

# **DIGITALIZATION OF PRESCHOOL PEDAGOGY -**

**A SWEDISH PRESCHOOL TEACHER PERSPECTIVE**

**LEIF MARKLUND (PhD)**



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# THE PRESENTATION

The presentation will cover a presentation of my thesis and the main findings of my thesis:

- Digital play in preschools – Understandings from educational use and professional learning



DIGITAL PLAY IN PRESCHOOLS

Understandings from educational use  
and professional learning

Leif Marklund



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# ABOUT THE THESIS

- The research project stretched from 2013 to 2020.
- Data collection was performed in 2014, 2016 and 2017
- Methods used:
  - Netnography (Study in 2014: Findings published in 2015 and 2016)
  - Self-report essays (Study in 2016: Findings published in 2019)
  - Interviews (Study in 2017: findings published in 2020)



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# ABOUT THE THESIS

## Publications:

- I. Marklund, Leif (2015). Preschool teachers' informal online professional development in relation to educational use of tablets in Swedish preschools. *Professional Development in Education* 41(2), 236-253.
- II. Marklund, Leif., & Dunkels, Elza. (2016). Digital play as a means to develop children's literacy and power in the Swedish preschool. *Early Years*, 36(3), 289-304.
- III. Marklund, Leif. (2019). Swedish preschool teachers' perceptions about digital play in a workplace-learning context. *Early Years*, doi:10-1080/09575146.2019.1658065
- IV. Marklund, Leif. (2020). Swedish preschool teachers' experiences from pedagogical use of digital play. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 9(1), 170-193.



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# ABOUT THE THESIS

The aim was to improve knowledge on preschool teachers' educational use of digital play and their professional learning about it.

- RQ1: How can preschool teacher educational use of digital play be understood?
- RQ2: How can the professional learning context of preschool teachers using digital play for educational purposes be understood?
- RQ3: How can preschool teacher knowledge needs concerning educational use of digital play be understood?



# THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis can be described as an umbrella term for a number of approaches to analysing qualitative data that focus on identifying , analysing and reporting patterns in the data (themes).

A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.82)

- Thematic analysis was used in the analysis in all of the included papers.
- Note that it is the thematic analysis of the all the data collected in the research project I present here today. What I could see, in terms of themes, when I looked at the data from the Netnography, Self-report essays and the Interviews combined.



# **RQ1: HOW CAN PRESCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATIONAL USE OF DIGITAL PLAY BE UNDERSTOOD?**

The educational use envisioned:

- Different from home usage
- Purposeful
- Embedded in educational practice
- Secure
- Primarily collaborative
- Preferably with teacher presence



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

# **RQ1: HOW CAN PRESCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATIONAL USE OF DIGITAL PLAY BE UNDERSTOOD?**

The incentives behind educational use were:

- Technology usability
- Enhancement of educational practice
  - Variation
  - Innovation
  - Adaptation
- Children's learning
  - Life focused learning
  - School-focused learning



# **RQ2: HOW CAN THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONTEXT OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS USING DIGITAL PLAY FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES BE UNDERSTOOD**

- Limited time and opportunities to learn
- Reluctance from colleagues and guardians
- Technology as an enabler of professional learning

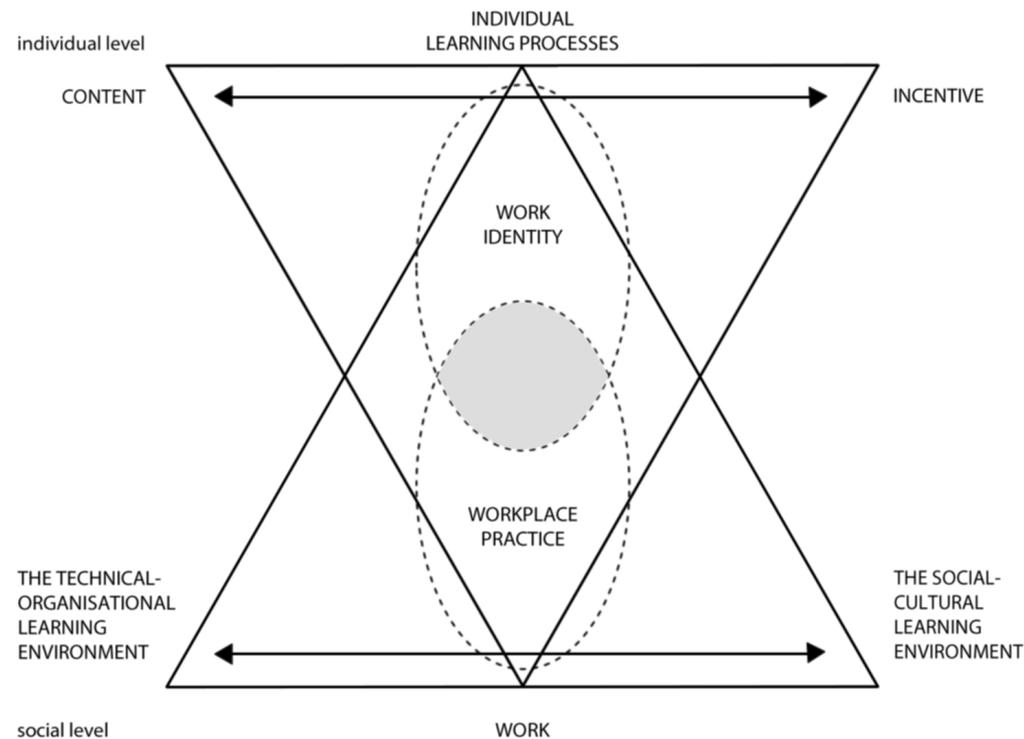


# **RQ3: HOW CAN PRESCHOOL TEACHER KNOWLEDGE NEEDS CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL USE OF DIGITAL PLAY BE UNDERSTOOD?**

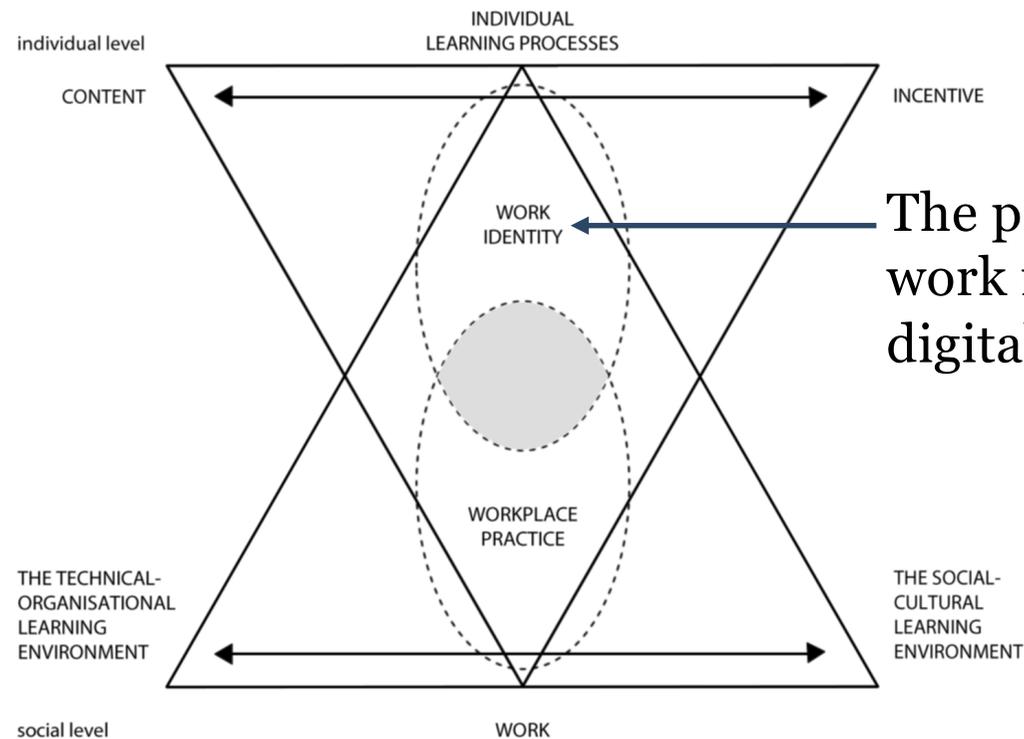
- Knowledge about social discourse
- Knowledge about technology
- Knowledge about educational use
  - Knowledge about access and agency



# THEORETICAL LENSE - THE LEARNING IN WORKING LIFE FRAMEWORK (ILLERIS, 2007)

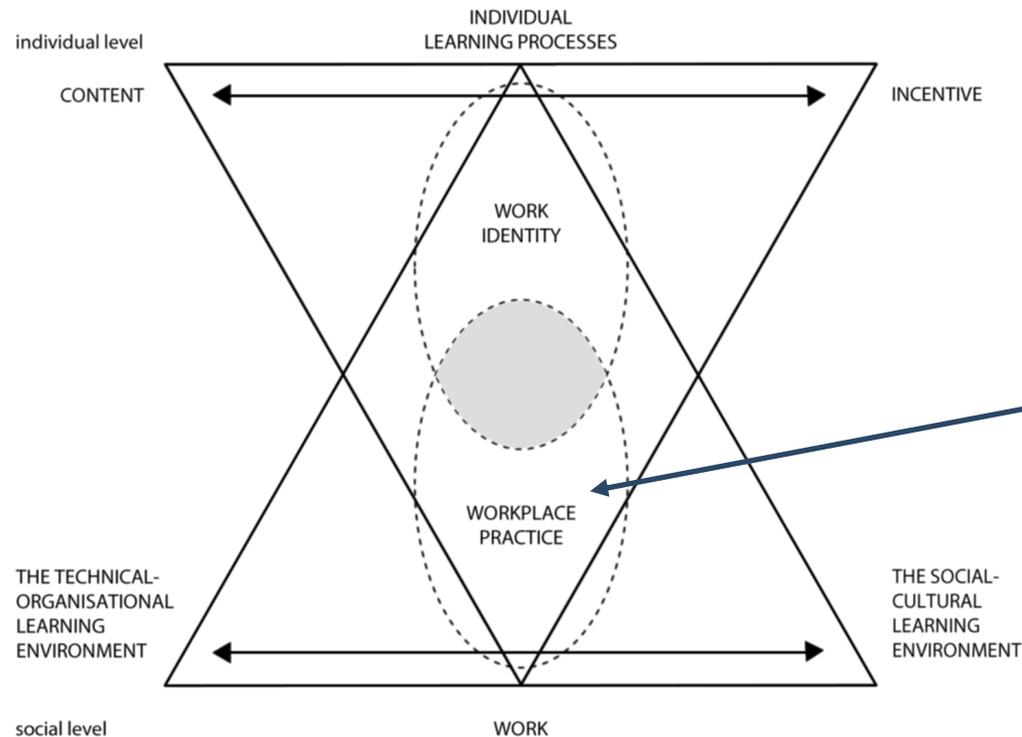


# THE PARTICIPANTS



The participants had a work identity that welcomed digital play.

# RQ1 (INCENTIVES FOR EDUCATIONAL USE)



## The society level:

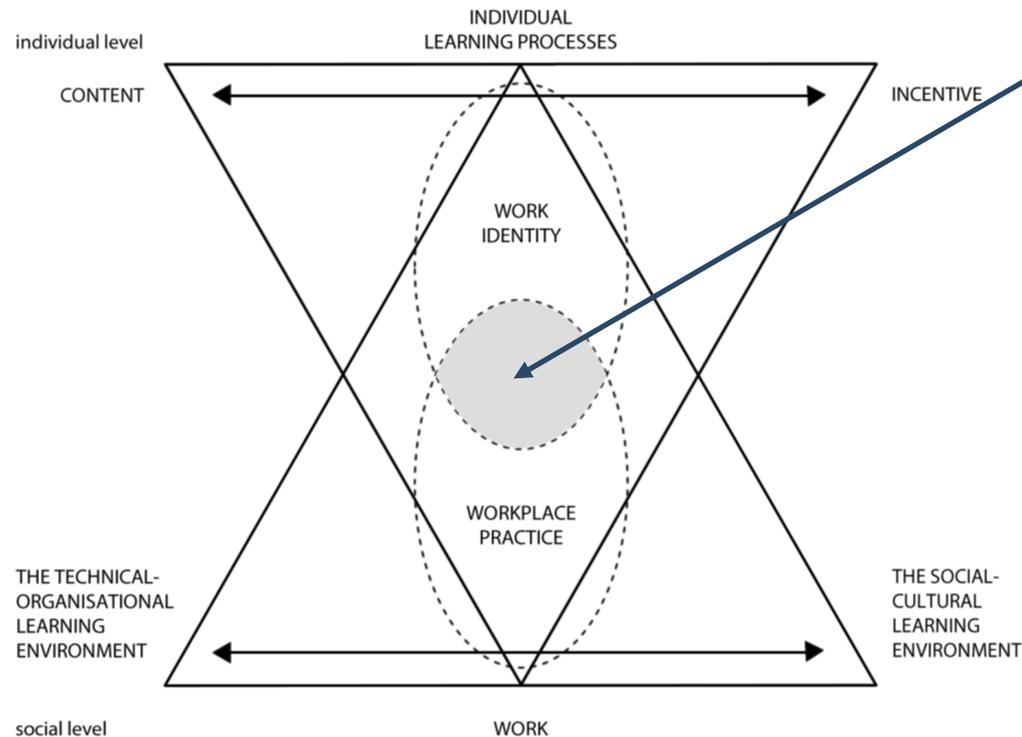
- Technological development
- Children's learning
  - Life focused
  - School focused

## The workplace practice:

- Enhancement of workplace practice
  - Variation
  - Adaptation
  - Innovation

ITY

# RQ1 (EDUCATIONAL USE ENVISIONED)

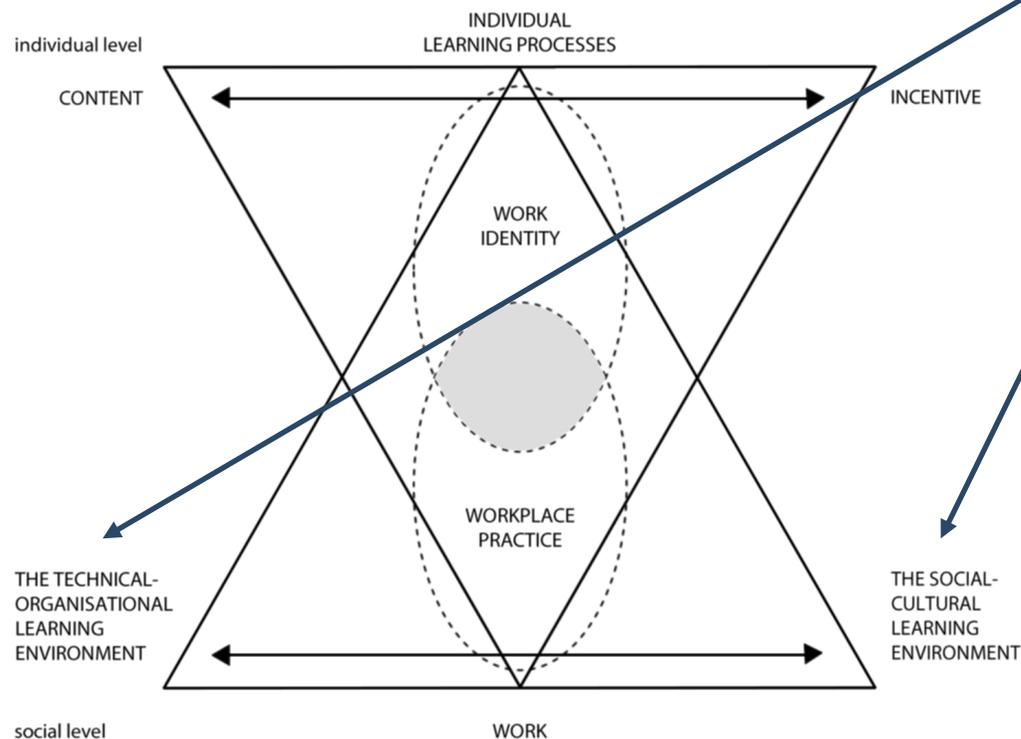


## The overlap between Work Identity and Workplace practice:

- Different from children's home use
- Purposeful
- Embedded in educational practice
- Secure
- Primarily collaborative
- Preferably with teacher presence

ITY

# RQ2 (PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONTEXT)



## The technical-organisational learning environment:

- Limited time and opportunities to learn (exploration in practice)

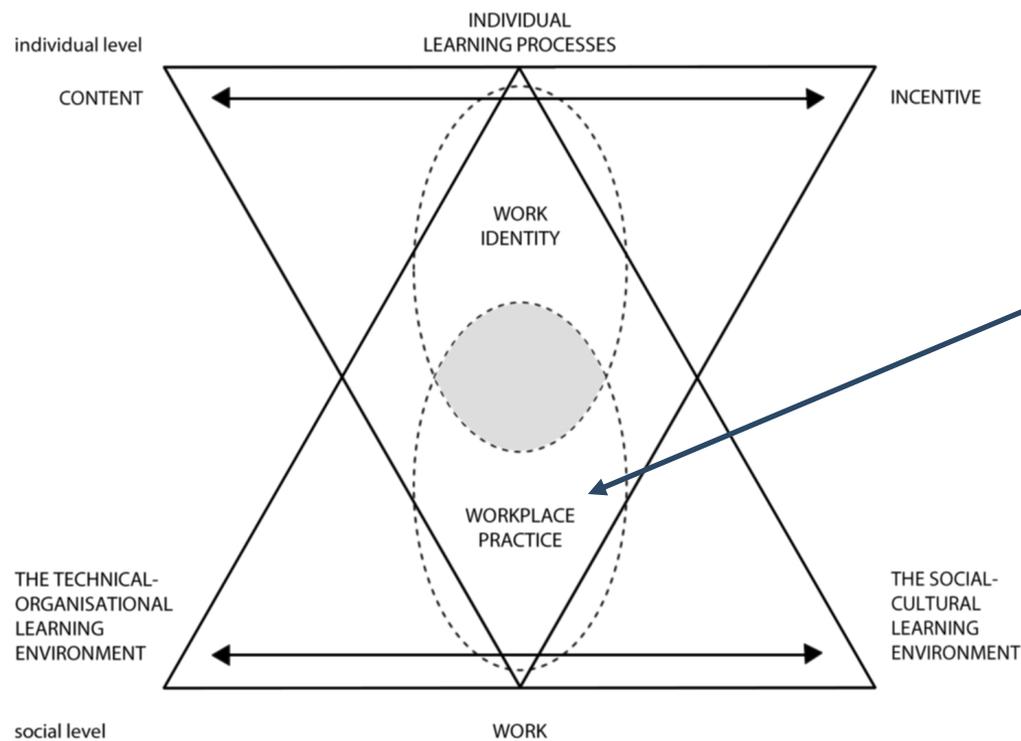
## The social-cultural learning environment:

- Reluctance from colleagues and guardians

## The society level:

- In this context technology enabled professional learning

# RQ3 (KNOWLEDGE NEEDS)



## The society level:

- Knowledge about social discourse
- Knowledge about technology

## The workplace practice:

- Knowledge about educational use
  - Knowledge about access and agency

# REGARDING ACCESS AND AGENCY

- The need for this knowledge about how to handle children's access to and agency in digital play was linked to the participants' strive towards embedding digital play while still establishing a balance between traditional and digital play in the workplace practice.
- Used, but also disliked methods: Timer, Schedule, Ticket system. A conflict in relation to how the participants were used to work in preschool pedagogy.
- Some thought the access was naturally controlled by the shifting phases during the preschool day. Others had realised that increased access resulted in less, or a periodical interest among the children.
- Strategies were to restrict access to one app at the time or to present the children with equal traditional and digital play activities on every digital play event.



# REFERENCES & LINKS

- Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2006. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3(2): 77-101.
- Illeris, K. 2007. *How we learn: Learning and Non-learning in School and Beyond*. New York: Routledge.
- Marklund, L. (2020). *Digital play in preschools: understandings from educational use and professional learning*. (Doctoral dissertation). Umeå: Umeå universitet.  
<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:umu:diva-168864>

