THOUGHTS ON CONVENTIONAL LEARNING AND MEDIATED LEARNING

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RESUME

Conventional Learning x Mediated Learning is the point of discussion and reflection caused primarily by the lack of knowledge of the real meaning. The on-site educative space and the distance teaching possibilities mediated by technology present different resources in its methodologies and pedagogical processes with different rhythm and dimension. Technology optimizes time and space with the virtuality enabling distance education, in addition to propitiate new skills and knowledge to students and teachers. This is a challenge for the education professionals, as well as the teaching institutions that are still undecided as to the use of these technological tools inside the classroom. For the realization of those changes in the learning process, in the distance education modality, the pedagogical planning is the key to success of the entire process.

Key words: Education; Learning; Technology.

Introduction

It is known that learning is a active process of mental elaboration, through which certain contents, beliefs and convictions are modified giving space to new points of view. It is also known that this transformation occurs through the dialogical relation between teacher and learner and we should take into account the "baggage" brought by learners.

How can we then plan a educative process without identifying what forms and informs the students? Understanding the students' cultural baggage, understanding the culture in a comprehensive manner, is understanding how their culture and identity are constituted towards, from this knowledge, being able to, through educational communication, forge a common culture, interacting with our students.

The 20th century witnessed a steep techno scientific development that has imposed to society, in general, and to schools, in particular, a radical transformation. Knowledge that was previously spread exclusively through books and regular school, began to spread via the media, which embraces diverse languages and vehicles, that have seduced us by the use, as na example, of audiovisual resources.

Recently, the advances in new communication and information technologies allowed the communicational means to introduce the idea of a society in network, where people are connected through telematics networks, which opens up the possibility of a democratized access to information. In this context, the written word, once the bearer of a single power of information, is being questioned on its ability to be the privileged channel of content and value transmission, and other means, such as the audiovisual, are being considered as valid to realize this transmission. The image has revealed itself as major focus and has been well appreciated and pointed out.

The conventional educator still can't recognize and institutionally incorporate the value of these new languages, forms and means for the knowledge building of the student. The force of the means of communications together with modern societies has induced a series of changes on the way humans relate with information and knowledge, because they act on the ways

of seeing and feeling the reality, and within them the strong presence of the image.

Those changes have achieved in a way, the universe of the educational institutions and the actions undertaken by formal education. The radio, TV, cinema, videogame, computer, and ultimately, the huge amount of codes, images, icons, symbols, spread through these means, not necessarily written, are still being incorporated by those who work with conventional education.

1. Conventional education x mediated education

How to entitle the one that has the essential competences for the Knowledge Society? Knowledge worker? Mental worker? Cerebral worker?

Let us consider that the educational practices and their quality are not restricted to academic facts anymore, but to the sociopolitical reflexes of society in general, in a dynamic conjugation with a particular society in which the institution of a "school" is situated and served. Let us ponder also that the concept of quality is directly linked to what is a priority for a determined society. We can then affirm that there a different types of school, schooling e pedagogical styles, as well as educational appreciations.

What could be conventionally called an "educative space"? A house, a tent, a room, a building, a campus... There, teacher and students participate, magically, of the permanent miracle of learning, of discovering the world, together.

The conventional classroom is a social space, with students and teachers present, where theoretical knowledge is gradatively presented to the learners, the schooling grades succeed each other and, coming the graduation, there is the demonstration that the knowledge and information are enough to start professional life or to continue studying in another segment. Some expressions clearly show this:

- Go to school: move yourself to a determined institution focused on "teaching and learning"
- School hours: traditionally the daily time considered dedicated to systematized learning.

- Academic formation: also correspond to the "school hours (time)", related to the history of an individual's personal life.

This scenario would portray the past (that keeps existing). But teaching and learning, according to the actual and constant technological transformations, today present very different rhythm and dimensions. It is not the degree of schooling that shows if the person is "graduated" or not. Information and knowledge can be obtained without physically moving even in traditional teaching and learning institutions. The possibilities to be informed are offered by virtual schools, with its online teaching and through interaction with countless types of technologies.

Virilio (1993 *apud* Kenski, 2003) states that nowadays, it is the information that moves itself. It moves in two ways: first, the physical spatiality, live, being possible to access information through last generation media technology. Then by its constant changes, by permanent transformations, by its intensive and momentary temporality.

Speed is the most adequate expression to the space-time status of knowledge in the present: speed to learn, to forget, to access information, interact with it and surpass it with recent news. Galvão (1997) says:

> If on one side this "information explosion", creates means that are increasingly efficient to storage and instantaneous circulation of information, on the other hand it develops softwares and search and filter programs that help us manage a space that is bordering infinity. (GALVÃO, 1997, p.26).

Nowadays the language, the buildings, and the classrooms are changing. The technological world is invading our life and one cannot but feel the transformation on how we consider space and time around us, thanks to technology. The travel to the knowledge temples, as we have seen, is no longer necessary: no more going to campus, to the library, to the laboratory, in order to learn. The educational space has been modified by the digital revolution. Thanks to the possibilities provided by new technologies, the emergence of virtual schools, was possible the distance learning to various subjects and levels.

In reality the mobiles, internet, apps and computers if used towards optimizing the teacher’s practice, to promote, stimulate and support the

educational practice, will be the major partners on the students' skill and competence development.

In the final document of a recent seminar organized in São Paulo by the Santillana Foundation and UNESCO, we read:

> The well successful use of technology will always be accompanied of simultaneous remodeling in other aspects – such as curriculum, evaluation, and professional development of faculty (…) (http://fundacaosantillana.org.br/seminario-tecnologia/pdf/tecnologias-para-a-transformacao-da-educacao.pdf Accessed on April/2015).

A given factor, however, needs to be taken under consideration: to the youth around the world, technology is increasingly important and present on daily basis, meanwhile the education world is still undecided whether to accept its use in classroom or not.

A surveying by BBC that, from specialists' debates and opinions, indicated ten trends related to the use of technology inside the classroom and experiences of its actual use has attracted our attention. A few of these trends are approached hereinafter:

Ten trends of technology on education
Add value to the teacher's job instead of substituting it.
Improve the processes, without having to drastically change them
Tablets gaining space from desktops and laptops
Think about internet beyond search engines and social networks
Make connections to the real world
Stimulate creation, cooperation and interaction
Think about new ways to evaluate students
Use games in favor of learning
Customization and personalization
Planning is a key

Reference: IDOETA, BBC Brazil, São Paulo, SP, 2014. Available on http://www.bbc.co.uk/portuguese/noticias/2014/12/ Accessed: April/2015.

- **Bimodal education: the hybrid teaching**

Often appears in the literature as "blended learning". A very clear definition on this thought is in the article entitled ENSINO HÍBRIDO OU BLENDED LEARNING from the website Porvir, where they describe the hybrid teaching as "the combination of online and offline apprenticeship inside a classroom, uniting the benefits of traditional teaching methods with the use of

technological education tools." (September/2012; available at http://porvir.org/wiki/ensino-hibrido-ou-blended-learning Accessed: April/2015). Thus we can highlight important points where technology contributes in an effective and dynamic way to the educational process.

- **The teacher is not substituted**

The expressions facilitator and mediator emphasize, because they commune with the technology, dynamically and objectively guiding the possibilities of knowledge building for the students.

- **Processes are not modified, they are improved**

A revolution is not necessary, because the help given by technology will assist the learning and work with the most intriguing content.

Facilitating access to the real world, technology establishes connections that motivate the students a lot more to compromise with studying. In the UNESCO document (commented by IDOETA, BBC Brazil, São Paulo, SP, 2014. Available on http://www.bbc.co.uk/portuguese/noticias/2014/12/ Accessed: April/2015), we see softwares, apps, tablets being understood as ways to provide "practical opportunities to exercise and apply skills."

- **Adaptive Learning**

Is the learning process that uses softwares that propose different activities to each student, customized from the answers and responses to tasks. Still on the surveying done by BBC, we give emphasis to the Brazilian software Geekie, used on a platform, when it interacts with the student "it detects his aptitudes and difficulties and designs a study plan adapted to them". UNESCO (commented by IDOETA, BBC Brazil, São Paulo, SP, 2014. Available on http://www.bbc.co.uk/portuguese/noticias/2014/12/ Accessed: April/2015). BBC Brazil's document identifies the Adaptive Learning as a customization and personalization agent.

- **Game-based Learning**

Is a learning process that bids on games to present the content in a more interesting way, motivating students to develop their creativity and following their development. When adequately used, videogames, beyond requiring more focus, contribute to a more pleasant and fun learning, even demanding more concentration and knowledge about the school subjects from the students.

On the Special Program for Licentiate Degree Acquisition, intended for Bachelor professionals that wish to dedicate themselves to academic life (especially from 6th grade to High School, and Technical School levels), Practice and Didactic teachers should insert technology, especially the possibility of games on the operationalizing of their syllabus.

Between all the mobile devices, we call attention to the tablets, which probably have more user friendly performance than desktops and laptops. The UNESCO document believes that, for students beyond 6th grade, individual tablets, bought by the government, or even borrowed, are the midterm trends in education. Its use would spare the establishments of having computer labs, server maintenance, etc.

2. Distance Education, Mediated Education, TML?

What can we say about learning from "distance education"? Having started with little or no technology (letters for example), we find very old examples. The printed material still makes itself present, within this same "teaching" perspective. CHAVES (1993, p.3) comments:

> With new electro electronic technology, especially in its digital version, unite to telecommunication technologies, now also digital, a new era begins for distance education, and teaching can be done in distance on a scale never before imagined and can yet count on more benefits, before considered impossible in this teaching modality: interactivity and even synchronicity. Thereupon, distance learning certainly is, as it has always been, a way to use technology on promoting education. Even though education and learning happen inside an individual, and therefore, can't be done at distance, they can and should be mediated through the contacts of the individual with the environment that surrounds him, specially through the contact with other people, this contact being "face to face" or "remote" (virtual, in a way that it doesn't

> involve the “space-time contiguity” of the two people). (CHAVES, 1999, p.3)

Let us have a better comprehension of the virtual school, that will be considered by SERRES (1994, p.191), as a way of student freedom from having to bear with the violent and brutal relations of break time courtyards, and the suppress that is the commute to and from school, in big clogged cities. The virtual school spaces are essentially structured as a language.

For KENSKI (2003, p.55) the virtual school corresponds to:

> The place where messages and flow for knowledge diffusion is shared, the virtual learning environment is built based on the encouragement to the realization of collaborative activities, on which the student does not feel alone, by himself, dialoguing only with the machine or a virtual instructor. It is the other way around, building new ways of communication, the virtual school space presents itself by the structure of online communities where teacher and student permanently dialogue mediated by knowledge. (KENSKI, 2003, p.55)

3. Technology Mediated Learning – TML

What is learning? Chaves (1999, p.6) states that

> Learning is a process that occurs inside an individual. Even when learning is due to a successful teaching process, it occurs inside an individual, and that same teaching that results in learning in one person can be totally ineffective in another one. (CHAVES, 1999, p.6)

Distance learning, for many, is giving away to a denomination, that in some way best represents the activity of learning through virtual environments. There was once a time when man’s learning was mediated through nature! Would that be auto learning? Nowadays, technology allows us not only to use it “from outside in”, with tutoring, but also gives us the chance to, motivated, look on our own for some knowledge (the “inside out” happens).

But in order to obtain good results, the whole process of learning in virtual environments needs to have a plan, because planning is the key. Use technology so it is effective and meaningful, it will not be by chance, but will with well-defined goals of how learning can advantage from it.

> In a study on July of 2014 about the efficiency of technology on education, the Inter-American Development Bank suggests four items: 1)focusing on specific learning goals, that can be basic areas like math and languages, or in skills, like critical thinking and collaboration; 2)Coordinate key components: technological infrastructure, content

> and human resources; 3) Develop a strategy of project evaluation and monitoring, with the steps being followed and the impact it pretends to generate; 4)Guarantee that the action isn't an isolated one, but part of a sustainable plan through time in the school or teaching system. (Available at: http://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/bbc/201412/06/dez -)

Reinforcing the study above, about the relevance of technology on the education process, Michael Moore on October 2010, in Florianópolis, opening speaker at the 1st International GUIDE (Global Universities in Distance Education) on Virtual Higher Education Seminar, said: "Virtual Higher Education is way more than the use of new technologies on the process of teaching and learning". He also stated that: "as important as investment on new technologies, are the internal and external educational policies." Therefore, it is understood that in order to have a quality distance education it is necessary an educational project that attends every step of pedagogical planning and processes.

Final considerations

Based on the thoughts presented above, we can see how important are the technologies relating to the teaching and learning process. Think about education permeated by technology opens up a variety of possibilities and various ways of stimulating the student to be increasingly involved in the process.

None the less it is important to remember that such resources only add value to the teaching process when matched with good pedagogical planning. Certain subjects show themselves to be interesting in applying such resources, as an example, Didactics, Philosophy, Mathematics, among others.

It is worth mentioning some aspects with possibilities of change on the addressed issue:

- The TML, even though spontaneous, sought by the student, should not be seen by the teacher as a competitor.
- One must be careful not to repeat in distance education inadequate conventional on-site models.
- It is important to always be aware and seeking to answer what is the real goal of education.
- At last we must be certain to go towards one single Education!

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