Summary

Digital World of Children at Early School Age

Conditions for the Use of New Technologies by Children

The book Digital World of Children at Early School Age shows how children of early school age are surrounded by new technologies. This is presented from the point of view of both the children themselves and adults. Children grow up with media, and using them permeates all aspects of their lives, changing how they play, learn and communicate with each other. Children's use of media has always aroused many emotions, but discussions around this topic are full of generalizations, simplifications and theorizing, not supported by empirical research. The publications appearing in this topic mostly concern teenagers or adults, as relatively little research covers children at an early school age.

The assumption is that this book is to fill a gap in the literature on this topic, because it shows, from the perspective of children, the way they function in the digital world. By allowing children to take the lead in in-depth-interviews, the author familiarized herself with the ranking they give to individual media and the activities using them; she also listened to how they assess their digital competences, which ones they consider to be particularly important and which are less important. Moreover, she learned their opinions on communicating by means of new technologies or their perception of family activities in the field of home media education.

The book also describes educational digital tools that can help children enjoy long-term benefits. In order to meet the condition of objectivity, as well as children, the perspectives of digital experts and teachers of early childhood education are presented, as these are people through whom such benefits are possible. In comprehensive interviews, these experts in the field of education discussed the importance of a skillful and prudent introduction of digital media into children's world, especially through activities in the school environment.

These expert accounts are completed by quantitative data obtained with the help of a diagnostic survey of early childhood education teachers who, unlike experts, have lower digital competences, but who are obliged (by the new educational program law) to foster selected digital competences in children and introduce them to the digital world. However, it is qualitative research, and especially interviews with children, that constitute this publication's special merit. They not only allow us to discover what the digital world of early school age children looks like, but also, according to the author, can help to revise our perception of childhood in this digital world.