Literacies and information literacies

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"This book contains very instructive and useful facts but even here one must remember that it is one year old and that the facts may not match exactly in today's society".

(Daniel, 18 years)
My background in this field

• I came to the field of information literacy research from information seeking.

• A sociocultural perspective worked as an entrance.

• E.g. Roger Säljö, Colin Lankshear & Michele Knobel, Paul Gee.

• I was intrigued by the role that social practices and artifacts for communication could be given when understanding information.

Information literacy and literacy

• A professional field, a research field, a concept that captures empirical phenomena, impregnated with different theoretical understandings.

• The problem of translation:
  – Between professional languages
  – Between research groups
  – Between natural languages

• Media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy and so forth?

• Relating to a wider research field, through literacy.
“approach literacy as a set of socially organised practices which make use of a symbol system and a technology for producing and disseminating it”


“/.../ the appropriation and mastery of communicative (including conceptual) and technical tools that serve as mediational means in social practices”

Säljö 1996, p. 91.
My interpretation of a sociocultural approach

- Focus: The dealing with information in certain (learning) practices through the use of tools / techniques.
  - How these tools / technologies reshape practices
  - How practices give meaning to the tools / technologies

- Inspiration from information literacy research, literacy research and from the STS field.

- Favoureding ethnographic inspired research.
Theories in practice

• Empirical research in upper secondary schools with double lenses
  – How people (pupils, teachers, librarians and content providers) construct credibility in digital information
  – How the material properties of digital information influence assessments of authority and credibility

• Out/sourcing knowledge
  – How conceptions of information (literacy) practices are co-created by how digital tools for memorising evolve.
Thoughts on the Future

• The importance of reaching out.

• The importance of connecting research fields and professional fields.

• The importance of research questions.

• The importance of making a difference.