

The Effectiveness of Developing Media Competence in Future Teachers of Higher Educational Institutions

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Abstract – This article is dedicated to some available connection between education and media in modern world and reveals the role that formal education should play in both the integration of media in the curriculum and the teachers' digital literacy at higher educational institutions. Moreover, the author highlights the demand for including a broader and deeper analysis of the social uses, attitudes, and values associated with new media tools, texts and practices.

Keywords – Information, communication, technology, media education, media competence, education, digital society, media forms, content, skills and practices media forms, content, skills, practices.

The usage of information and communication technologies is becoming very fast during the past years and continue to generate both delicate and essential restructuring in every part of society. In essence, the pervasive access, ubiquity and daily reliance on multimedia devices are getting familiar to all members of society. Their omnipresence is specifically resonant with younger generations of users who approach information in various and innovative ways that position their everyday uses of ICTs and related to new media practices as an important life skill. Although education is extensively seen a pathway to personal, academic and career preparation, the education sector lateness in its relative answer to ICTs. Taking all things into consideration, its response is partial and calls into question the traditional usurpation about the design of the studying environment and its effect on widespread social and cultural needs within the circumstance of coeval media forms, content, skills and practices. Among the basic peculiarities of the increasingly global and digital society are multiculturalism, the increased ability to stock and

recuperate of information, access to broad social networks, and the ability to use computer networks to transcend time and space. In exchange for, it could be said that the education sector is an anachronism in its own time as it persists to prepare students for a society that no longer exists. When the number and types of literacy devices used by students outside of university are compared with the literacy tools and texts used in formal education, it is evident that teachers must unplug to take part in the classroom. Eventually, they should also power down their own habitual ways of working with information and related cultural interests. In this case, students transverse a polarized existence of formal and informal learning environments. One the one hand, they spend most of their day in schools that are far removed from their own authentic media and information skills, interests and needs. Moreover, they follow these interests and hone their skills through peer learning and knowledge networks in the world outside of university. With few bridges between these parallel worlds, many students do not even bother to try establish

connections between the informal and formal education sectors. It is known that the most dangerous branches of this mismatch is not the lack of access to digital devices or gadgets, nor the fact that access to timely and relevant information is plainly blocked in classrooms. Besides, it is much more worrying that extending ideals and assumptions about the mission of compulsory schooling as a preparation for social and civic life are unraveling. As schools increasingly insulate the day-to-day literacy skills of students (and especially teachers), this social contract is broken. Providing the narrow versions of literacy practiced in the classroom, it is evident that formal schooling is not necessary. Students would prefer to learn about the functions of ICTs through informal environments such as peer networks, online or even at their local computer store. The social contract for formal education implies much more, with new forms of literacy at its center. To re-establish public confidence in the merit of schooling for social preparation and personal fulfillment, we imagine a critical, noble and liberating concept of literacy. Attempts to reconnect and support modern literacy practices in formal schooling go well beyond competencies with digital devices and networks. It is also essential that formal education unites skills and practices that support students' critical autonomy and awareness of the relevant contexts of using media. These attempts also go well beyond a reactive answer to the commercial interests of the dominant digital media companies of the moment. A wider vision for the accommodation of new literacy skills will demand important restructuring in the education part. With the dominance of high-stakes standardized testing in formal schooling, it remains visible how schools can transform widespread content delivery modes into critical, participatory designs for the classroom atmosphere. So as to prepare students and teachers for life in a global multicultural, digital world, formal education must also transcend the narrow focus on test scores and grades to cover students' existing knowledge, skills and practices, learned outside schools. Thereby ICTs are centered to the restructuring of most up-to-date formal schooling atmospheres and a catalyst for revising the strategies of compulsory education to support and encourage active citizenship and self-expression in a democratic society. Many scientists stress the need to expand the concept, content and purposes of traditional literacy so as to accommodate contemporary digital, multimodal and media literacy. During the past years, several scientists have identified these new literacy concepts as audiovisual literacy, informational, multimodal, media literacy, digital competency and so on. Although the technical proficiencies

may differ, these multiple definitions of literacy actually correspond with the same concepts, aims and purposes of traditional literacy.

It is obvious that nowadays media have already entered to each sphere of society. It is impossible to imagine working process at different spheres especially education without media, social networking or any other digital devices. Fortunately, they are all beneficial and serves as the tool of making progress. As each new medium is adopted in society, schools have attempted to integrate them into the classroom curricula. From the uses of film in the 21st Century to the current promotion of whiteboards in the classroom, each new device or medium has been promoted as a benefit and a support to learning. In this tradition, contemporary digital media, networked communication and ICTs are most often introduced into the curriculum at the discretion of the teacher, as a an ancillary content delivery tool. Given the ubiquity and dominance of multiple media in the informal education of children and youth, it is not as if schools are unaware of the pervasive influence of media. For many years, schools have attempted to integrate media tools and texts into classroom practice. However, it is becoming increasing apparent that it is not enough to simply teach and learn «with» media, but that a comprehensive educational environment also requires that students study «about» media in order to analyze the world of new texts, technologies and their relevant contexts. In the English-speaking world, the study of media has emerged as «media studies» which addresses the reception of media content, distribution and related aesthetic and production processes within historical, economic and cultural contexts, usually from a social science or humanities theory base. Now more than ever, it is necessary to clarify and bridge the «with» or «about» approach to media education. At every level of education, media and digital literacy are often approached from a strictly technical perspective, resulting in a goal of literacy competencies based on the way that hardware and software applications can be mastered and directly applied to traditional learning environments. As a result, media education is often associated with simply attaining the applied skills needed to navigate computer networks, virtual worlds, software platforms, social networks or media production tools and editing devices. Scholars and practitioners have attempted to clarify the differences between teaching «with» versus «about» media by defining applied mastery of ICTS as «digital literacy» and alternatively defining critical approaches to media as «media literacy». However, the distinction between the two can still be confusing. This dichotomy still favors the

teaching «with» media over the «about» media approach in educational institutions. For example, educational technology courses in teacher training curricula, when they are offered, tend to support the «with» approach. Critical media studies and media literacy courses have struggled without much success for a place in all segments of the compulsory education curriculum in different countries. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which is the dominance of commercial interests in the integration of classroom resources associated with media education, such as computer hardware, software, and presentation tools. The potential for increased ICTs in the classroom and the resulting market share for hardware and software sales in the education sector, increases the advocacy for their integration by commercial interests, but it does not necessarily mean that the new media tools are being integrated in a way that supports learning in a meaningful way. Media studies are an important component of media education and often offered as an elective or single subject area in Anglo-Saxon schools. However, media study is also only one strand in a comprehensive program of critical media education. This breadth and complexity is based in part on the fact that media literacy, like traditional literacy, cuts across the curriculum in an interdisciplinary way. More specifically, it is education that aims to increase the students' understanding and enjoyment of how the media work, how they produce meaning, how they are organized, and how they construct reality. The rapid adoption of digital networks and new information and communication technologies substantially modifies media forms and content, as well as users' relationship with information. This is reflected in new approaches to media education as it moves beyond the critical analysis and practices related to radio, television, film and pop culture to the critical reception and uses of ICTs such as mobile devices, the Internet, video games, social networks, WebTV, interactive digital boards, virtual worlds, and so on.

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