

Abstract for Digitising Early Childhood Conference 2017

Playing with a digital swing

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Based on a four months field study in a kindergarten among 37 5-year-old children in Denmark, this paper explores playing activities on a digital swing called SON-X Octavia. SON-X Octavia is an interactive sound unit, which can be attached to any swing chain, containing different types of playing activity. The paper explores the relationship between SON-X, the playing activities, and risky play. The aim is to show that the SON-X Octavia offers the children play possibilities that allow them to explore different types of play practices. One interesting finding was that the children explore risky play using the feedback from the SON-X technology as a way to manage risk and security within the limits of their playing activities (Sandseter, 2009; Svendsen, 2008, Skovbjerg, 2017, forthcoming).

The exploration and analysis is understood through the following theoretical framework: Play media, play practices, and play moods (Karoff, 2013) using Bateson's term of "framing" (1955/2001), Schmidt's notion of *commonness* (Schmidt, 2011), and Heidegger's term "mood" (1996). Play mood is state of being in which we are open and ready, to both others and their ideas, and to new opportunities for play practices. The paper points to four types of play moods – devotion, intensity, tension, and euphoria that show affiliation with four types of play practices – sliding, shifting, displaying and exceeding. Through play practices on the interactive swing, children create play moods. Through this conceptual framework, it is possible to highlight three features of play on the digital swing. First moods are essential to play on the swing; second, moods are always in plural; and finally, playing on the swing children look for ways to engage with the swing in order to explore and manage risky play.

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