AUDIOVISUALS, SOCIO-CULTURAL INEQUALITIES AND EDUCATION

Bautista Garcia-Vera, Antonio (2021). Murcia: Murcia University. Publication Services, 199 pp. ISBN: 978-84-18936-27-2

No one doubts that Professor Antonio Bautista García-Vera from the Department of Educational Studies at the Complutense University of Madrid and director of the Research Group: *Technological Development, Sociocultural Exclusion, and Education*, is one of the fathers of both Didactics in Spain as well as the line of Audiovisual Technologies, Photo-elicitation, Audiovisual Narratives which focuses on improving the school and the society by alleviating the increase of sociocultural inequalities that affect the educational world (students, teachers, parents). His publications and studies in this field, I would say of outstanding excellence, have been the basis from which to cement this emerging area, which began with the R & D project reference *SEJ2004-1408EDU* that aimed at testing the benefit of the languages of film and photography to promote the participation of a group of women (mostly mothers of students) in the school community, as well as to improve their self-esteem and personal safety. This situation led him to learn about the role of audiovisual storytelling in the intercultural relations of students in schools with a high rate of immigrant families and, consequently, in their mutual knowledge and understanding.

In this regard, the book we present here is an essential link in the settlement of some of its lines of research from the perspective of technological progress and professional development of teachers; of sociocultural inequalities and the digital divide; of sociocultural justice and the digital divide; and of audiovisual narratives, participation and intercultural relations in education.

Digital hybrids, the screen era, multiple literacies, and digital competence in teaching become the four protagonists that contextualize the discourse of this text. It attempts to enlighten the technological functionality amidst the increase of inequalities between groups and populations, comprehend the use of artistic culture in general, and, in particular, how some economic and political groups have used audiovisual culture to maintain positions of privilege over the rest of the population.

The results come from the fieldwork carried out for three years in two public schools (one located in the South of Madrid and the other in the East of the capital) on Plastic Education in Primary Education. The results of these studies point to the convenience of nurturing teachers' professional development with training actions of photographic and cinematographic narration of their own stories situated and relevant to the educational community.

The author points out that the languages of photography and cinema have become fundamental elements of the screens. They are easy systems of representation of what is experienced in space and time, such as sensations, emotions, and ideas. Concerning the legal component of art and the products of technological development, the effects of official regulations on the increase of socio-cultural inequalities have been analyzed, either by the rigidity with which they guide their acquisition, access, and use or by the utilization of certain types of publicity about them.

The whole book is novel and original. It is structured into eight chapters. The table of contents is detailed and lets us know the contents precisely. From the first one, *The Quarantine*, where concerns and reflections pointed out by Professor Bautista and participants in the non-experimental research are collected, to the last chapter (Epilogue), which includes various topics to address the digital divide. The two appendices containing the questionnaires sent to the students and teachers participating in the study and the extensive bibliography of prominent authors are also worth mentioning.

Professor Bautista (p. 162) points out that, although technological products can and do create inequalities between people, peoples, and countries when used as in this study, they can facilitate reflection and regeneration of common knowledge, perception, citizen awareness, and participation, thought and sensitivity with which students arrive at school. In this way, the development of one of the great functions of the educational institution is made possible: to reduce the social inequalities of origin of those who come to it.

In conclusion, it is necessary to use the current digital devices to alleviate this gap by constructing and reconstructing meanings through audiovisual narratives, thus reducing the sociocultural inequalities of origin presented by a part of Humanity.

It is a great book, and its reading and analysis are of great value both for professionals who are dedicated to Social Pedagogy, as well as for professionals who are dedicated to other areas of Pedagogy.

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