



Restructuring Educational Technology in New Millennium

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Technology, Pedagogy, Revolution, Restructuring

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ABSTRACT *we need to develop new technology of diverse sorts, including a more fundamental importance for education, to meet the challenge of restructuring education for a high tech, multicultural society, and global culture. In a period of dramatic technological and social change, education needs to help produce a variety of new types of technologies to make current pedagogy relevant to the demands of the contemporary era. By introducing new technology in education to empower individuals and groups traditionally excluded, education could be reconstructed to make it more responsive to the challenges of a democratic and multicultural society.*

I. Introduction

Technology in education is most simply and comfortably defined as an array of tools that might prove helpful in advancing student learning and may be measured in how and why individuals behave. Educational Technology relies on a broad definition of the word "technology." Technology can refer to material objects of use to humanity, such as machines or hardware, but it can also encompass broader themes, including systems, methods of organization, and techniques. Some modern tools include but are not limited to overhead projectors, laptop computers, and calculators.

A dramatic technological revolution, centered on computer, information, communication, and multimedia technologies, has been changing everything from the ways people work, to the ways they communicate with each other and spend their leisure time. This technological revolution is often interpreted as the beginnings of a knowledge or information society, and therefore ascribes education a central role in every aspect of life. It poses tremendous challenges to educators to rethink their basic tenets, to deploy the new technologies in creative and productive ways, and to restructure schooling to respond constructively and progressively to the technological and social changes that we are now experiencing. At the same time that technological revolution is underway, important demographic and socio-political changes are taking place in the United States and throughout the world. Emigration patterns have created the challenge of providing people from diverse races, classes, and backgrounds with the tools and competencies to enable them to succeed and participate in an ever more complex and changing world.

Technological revolution demand a major restructuring of education today with new curricula, pedagogy, literacies, practices, and goals. Furthermore, the technological revolution of the present era makes possible the radical reconstruction and restructuring of education and society argued for in the progressive era by Dewey and in the 1960s and 1970s by Ivan Illich, Paolo Freire, and others who sought radical educational and social reform. technology is aware that technologies have unforeseen consequences and that good intentions and seemingly good projects may have results that were not desired or positive. Indeed, there are ecological consequences concerning the production, use, and discarding of computer technologies, dangers of over and misuse of computers for individual health and wellbeing, and costs and downsides of organizing so many ac-

tivities ranging from work to communication to research around information technologies Media culture is a form of pedagogy that teaches proper and improper behavior, gender roles, values, and knowledge of the world (Kellner, 1995). Individuals are often not aware that they are being educated and constructed by media culture, as its pedagogy is frequently invisible and subliminal. This situation calls for critical approaches that make us aware of how media construct meanings, influence and educate audiences, and impose their messages and values. A media literate person is skillful in analyzing media codes and conventions, able to criticize stereotypes, values, and ideologies, and competent to interpret the multiple meanings and messages generated by media texts. Media literacy helps people to use media intelligently, to discriminate and evaluate media content, to critically dissect media forms, and to investigate media effects and uses (see Kellner 1995a and 1995b). Within educational circles, however, a debate persists over

II. Multimedia: The New Frontier

The new multimedia environments necessitate a diversity of types of multisemiotic and multimodal interaction, involving interfacing with words and print material and often images, graphics, and audio and video material. As technological convergence develops apace, individuals need to combine the skills of critical media literacy with traditional print literacy and new forms of multiple literacies to access and navigate the new multimedia hypertext environments. Literacy in this conception involves the abilities to engage effectively in socially-constructed emergent and novel forms of culture and communication. Reading and interpreting print was the appropriate mode of literacy for books, while critical multiple literacies entail reading and interpreting discourse, images, spectacle, narratives, and the forms and genres of media culture. Forms of multimedia communication involve print, speech, visuality, and audio, in a hybrid field that combines these forms, all of which involve skills of interpreting and critique .

This revisioning of education involves that recognition that teachers can learn from students and that often students are ahead of teachers in various technological literacies and technical abilities. Many of us (and this is true of myself) have learned much of what we know of computers and new media and technologies from students. We should also recognize to extent to which young people helped invent the Internet and have grown up in a cyber-

culture in which they may have cultivated technological skills from an early age.¹³ Peer-to-peer communication among young people is highly sophisticated and developed and democratic pedagogies should build upon and enhance these resources and practices. One of the challenges of contemporary education is to overcome the disconnect between students experiences, subjectivities, and interests rooted in the new multimedia cyberculture in contrast to the classroom situation grounded in print culture and traditional learning and disciplines (see Luke and Luke, forthcoming). Already in the 1960s, Marshall McLuhan (1964) pointed to the disconnect between students raised on radio, television, and popular culture confronted with print materials. Today, the disconnect is even more striking in the contrast between an interactive and multimedia cyberculture and traditional forms of authoritarian lecturing and problematic print materials, thus suggesting a generational divide as well as a digital divide.

This is a time of challenge and a time for experiment. It is time to put existing pedagogies, practices, and educational philosophies in question and to construct new ones. It is a time for new pedagogical experiments to see what works and what doesn't work. It is a time to reflect on our

goals and to discern what we want to achieve with education and how we can achieve it. Ironically, it is a time to return to classical philosophy of education which situates reflections on education in reflections on the good life and society at the same time that we reflect on how we can transform education to become relevant to a high tech society. It is time to return to John Dewey to rethink that intimate connection between education and democracy at the same time we address the multicultural challenges that Dewey in the midst of a still vital melting pot ideology and liberal progressivist optimism did not address.

III. Conclusion:

Technology has significantly transformed education at several major turning points in our history. To ensure the equitable implementation of technology throughout the curriculum, professional development should include strategies for in technology use and providing technical support for technology use and maintenance. As policies and procedures to ensure equitable use of education technology are implemented, administrators, teachers, policymakers, parents, and community members must think ahead to how they will document that technological equity has been achieved.

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