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Educational Technology: My Philosophy

By: Chantal Drolet

EDUC 511-64B Marianne Justus

Essay: 400 words

(<u>Not</u> including reference hyperlink numbers & the title on p.2)

Including an Image (see mind map on separate document)

University of British Columbia

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Educational Technology: My Philosophy

Working definitions

First, philosophy studies the fundamental nature of, and relationship with, phenomena (5). Second, education includes teaching and learning; its aim is knowledge acquisition in the form of basic skills, technical competencies, critical thinking, as well as ethical and artistic development (8). Finally, technology is the process by which people modify nature to fulfill their needs and desires (9).

Challenging assumptions

If the nature of technology is not merely a means to an end and relates to human activity, therefore the relationship between education and technology is built on the process of learning as much as the articulation of knowledge (6). Consequently, the purpose of educational technology is to enhance the course of action needed to *unlock* knowledge and manifest it (3).

Technology in education can foster creativity, motivation and autonomy. Then again, technological procedures and tools also generate a regulating effect. This systemization of instruction (4) allows for operational efficiency but can be erratic and therefore requires human intervention (6). The question that logically comes to mind is *who* decides what is worth studying and what tools to use to obtain the information?

Does the way technological devices function reflect values propagated by privileged groups of people who control the processes and the equipment? If the answer is yes, educational technology could be seen as a commodity, whose function is to serve the interests of the ones commercializing and administering it. Hence, educational technology is not neutral. (1)

Teaching with technology

To explain my position regarding the pedagogy involved with educational technologies, it is useful to artificially divide the content delivered by technology and the mechanisms that deliver it.

From a content perspective, I take a humanist stance. The quality of information mediated by educational technology should allow the cultivation of critical and original thought. Teaching with technology should advance the development of knowledge, rooted in the principles of the charter of human rights, and consider economical and political perspectives as well as the environment (4) (7).

However, when considering the apparatus, my view tends to be more functionalist. Educating with technology should facilitate learning by using efficient methods of production and communication. The instruments and techniques, used to assist subjective content creation, gain effectiveness when they are standardized. It is difficult to contact people from around the world when our technological gears do not connect.

To summarize, my philosophy acknowledges technology's normative powers (2) and recognizes the vigilance needed to handle the human costs of computerized educational activities.

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    1(1), 47-64.

    a. P. 52: "*… technocratic tendencies of modern societies… limiting the groups*
        intervening in design to technical experts and the corporate and political elites they
        serve."

2. Hawkridge, D. (1981). The Telesis of Educational Technology. British *Journal of*
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    a. P. 12: see figure 1 (*Normative precepts)*

3. Heidegger, M. (1953/1977). The question concerning technology. In m. Heidegger, *The*
    question concerning technology and other essays (trans. W. Lovitt) (pp. 3-35). New York:
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    a. P. 16: "*… what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is*
        stored up is… distributed…"

4. Mead, M. (1955). *Cultural patterns and technical change.* New York: Mentor.

    a. (In reference to systemization) p.12: "*Culture… covers … the system of technology,*
        the political practices…"

b. (In reference to human rights) p. 16-17: "*Education … [in relation to] … technological change … [should be] … preserving the cultural integrity of those among whom the changes are introduced.*"

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a. (In relation to "technology as a process) p. 241: "*… technology is a set of social behaviours and a system of meanings.*"

b. (In relation to "control") p. 239: "*… technological development is… so rapid that technology is out of control; we cannot evaluate our own creations or defend ourselves against them.*"

7. Todd, L. (1996). Aboriginal narratives in cyberspace. In M. A. Moser with D. MacLeod (Eds.), *Immersed in technology* (pp. 179-194). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

a. P. 185: "*What if with each technological advancement the question of its effect on the seventh generation was considered?*"

8. What is education: http://www.motivation-tools.com/youth/what_is_education.htm

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9. What is technology: http://www.nae.edu/nae/techlithome.nsf/weblinks/KGRG-55A3ER

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