Editorial

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People's attitude towards digital devices is quite paradoxical. In some areas, they are considered absolutely irreplaceable. In other ones, they are seen as dangerous and must be avoided. Analogically, the school contexts reflect the same situation: media and ICTs, and in general, they are risky; therefore, on the one hand, digital devices are forbidden and their use is prohibited, and on the other hand, technology pervades almost all areas in society (Scherer, Siddiq & Tondeur, 2019) and the new generation of teachers faces considerable demands with respect to the use of new technologies in education (OECD, 2010). In other words, a generalized feeling considers technology as a danger for pupils' cognitive and social health but, at the same time, digital devices are around us and stay silently by us.

The role of scholars and researchers is as follows: Studying deeply the digital phenomena and identifying their potentialities and limits in a scientific way. Instead, the role of teachers is more difficult because they have to face the challenges offered by the digital situations and balance their actions between a proper use of technologies in the educational settings, supporting the pupils' cognitive and social growth and understanding the parents' fears, worries and doubts. Teachers walk along the border between a scientific level (the studies related to ICTs' use) and a practical one (caring the relationships with pupils' families).

The starting point for any reflection on the media in terms of education and prevention cannot ignore considering them as a real environment, that is:

a) as languages with their specific logics;

b) as a social background within which to explain the behavior of the subjects;

c) as a real culture that, in the case of young people, becomes a sub-culture that contributes to build their values.

Knowing these aspects means, on the side of the operators, to have the tools to correctly understand the profile of the target and, consequently, to make their intervention effective.

We can indicate some of the characteristics of the actual media environment:

- mobility and connectivity. Digital media is small, light, always connected. They allow us to emancipate our access to communication from being in a certain place at a certain time;

- this emancipation of communication from its relationship with the place redefines the forms of culture by removing them from the control of the adult (Tisseron, 2013). Sonia Livingstone (2007) said that youth cultures have transformed themselves from bedroom cultures (the children's room as a world apart, but still within the perimeter of the house) into pocket cultures. A pocket culture follows those who have their device in the pocket: youngsters world leaves the perimeter of the house (in the mid-2000s 80% of the Internet consumption of the under-25s was from home, today it is on the move);

- it changes the access to information and the way in which it is certified. The rise of social media and You-tube marks the advent of influencers, you-tubers, fashon bloggers. As in the two-step flow of communication, the role of opinion leaders is crucial, but the logic that establishes their credibility has changed. At the time of post-truth, information becomes credible if it confirms what people believes, and if it is emotional (Gili and Maddalena, 2017; Maffeis and Rivoltella, 2018);

- the media have a social function, they act as aggregators of affinity groups (Gee, 2007), catalyzing the interest of all those who share a passion or a way of thinking, and makes possible their aggregation and exchanges. The result is a light sociability, made up of weak ties and multiple affiliations (boyd, 2014).

On this background we understand in what sense we can speak of the media as a mirror. They function as devices of desire triangulation (Girard, 1972): in them we do not see our image, but through them - just like happens to Carrol's Alice - our desire has the possibility of orienting itself on its object, of living worlds, of living adventures.

What we can see through the media mirror?

First of all, we can see images of the body. In an exhibition society (Han, 2012) like ours, the body is exhibited without any space for imagination and directs desire in at least two directions. The first direction is that which leads to want a lean, athletic, performing body: the space of eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia) opens up here. The other direction is instead that which leads us to think that the body in the sexual relationship is only a tool, a device, and that

sexuality itself is a problem of performance, measures, duration: here opens up the space of the fall of desire and of pharmacology.

Secondly, through the media mirror we can see opportunities. We can think to opportunities opened up by the mirage of the winnings in online gambling, but also to the opportunities of social media and gaming when they allow us to live a digital life better than the real one.

In both cases we are dealing with forms of behavior that can lead to addiction because they activate the brain reward circuit in some way, but we must avoid the temptation to provide explanations based on reductionist or deterministic simplifications and rather opt for a complex look. Is the media addictive? Or can the excessive use of the media not be an indicator of comorbidity for subjects who are structurally dependent to many other things and therefore also by the media? Finally, can it not happen that the media, as in cases of social withdrawal, does not represent rather the last fleeting contact between the retired and the world and, therefore, also the last barrier to the outcome in a psychosis?

References

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