

New Technology in Attention to Diversity

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Abstract

Introduction and theoretical background:

The main aim of this study was analyze the possibilities of the new technology in the attention to diversity. At this moment, the schools have multiple situation of diversity derives from the students special needs. The technologies applied to education can be a tool to provide new opportunities to these students in the learning context.

In the present work, we analyze the perceptions of teacher in active, teachers in formation, and the other agents involved in the education in diversity contexts about the use of new technologies for these situations.

Methodology and objectives:

A discussion group formed by three teachers in active, three teachers in formation, two researchers from the university, and one education supervisor, was created to discuss about this issue and tried to clarify the following aims:

- Analyze the actual situation of the attention to diversity in the Spanish schools.
- Explore the perception of teachers in active about the possibilities of the new technologies in attention to diversity.
- Explore the perception of teachers' information about the possibilities of the new technologies in attention to diversity.
- Analyze the research fields that can enable the use of technologies in the education centers.
- Offer the perception of the education supervisor about the situation in the education centers in Andalusia (Spain).

Results:

In this paper we offer the more relevant conclusions draw from our study.

Spirituality: A supportive umbrella for Iranian elderly people

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Abstract

Background: Spirituality recognized as personally important to the elderly, and there is increasing evidence that it relate to health outcomes and older adults tend to take more interest in spiritual chases than younger people.

Objectives: The aim of this qualitative research study carried out in Iran was to explanation the spirituality from the lived experiences of Iranian elderly people. To achieve this, 11 participants were participated in this research and 11 semi structured interviews were conducted during 2009 in Tehran with elderly people.

Methods: A qualitative content analysis was used for analyzing the participants' experiences, their perceptions around spirituality. Data collection was done through Semi structured interviews.

Results: The themes captured were classified into four main categories, with certain themes identified within each category. The categories were: (1) prayer as important element on elders, (2) spiritual health, (3) spiritual beliefs, and (4) religious doings. The distinctive themes within each of the categories were identified as: (1a) seeking help from God in difficulty, (1b) and prayer as effective on elderly life. (2a) having servant morale, (2b) loss of intellectual and spiritual support, (2c) and beneficence as a main need of elders. (3a) only God has power to decide life and death and is ultimately responsible for physical and spiritual health, (3b) reliance to God, (3c) and faith to tumult day. (4a) (1a) faith as resource of succulence in life, (4b) praying, (4c) going to religious organizations and reading Quran, (4d) and going to mosque.

Conclusion: The findings of this study make it clear the category and subcategories from spirituality in Iranian elderly and represent an explicit image of their standpoint and life experience.

The Process of Substance Dependency in Iranian Youth

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Objective: Exploring the process of substance dependency in Iranian Youths

Methodology:

The study is qualitative in nature and the data will be obtained through semi-structured interviews, documentary materials, detailed field notes and memos. Grounded theory with the method of Strauss and Corbin is going to be used to guide the analysis (i.e. data will be analyzed through constant comparative analysis). Individual and group interviews will be used to collect data. Through this research, the process of addiction and the process of dealing with addiction are going to be discovered. This study was approved by research committee and ethical board of the Nursing faculty of Tehran medical sciences University

Statement of the problem:

Substance dependency has recently become a worldwide social problem, especially affecting teenagers and Youths in various countries, including Iran, leading to a major public health issues. The age at which substance is consumed for the first time is declining. One of the most dangerous behaviors that teenagers and Youths may be involved is substance abuse. Iran's geographical situation confronts the country with the problem of drug trafficking (due to its neighboring with Afghanistan). Demographically speaking, Iran is a young country; the results of the 2006 census has shown that more than 35 million of Iran's population are under 24, making the large part of the population vulnerable to addiction issues. The magnitude and severity of substance use problems in youth is enormous. These problems take their toll on the individual in numerous ways including physical health problems, financial hardship, legal difficulties, psychological damage and functional disability, which can have life long impacts into adult life. Often the family and friends of those who are dealing with such problems also suffer. The cost for society is also great with financial resources being provided to create programs for youth with substance abuse problems. Nurses are encouraged to renew their commitment to incorporating knowledge of addiction into their practice. They ought to make advances in theory, practice, and research in relation to substance abuse. There is a greater need for a renewed agenda in nursing to practice and handle substance misuse. It is necessary to view the substance abuse issue from youth's perspectives and their experiences.

Understanding the Complexity of the Pedagogical Instructor's Role through Teacher-Training Programs by Learning Both the Instructors' and Students' Points of View

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Abstract:

Introduction:

Pedagogical mentors serve as central figures throughout the process of teacher-training programs in teacher-colleges. They go through the process with their students while making the connections between the theories that are taught and the practice that is needed in schools. Teacher-training models that were developed up to today are based on general training without specific reference to the domain of teacher-training. Moreover, those models are based on the relevant of the training as the mentors understand it, without any integration of the way the guided students understand their role as students-teacher.

This study, that includes 118 students and 69 pedagogy mentors, is based on questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. An integrated view of all participants is presented throughout the paper and lightens a refreshing way to better practice pedagogical theories. The goal of the study is to provide professional pedagogy lecturers a practical and professional way to lead their students through the process of becoming teachers.

Methodology:

This paper presents a study that was conducted throughout two years and based on mixed methodology through different 6 stages. After each stage data was analyzed in order to better conduct the following one.

1. Five open questions were given to students in order to better understand their point of view of the pedagogy-mentors' role.
2. Four separated focus-groups were conducted with students.
3. Ten individual- interviews were taken with students.
4. A focus group with pedagogical mentors was conducted in order to better understand their point of view of their role.
5. Questionnaires with closed questions were given to pedagogical mentors.
6. Two focus- groups with pedagogical mentors were conducted in order to better understand some of the questions that were raised up after analyzing al data collected throughout the study.

Results and findings:

The role of pedagogy mentors, as it described through variety of studies, holds almost any role that may relate to being a general mentor in any area. Through this study we developed a primary model that let both mentors and students have a mutual and practical process of becoming a professional teacher.

Promoting motivation through the students' involvement in blogs

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Abstract

Recent research has shown that Computer Mediated Communication activities can help to promote learner autonomy, promote cooperative learning and serve as an educational tool in language courses. Weblogs, more commonly known as blogs have become a recent phenomenon from a sociological standpoint, useful not only for dissemination of information, for communication and for reflection but also for providing language teachers and learners with multiple possibilities to enhance their daily practice. The major benefits of blogging in the language classroom have been reported as the choice of more appropriate language on the part of the learners, the addition of new perspectives to the learners' thoughts, and the motivational aspect of realizing that one's voice echoes in distant parts of the globe and is heard by others.

The present research aims at studying the motivation of university students of English participating in professional blogs and the assessment of their writing fluency and form correctness. The experiment was run with students of English in a university environment, the degree of Library Science. In order to frame class blogs within an authentic context, students were given a list of 100 blogs for Library Science. Students were asked to work in groups and get involved with their comments in the blogs chosen and exchange their comments to the other groups. The analysis of the results obtained shows a high motivation of the students involved in the activity by actively participating in authentic communications of their field of studies, being able to express their own ideas in a foreign language and participating in a social network based on their professional interests. Writing for a purpose has also encouraged them to produce language more fluently and be more concerned on correctness which leads us to consider blogs a potential tool for the development of foreign language linguistic skills.

Research Study on Sexual Assault: Theoretical reflections and methodological implications based on the analysis of interrogation records

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Abstract

This paper examines the problems raised by the use of interrogation records on the part of Juridical Police, through the analysis of transcriptions of 33 judicial acts on crimes of sexual assault, perpetrated in Sardinia between 2003 and 2007. All documentation was provided by Sassari Public Prosecutor's Office. The empirical research is linked to a study co-ordinated by the University of Sassari DEIS – Centro Studi Urbani on criminality in Sardinia and focuses on psycho-criminal sex offenders' profiles, the interaction between the offender and the victim, the dynamics of the crime and criminal careers. In Italy, unlike other European countries, audio and video recording of interrogations and accurate transcriptions are not compulsory. This has deep implications for the Police Forces's work, since possible misinterpretation and manipulation of evidence makes the latter questionable in court. Not only could audio and video recordings of interrogations offer new material for the study of operational practices and interactions between the Police Force and the suspect, but it could also help to understand the different behaviours adopted by the suspect. This research project emphasises the significance of the study of interrogations' transcriptions and audio- recordings, in order to reconstruct criminal events, and it highlights the benefits of using the software ATLAS.ti to elaborate transcriptions.

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The Dynamics of qualitative research: Interpretive repertoires, narrative modules, diatextual assets

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Psychosemiotics is a qualitative research perspective aiming at developing the seminal intuition by Peirce (1931-58) according to who man is a complex network of signs. At a methodological level, it privileges research practices which enhance “abduction”, an inferential modality that Peirce considered as more adequate than deduction and induction as to characterize the process of scientific knowledge production. The abducing procedure would be analyzed through the comparison between three typologies of constructs considered as focal points of many different forms of qualitative research actualization, that is “interpretative repertoires” (Potter & Wetherell 1987), “narrative modules” (Bruner 1990) and “diatextual assets” (Mininni 1992). These three modalities of analysis of the sense-making and sense-giving processes do share a route of comprehension aimed at highlighting their holistic nature. On the other hand, what allows distinguishing between them is the different emphasis given respectively to interpretation principles, to situated agency, to dialogism between text and context. A corpus of empirical evidences, collected within different social contexts allows better discussing and understanding how diatexts actually work as yeast for human discourses.

Key-words: psychosemiotics, interpretation, narrative, dialogism

Old Roots, New Branches: The shoot of diatextual analysis

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Within the last decades, qualitative inquiry has stressed out the relevance of hermeneutics as a subjective and interpretative paradigm that allows catching the inter-subjective nature of meanings.

In this vein, the title of the presentation exploits the imaginative power of a botanical metaphor: since research practices might be seen as a big plant, the young and flexible branch of diatextual analysis can enhance the rhetorical dimension of discourse (Mininni 1992; 2003).

The present contribution focuses on the discursive perspective, which finds its roots in the several “turns” that animated the previous century. Its theoretical background is based on the awareness that “doing things with words” is possible (Austin, 1962) as well as on the importance attributed to sense-making processes. The latter are emphasized by the consideration of the dilemmatic nature of human thought (Billig, 1991), emerging in the eternal opposition between *logoi* and *antilogoi*, and by the acknowledgement of narrative as the best way for the personal construction of meaning (Bruner, 1986). Besides the “discursive” and the “narrative” turns, the “contextual turn” has highlighted that meanings shape themselves in a context, which could be seen both as a “context” (the linguistic around) as well as an extralinguistic frame (Slama Cazacu, 1959/1961). Such perspective allows considering texts as “efforts after meaning”, as diatext (Mininni et al., 2008), because their enunciative quality derive from the dialogical correspondence with a specific “context” (Slama-Cazacu, 2007). The cognitive engagement and the affective involvement of the interlocutors during an interaction demand a constant monitoring activity on the need for attunement between intentions and situational bonds.

Key-words: rhetoric, discourse, context, diatext

Qualitative Research in Suicidology: Ethical issues, strengths and contributions

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Abstract

This paper examines relatively scarce contributions in qualitative research in suicidology with a particular focus on psychological studies, and gives a review of what has been accomplished so far pointing out the strengths and limitations of qualitative research in suicidology. It points out the need for a wider use of different qualitative methods in the field of suicidology in order to better understand the phenomenon of suicide from the point of view of individual experience – with an aim of possible subsequent suicide prevention. Moreover, the use of qualitative research methods because of their strengths in areas such as representations of, attitudes toward and values regarding suicide in different societies and cultures is advocated. Ethical issues in various types of qualitative research with suicide attempters, suicide survivors, individuals with suicidal ideation, professionals in the field and others are discussed and contrasted to quantitative research with the same subjects, with a particular focus on the possible detrimental or beneficial effects of research on the participants. The constraints relating to ethical issues in qualitative research agendas in suicidology and suicide prevention as well as relating to other issues such as trustworthiness, confidentiality, participant recruitment, topic sensitivity, stigma, debriefing, rapport and researcher reservations are pointed out with an aim of improving the quality and quantity of qualitative research in this field. One of the conclusions is that there is a need to consider and reflect upon the values and assumptions regarding suicide among the researchers in psychology and wider as well and take into account how these shape and influence the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of doing or not doing qualitative research in suicidology.

Evaluation of Quality in Education: Complementing evaluation scores by qualitative data

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Abstract

Internal and external evaluations by means of standardized rating instruments form a central part of quality management in education. While these instruments yield easily comparable results in form of rating scores, interpreting these scores and drawing practical conclusions appears to be problematic.

Two problem areas are of particular importance. (1) The numeric scores inform about the level of acceptance or realization of certain educational practices, but in case of relatively low scores we do not learn about the reasons that led to lower marks on the rating scale. (2) In case of items assessing necessary changes in educational practice a series of high scores does not allow to decide, which changes are most urgent.

A solution is possible by applying a mixed methods approach to evaluation, combining the usual quantitative rating instruments and qualitative methods like interviewing a sample of respondents. Thus we receive complementary information that

- helps to better understand the meaning of the quantitative findings.
- supplies new aspects from the interviewees' point of view.
- points out inter-relations between the main themes of the rating scale.

This paper will present and discuss an approach to the analysis of the quality of an inclusive approach to the educational treatment of diversity. Selected examples from about 4000 rating scales filled in by teachers and 50 complementary interviews will demonstrate the importance of combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluation in the field of education.

A mixed method approach to exploring individual differences and values in German elementary teachers' perceptions of classroom demands and resources

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Abstract

A mixed method approach to exploring individual differences in German elementary teachers' perceptions of classroom demands and resources and their relationship to burnout symptoms

This observational study is a follow-up to a survey, which investigated the extent to which a sample of 451 elementary teachers in the United States and a sample of 469 teachers in Germany experience burnout due to occupational stress (Ullrich, Lambert, & McCarthy, 2009). Results from this survey showed that in both countries individual teacher perceptions of resources and demands were stronger indicators of burnout than differences between schools in environmental demands and resources. This finding suggested to pursue further qualitative research to examine if personality has an impact on why some teachers survive and thrive in specific school environments, while other teachers struggle in the same setting. It is this "individual difference" or personality perspective that can help to understand why some teachers cope and other don't.

Transactional models of stress emphasize the goal-directedness of the stress response, which occurs if demands exceed resources. Psychodynamic theorists on the other hand have equated personality and coping, treating coping strategies as a stable trait (Suls, David, & Harvey, 1996). The literature on coping provides evidence that personality traits have an impact on the ability to cope with stress, e.g., certain aspects of personality may have a protective effect on perceptions of stress. One aspect of personality or a lens through which personality can be viewed is the construct of Identity-comfort, a subscale in the Self-Acceptance scale of the Preventive Resources Inventory (PRI; English language version; McCarthy & Lambert, 2001), which was used in this study.

In an attempt to explore and describe individual differences and tendencies in teacher reactions to stressful situations in teaching, quantitative data collected by the psychological assessment tools Classroom Assessment of Resources and Demands (CARD; English language school-age version; Lambert, McCarthy, & Abbott-Shim; German language school-age version; Lambert, McCarthy, Abbott-Shim, & Ullrich, 2008) and the Self-acceptance scale of the Preventive Resources Inventory (PRI; German language version, McCarthy, Lambert, & Ullrich, 2008) were used to classify teachers into four groups according to the following criteria (with Resources > Demands indicating low stress level vs. Demands > Resources indicating high stress level):

High Self-acceptance/ Resources > Demands
High Self-acceptance/ Demands > Resources
Low Self-acceptance/ Resources > Demands
Low Self-acceptance/ Demands > Resources

A subset of eight elementary teachers in the German sample was randomly selected for classroom observations and qualitative interviews. Those were conducted in June, July, and August of 2009. A questionnaire with open-ended questions was used for the interviews. In addition, the four groups were compared on the MBI scores. The qualitative data confirmed our theoretically driven predictions and helped to deepen our understanding with regard to personality related differences in perceptions of stress and coping among teachers in German elementary schools. We found that differences were related to the unique relationship between the teacher, his or her individual attitudes towards students and teaching, and specific situations. Rather than stable personality traits, these dispositions may be considered as patterns of behavior constituting a habit of mind under a certain type of conscious and voluntary control (Katz, 1995), which is intentional and oriented to the goal of coping with the stresses of teaching.

We found that teachers who scored low on Self-acceptance and perceived Demands to be greater than Resources could be described as taking a “reactive” approach to teaching. Teachers who scored low on Self-acceptance and rated Resources greater than Demands had a more “detached” approach. Teachers who scored high on Self-acceptance and perceived Resources to be greater than Demands demonstrated an “engaged” approach. Teachers who scored high on Self-acceptance and perceived Demands to be greater than Resources displayed a “reflective” approach to teaching both in the classroom and in the interview process. Findings provide insight into how those four categories that emerged from the qualitative research process may be related to individual personality characteristics.

Ethical values concerning the research with people with an intellectual disability

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Abstract

While working with people with an intellectual disability a multitude of ethical questions come into focus.

First of all the assumption of difference or foreignness comes to mind. Is the other, object of one's research different - part of a foreign field? Or is the exclusion into a marginalized sub society the constructional element of this foreignness? Researching this group might not only be system immanent but furthermore constructing a foreignness that in itself is not a given. Can Judith Butler's model of Performance as it is being used concerning Gender be adapted when researching the intellectually disabled?

How can the mechanisms of exoticisation, othering, totalisation and essentialisation be reflected when the group researched is constructed based on these mechanisms?

Is the specific institutional socialization of people with an intellectual disability with all its implied structural and not only structural violence something that can be researched objectively or does it call for partiality?

Another issue that cannot be disregarded is one's responsibility researching such a field. Is the feeling of responsibility product of an implied superiority versus the researched and based on stigmatization mechanisms? Is trying to break through the phenomena of learned undemandingness after Theunissen a responsible act to collect data on the researched's demands? Even if it is likely that being aware of one's needs and demands does not change the fact that in the current situation of intellectually disabled in Germany those will never be fulfilled?

I would like to share experiences on my journey through sociology, psychology, ethnology and disability studies concerning these and further questions.

The Incidence of Video Games in Teenagers' Behaviour: Didactical integration of video games

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Abstract

Introduction:

Most of the teenagers have a special interest in the use of videogames, included the violent ones. Videogames can enable the development of different skills: perception, quick reaction and the complete formation. This is the reason why we are working for the integration of the didactic integration of the videogames in the process of learning, by building up educational sessions more creative.

Theoretical background:

Analyze the incidence of the videogames in the improvement of the technological, social and communicative competence and knowledge of the environment.

Objectives:

The aim is to answer the following questions:

- Must videogames be integrated in the learning process?
- What types of videogames are the ones which produce aggressive behaviours?
- How to integrate videogames into other didactic ways?
- How to help in the development of collaborative works between teachers and students?
- How to make the case study with teenagers between twelve and fourteen years?
- What competencies are the most representative What selection should be done in this environment?
- What processes should we promote to teach the teachers in the following of these games?

Methodology:

Case Study, questionnaire, pre-test, post-test, observation, focus group between teachers, students and families.

Methodological integration, qualitative and quantitative.

Context of the Investigation:

Educational' Centres of Andalusia and Madrid. Contrasting with rural' and periurban' environments.

Results and findings:

- The continuation of previous works (Medina, Domínguez, Gento 2009).
- Reinforce the collaborative work between the teachers and the use of videogames as a didactic resource and set the work in a didactic unit.
- Experimenting by the case study, this didactic integration and evaluate its incidence in the improvement of the competencies.

The final discussion leads us to contrast the results with the previous findings, fostering the innovation in the learning-teaching process.

Values and Religiosity among adolescents in Switzerland: A mixed methods study

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The significance of values as well as religious orientations for the development and mental health of adolescents from different religious backgrounds is investigated in an interdisciplinary project in selected rural and urban areas of Switzerland and Germany. Participants between the ages of 12 and 17 were surveyed on two occasions. A cohort-sequence design enables the control of cohort effects as well as cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses to evaluate the stability of values and religious beliefs in adolescence. With the incorporation of qualitative methods, including the analysis of interviews with selected adolescents from the sample, it is possible to describe individual cases that are prototypical for results from the quantitative study. In this way, greater understanding of the dynamics of influential parameters could be gained.

Values of Web 2.0 in Qualitative Research

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Web 2.0 is associated with interactive applications, information sharing, user-centred development, and web collaboration. Web 2.0 tools are web-based communities, hosted services, web applications, social-networking sites, record-sharing sites (videos, photos, creations, etc.), wikis, blogs, and others. Web 2.0 philosophy is based on interactions, communication, labelling, users' productions, etc.

This paper explains the possibilities and limits of the Web 2.0 tools for Qualitative Research. Based on several practical experiences, it's possible to discover new applications of these tools for qualitative purposes.

Web-based communities:

Communities offer asynchronous options for communication. Forums are the best-known tools. Communities allow sharing interests, documents, information, data, etc. among several people.

Web applications:

Delicious is an example of web application with people implication. When you visit an interesting web site, you could register it and label it. Other users could search these links using the tags.

Social-networking sites:

Facebook is a community that allows quick communication, sharing information, and support groups about topics, problems or demands. This kind of tools

Video-sharing:

Youtube is the most well-known tool to share videos. The videos are labelled and easy to find. As with videos, there are other spaces to share photos, postcasts, and other creations.

Wikis:

The wikis are collaborative spaces. Several persons could contribute to the elaboration of a text. Google Docs offers office tools with collaborative purposes. As well, Wikipedia is a famous online encyclopaedia developed collaboratively.

Blogs:

The blogs are an example of user-centred developments. Anybody could create a personal space and publish his/her comments, news, feelings, reflections, as in a diary. No specific knowledge is required. Any person could do it.