

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the educational potentiality of online technologies and proposes theoretical and methodological pathways for an affirmative engagement with technology in education. An overview of the current discourse on online education shows the dominance of a replicative logic — i.e., the replication of practices and imaginaries originally from onsite education — that overshadows genuinely educational potentialities of online technologies. Drawing on a post-critical perspective, inspired by the works of Masschelein and Simons, and Vlieghe and Zamojski, the dissertation explores online education starting from the affirmation of technical artifacts and systems as constitutive elements of educational temporalities and spatialities. A critical analysis of Stiegler's philosophy of technology further elucidates the constitutive role of technology in education. Disclosing such potential ontological underpinnings of online education starts from approaching certain (ontic) practices involving online technologies. Drawing on Husserl and Lagerkvist, this dissertation takes non-formal online educational practices as an alternative whose study might show the sought-after educational potentiality. Vlieghe and Zamojski's thing-centered pedagogy and van Manen's and Friesen's study of phenomenological descriptions is a theoretical and methodological scaffolding for identification, presentation and analyses of non-formal practices. Inspired by both Heidegger's and Latour's discussion of the thing, I argue that an educational potentiality of online technologies is letting the multitude of aspects that make up a thing shape the spatial and temporal relations of the involvements of a person with these technologies. By getting entangled with this multitude of aspects, the involved person is able to discover different aspects of the world, develop a relation with them, and finally care about (these aspects of) the world. The approach here reported can inspire the disclosure of educational potentialities not only of online technologies but also of other technological systems.

KEYWORDS

Online Education, Online Technologies, Post-critical, Phenomenological Descriptions, Educational Potentiality