Editorial

Corresponding author
Juan Carlos Fernández-Rodríguez
Director of Psychology Degree
Universidad Antonio de Nebrija
Madrid, Spain
E-mail: jfernanr@nebrija.es

eLearning Education

Juan Carlos Fernández-Rodríguez, PhD*

Director of Psychology Degree, Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Madrid, Spain

The influence of globalization in teaching has been huge. On account of distance learning systems and the use of technology in education, in the present day, the modern education system has undergone a natural evolution with respect to teaching methods. Evolution in the field of distance education following the ability to overcome the concerns related to its effectiveness,[1] and quality,[2] we have been able to deal with important questions, such as personalised education, where the student can set and achieve individual learning goals and be engaged in an open education system.[3] Geographical barriers and being able to overcome these issues is a very important factor that has to be taken into account. We can state that this issue has already taken place and could be applicable to multiple contexts.[2,4]

The advancement of new technologies have altered the reality. In the educational world, these changes have been important and significant. Perhaps one of the most relevant changes has been the mode of delivering knowledge, and technology undoubtedly plays the role of the most relevant catalyst. Because of the changes in the teaching system, students have adapted as well, mainly in the context of use of new technologies. Now, the students are expected not only to study, but to collaborate, socialise, learn and communicate. We can use, as an example, the inclusion of communication tools between teachers and students, like chats, video conferences, electronic whiteboards, email and forums, where, according to Amador,[5] the role of the student has been changed to become more active and the teacher has become a knowledge facilitator and a leader in the learning path. This change has been brought about without leaving aside the acquisition of required knowledge in this area and being trained for technology and teaching.

The possibility to integrate the Technologies of Information and Communication (TIC) into the education system, firmly implemented nowadays, not only offers a greater probability to facilitate access to knowledge to a large number of people and places, overcoming the barriers due to large distance coverage, but it also ensures that innovation is applied in learning, and therefore in teaching. With a broader range of possibilities, learning has somehow been modified when compared to classroom teaching.

Educational practices and education itself has undergone changes, mainly because the use of TICs offers different possibilities that we did not really find in what we call the traditional education system.[6]

One of the relevant challenges that is important to be taken into account is the search for an interactive, flexible and accesible learning system supporting the the integration of ICTs (to address strictly technical pedagogical aspects). Applications and services, on the basis of ICTs, are designed to facilitate the teaching-learning process. Consequently, in a pedagogical model, in which students become protagonists of the process underlying the basis of a process of permanent significant construction and based on nodal networking of collaborative development. Thus, the innovative changes associated with this new model is not supported in the introduction and application of technology; it goes further, up to the actual integration of technology to constitute a new paradigm. A change, as García Aretio[7] confirms, does not lie in the use of ICT, but in the conception of the formation by an educator; a key element for the improvement and accessibility to the effective management of knowledge.

To take advantage of the benefits that ICTs offer and to understand its limitations, of-

fers a mean of response to the possible digital gap that exists between the students and the teachers. The integration of technology with educatiion comes with a warning that our students are named "digital natives" that manage easily between technological tools and communicative complexes. In reality: particular ways of thinking, meaning, speaking, pronouncing and socializing is governed by the characteristics of these technological tools through the establishment of different codes of behaviour, which teachers cannot ignore, for the teacher to "get closer" to the students. To introduce with proposals that involve reflective teaching and complying with innovative social actions can mark the beginning of a determined action.[8]

In the present day, the opportunity, to integrate technology and ITC with education, provides a greater possibility to spread knowledge and awareness over a larger audience residing in a large number of places, covering distances. It has also introduced a concept of innovation in learning and certainly in education. The availability of opportunities for learning is large, such that the education system has undergone a considerable modification particulary when compared with on-campus courses. The education system , and so education itself, has undergone a significant change, precisely due to the fact that the use of technology offers various options which could not be found in what is known as traditional education. Change also constitutes the modern education system, and undoubtedly eLearning leads us towards an active learning structure.[9]

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