The “Technological Good” in the Multiliteracies Processes of Teachers and Students

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the importance of media literacy and digital skills play in strengthening the cultural profiles of the population. In particular, it considers the “technological good” as an element that is part of a symbolic system of culture that can create new forms of “thin inequality.” In this sense, the contribution examines the relationship between new forms of literacy and media skills in an attempt to explore how technologies are transforming the traditional literacy of teachers and students, as well as the rest of the population, and how this will lead to new ways of thinking, acting and being the teaching and learning. The heritage technological, individual, and social, reshapes the culture and its size, inducing the education, at all levels, to building curricular activities most appropriate to the needs of a knowledge society and the profile of the literate of the 20th century.

Keywords: Cultural Profile, Digital Skills, Heritage Technological, Information Communication Technology (ICT), Learning, Media Skills, Multiliteracies, School, Teaching, Technological Good

1. TEACHERS AND STUDENTS’ EDUCATION BETWEEN MULTILITERACIES AND TECHNOLOGIES

The contribution focuses on the importance that the use of media, in all its meanings, acquires in the development of new alphabetical forms, both of teachers and students. It is well known in fact, that today’s knowledge society requires individuals to be equipped with innovative cognitive tools to support the sudden changes they are exposed to by contemporary events. Media constitute, as all the other cultural goods, the signs, the artefacts and lifestyles shared by individuals and are an integral part of a set of symbolic systems. Nowadays they are referred to in the international literature to reinforce the literacy processes and the individuals’ knowledge and ability repertories to build stronger cultural profiles (Nuzzaci, 2011a, pp. 19-38), because the different alphabetical needs established during the last few years have shifted the literacy axis towards multiple dimensions which roles will become in the future even more important for the diachronic and synchronic understanding of cultures and of their different expressions. Therefore, in a moment in which, the new literacy forms (especially the media ones) appear elusive and not easy to identify and
to teach, and when the communication genres are constantly expanding through networks, tools, communities and purposes, it emerges the need to define and conceptualize the new “education areas.” However, at the same time, in the era of digital education, old discriminations that lead to new implicit misunderstandings of the representation, expression and organization of knowledge come back to life and, questioning the appropriateness of traditional educational practices, they challenge the education contexts and objectives.

Hence we witness to the appearance of an original “literacy epistemology” that, as a complex multimodal process working through multiple channels and plural-sign codes, makes it possible to build skills suitable to feed people in the exercise of active citizenship.

However, today’s school system does not help promoting the significant multiple literacy (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006) forms that obviously imply a change of paradigm in the ways of conceiving and developing education both in terms of teaching and learning. To give shape to such need it is necessary to redefine the relation between school and extra school to reshape the cultural intersection areas that imply the commonly used term “multi-literacy” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

The same relation existing between technological uses at and outside school. The latter, entails, first of all, the adoption of an increasing range of channels and multimodal and semiotic (of meaning) communication systems that extends, more than replace, the types of literacy previously linked to the press, until including in the writing and in the audio speech (sound), the visual (images), the mimicry (the body language), the spatiality (the use of the space), the multimodal modality and the combination of all these elements; secondly, it amplifies the pedagogical literacy field called to take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity in which education works, answering to the global changes deriving from the interrelation between cultures and their wider circulation and from the variety of the texts and contexts.

Within a society that is becoming even more “globally connected,” it arises the problem of the management of the complexity and diversity in the variety of ICT use in local contexts that, with the social and cultural characterizations expressed in the objectuality and non objectuality of the tools they represent, they stand out as vital dimensions in teachers and students’ education and in the structuring of that store of knowledge considered fundamental for the transmission, building, production and transformation of knowledge.

In order to give an answer to the question on which are the implications of a “media legacy” education starting from an idea of “multiple literacy” (and vice versa), we cannot exempt ourselves from pointing out that the literature brings the discussion back to the issue of education practices revisited in the light of the plurality of languages, codes, channels and symbols that impose digital education forms able to simultaneously act on different meaning systems. To examine the importance of ICT literacy, adopting such interpretative key, does not only mean to arise the problem of the extension of the traditional literacy conceptions and definitions, but also to extend the research to innovative genres, methodologies and tools to find new ways to cultivate the population.

In this same direction we have to read the re-contextualise effort and make explicit the sophisticated meaning of “literacy” that tends to support an alphabetical interpretation logic that incorporates the ICT cultural practices within the classroom practices adopting even more efficient imitative, heuristic and creative strategies able to see school with the new eyes of “informal territories.” It is therefore essential to reflect on an idea of ICT as “cultural goods” and on the different forms of educational mediation employed to make them readable and easy to be interpreted, as now it is not enough to explore and make them accessible to everybody, but it is necessary to transform them form information research “sources” to communication and information processing places relying on original media devices that enable individuals to access to the meaning systems.
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