BOOK REVIEW:

Laurent Tessier. *Éduquer au numérique? Un changement de paradigme,* Paris: Éditions Mkf, 2019, 180p.

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Published in 2019, at the MkF Publishing House (Paris, France), in the collection entitled "*Les essais numériques*", and signed by the French sociologist Laurent Tessier, the paper "*Éduquer au numérique? Un changement de paradigme*" aims to explain what role plays the digital in the educational process, in a rapidly changing society that created the premises of what the author calls the "digital revolution" (p.9).

Beyond the theoretical approach in this area, the media and political approaches, the introduction (and use) of digital in education is still a challenge for many educational systems. What is the reason? As the author states, the use of ICT in education means changing educational programs, putting into practice new pedagogical experiments and practices, moreover, "changing educational paradigms" (in fact, this aspect is also mentioned in the book's subtitle).

The actuality of the subject of this work is illustratively explained and argued by the author, by contextualizing the "radically different" (p. 11) relationship between the old and the new generations (which the author describes using the phrase of M. Prensky – *digital natives* – a phrase that best outlines the generational profile of those people born after 2000).

Starting from the presentation of this context, which highlights, among others, one of the obstacles to a better use of digital in education, the author invites us to reflect on the answer to the following question: "What can the old generations transmit to the new ones, when the digital revolution seems to create between them two an irreconcilable rupture"? (p. 13)

The paper is structured in two parts that correspond to the two educational models that Laurent Tessier analyses and compares: the French model (TICE – *Technologies des l'Information et de la Communication pour l'Enseignement*) and the Anglo-Saxon model (EdTech – *Educational Technologies*). The choice for the two educational models is explained by the author, who argues that, beyond the strong contrast between them (one being characterized by the prominence of the theory on the practice, by a form of defence against technology; the other, characterized by

a "voluntarist" enthusiasm towards technology and based on the principle of *learning by doing*), they can serve as models that can be combined and applied in other education systems.

Therefore, the book does not aim to analyze two different and opposite educational models and to highlight the strengths of one of them, but rather to look at the strengths of each and to highlight how they can be combined in a "conceptual matrix that can then be applied in other educational contexts" (p. 19).
Moreover, in the concluding part of the paper, the author illustrates a possible "third way", represented by "digital humanities", as a model of synthesis between the two, a model based on "collaborative practices and open technologies". Moreover, this model of digital humanities has been presented and analyzed more largely in another book – *Quelles humanités numériques pour l'éducation?* (in a collaboration with M. Bourgatte și M. Ferloni) – published in 2016, at M.k.F Publishing House, from Paris.

The first part of the book: "*Les TICE: enseigner et apprendre les technologies à l'école*" (pp. 24-101), devoted to the French model, it begins with a presentation of the historical context and evolution of the use of ICT in education, starting with the period after the Second World War. This historical context represents an asset of the book because it allows the reader, especially a reader of a different nationality than the French one, to better understand the French educational model in the ICT field and to be able to better problematize how it worked the relationship between education and technology in France, in the 20th century. Further, the first part of the book presents the main public policy measures for ICT introduction and use in education - from providing educational infrastructure to implementing innovative pedagogical practices. Also interesting is the presentation of the obstacles of the development of ICT education, which were characteristic for French society, between the 80's and the 90's: from the criticisms that have been made to the *Plan Informatique pour Tous* (IPT), to the possible risks of using multimedia technology in education, and to issues related to social and economic inequalities.

Useful for understanding the TICE model is also the presentation of how it was implemented, starting with the end of the 1990s when legislative texts, measures and instruments were developed; measures that aimed at "the reconfiguration of technology education around the TICE paradigm" (p.66). Of the "measures" presented in the book (and which, as mentioned above, can be used for other educational systems, why not, as examples of good practices), we mention B2i (*Brevet Informatique et Internet*) and C2i (*Certificat Informatique et Internet*), which are used in the French secondary and tertiary education. Also in this first part, the author addresses the topic of initial and continuous training of ICT teachers, as well as the challenges that motivate teachers to develop, change and improve their pedagogical practices, through the use of ICT.

The second part of the book "*Les EdTech: éducation au numérique vue de Silicon Valley*" (pp. 102-160) is written in a different approach: if in the case of the French model, the approach was one from the macro-social at the micro-social level

(from political, ministerial, to local initiatives), the Anglo-Saxon model is presented starting from local initiatives. The author prefers to use the term *EdTech* instead of *e-learning*, because, in his opinion, the term *EdTech* "involves a much more inclusive vision of the use of technology in education, which is not limited to the use of the Internet" (p. 111). First of all, this educational model is not limited only to formal education, but also to non-formal education, provided both inside and outside educational institutions. Secondly, this model is a collaborative, mixed one, a *blended learning* and/or *adaptive learning* model, whose main objective is to promote learning and make technologies much more attractive for students, teachers, decision-makers, "a certain audience or a certain minority" (p. 115).

Also, in presenting this model, the author emphasizes the role played by colloquiums, conferences and events organized around *EdTech* in "building" this attractiveness of technology (in general) and its use in education (in particular). Moreover, the principles of the *EdTech* model are found, or rather, they were inspired by the principles of the philosophy of education, in particular the Chicago School of Pragmatism (John Dewey, William James, George Herbert Mead), according to which "the school is an environment for experimentation" (*learning by doing*) (p. 135). The author also presents how the *EdTech* movement has become internationalized and expanded in several countries (developed or emerged ones) but also the criticisms/obstacles/resistance that it encountered in other societies (such as, for example, France). The arguments against (the technology resistance) the *EdTech* model, as they are presented by the author, start from the fact that through ICT, the school "leaves no room for boredom, learning of patience, of reflection" (p. 142); technology can diminish the role of the teacher "who is no longer seen as a unique repository of knowledge" (p. 142).

The second part of the paper ends with the presentation of a *HackEdu* model (a French adaptation of the *EdTech* model), initiated in 2016 by Stéphanie Pfeiffer, which led to the emergence ("flowering", in terms of the author) of an on-going French *EdTech* network which is starting to be "active and increasingly visible" (p. 151). This is how, as we stated in the paragraphs above, with all the differences that exist between the two models that the book is analysing (TICE and EdTech), despite the criticisms and reluctance it has encountered and still encounter the Anglo-Saxon model in French society, however, certain elements of it were also taken over by stakeholders and experts in the field of education sciences.

This aspect highlights the same principle that should be the basis of building effective public policies and educational models: *instead of rejecting what is different, just because it does not correspond to the pattern of our educational system, why we cannot try to adapt it, so that the results are at least similar if not the same ones*? And this adaptation may be what the author presents to us as a possible "third paradigm" - *the digital humanities*, which he defines as "the application of digital technologies to social sciences and humanities". This third paradigm, presented in the Conclusive part of the book, is viewed by some authors

as "a Trojan horse of the neoliberal management in universities or as one of the forms of the new public management" (p. 164).

It represents (in the author's view) a model that combines elements from the two paradigms; thus, it "can enable actors to identify and find alternative pedagogical resources and ways, both from TICE and EdTech" (p. 165), contributing to the renewal of educational institutions, starting from their internal structure.

The book published by Laurent Tessier inspires reflection on the place and role that technology plays in the development of today's society (in general) and of educational systems (in particular). Its reading can be more than useful for teachers, parents, researchers, pupils/students, but also, in particular, for relevant actors and experts, involved in the design of educational policies and reforms.