

EDITORIAL

New Perspectives for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media

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The great health crisis we have had to cope with since 2020 is not yet fully over, and it is far too early to imagine its impact on education and research, notably regarding textbooks and educational resources use. History will tell.

However, a few facts seem well established.

- The impact on education has been rather brutal, with the temporary restriction to teaching and learning outside the traditional classroom and without the physical presence of teachers.
- In countries with an efficient and affordable internet this has often taken place online, but not so often elsewhere. But, everywhere, information and communication technologies have been used (even if only social networks on mobile phones), whether or not it has always been very efficient or innovative.
- In the presence of important problems, interaction and mutual aid between learners, teachers and even parents (to whom new responsibilities have been suddenly bestowed) have developed, as is always the case in situations of crisis, when solutions have to be collectively invented. So far, this phenomenon has not been much analysed.

Finally, what practices will remain or emerge in the future is unclear. Because educational systems have a strong homeostasis, it is very possible that the pandemic will soon be forgotten because of new and preoccupying problems, such as a rise in confrontation and war between antagonist blocks of countries.

Still, textbooks (either on paper or in digital form) are going to stay with us, with probable new functions and uses. And the importance of educational media and resources is most likely going to grow.

It is essential to document and understand the different evolutions in this field, and this is a responsibility for research.

Among the many issues that need to be explored, four seem to be particularly important:

- The tension between scripted instruction (aiming at providing instruction even when there is a deficit of qualified teachers) and companion resources aiming at offering students new opportunities of discovery under the direction of teachers. This issue is directly correlated with the agentivity of teachers.
- The tension between traditional publishers and newcomers offering sometimes very sophisticated resources and e-learning systems.
- Issues regarding both the standards and modalities used for producing digital resources and their different uses by teachers and students in different countries with different traditions and economic resources, both in the classroom and in non-formal situations.
- Issues related to the fundamental challenges about criticality in curriculum, pedagogy and textbooks from a point of view of information and data literacy.

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