THE DYNAMIC MIRROR

Antonio Balestra
Università Telematica Pegaso (ITALY)

Abstract

The use of video technology, especially since the advent of digital technology, has pervaded the world of Vocational Training more and more. Longer or shorter videos are assembled by trainers and shared with students indeed to observe and hence ponder over a specific practical action. According to both teaching perspective (academic achievement) and in the perspective of teacher training, videos are widely used as tools, also in the broader context of adult learning and in particular in the relevant field know as experiential learning. This paper aims at proposing a broader and widespread use of the videos, to be targeted and put in place whenever it seems essential to deal directly with oneself in term of personal identity, to foster a thoughtful learning method and a high level of self – awareness. On the one hand knowledge and information help individuals to know the world, but on the other hand there is the need for the ability to own it. In this sense, the use of video technology in teaching/learning process can effectively helps not only the teacher, but also the student, the video is seen as a mirror through which students can know and recognize, a metacognitive resource, for their learning. In this way, the student becomes an authentic protagonist of his/her own learning process, able to reflect on the practice of training situation because, as well as in the teaching profession, even the student "learns to be" in the action and with reflection on the action. When there is a truly reflective teacher, we will have a "thoughtful student" capable of being the main character of learning, and looking at himself/ herself as part of educational context he stars. He is willing to establish himself/herself as a driver of his existential spacecraft, capable of giving meaning to what he learns not only in the educational context but also in the complexity of the society in which he lives and acts.

Keywords: Video Technologies, Vocational Training, Reflective Learning, Pedagogy.

1 INTRODUCTION

The reflective teacher is the subject of discussion for several years. The problems linked to the figure of the teacher as a professional is not exhausted in these discussions. The disciplinary competence, the methodological expertise and didactics, communicative skills and relational skills, the organizational competence mixed to the personal identity of the teacher, are elements that contribute to the professional competence, in a unitary harmony and flexible. When this harmony is lacking, the actions of the teacher in the context of formation are less effective, become dull, arise in a performance free of competence.

The failure to achieve professional competence harmonic, unitary and flexible, can have various causes. The stereotypical behaviors, the use of the expression "That's the way it's always been done", the insistent emphasis on the experience gained, often leads to think that if a procedure has given positive results, can still give good results, jamming the process of reflectivity. So the originality of the moment does not allow transfers "mechanical". The experience of the past can also be useful, but must be rethought and contextualized.

The other element which approaches the stereotypical behaviors is the resistance to change, for mechanisms of psychological type, for vices of perception, for a series of experiences linked to their own inner world, or for defense mechanisms that arise in a condition of psychological weakness. These elements must be removed, attenuated or resolved with initiatives admittedly oriented to overcome the resistance to change.

The reasons that may cause this condition are difficult to remove with the usual update activities. It is necessary to program the paths of learning or re-programming aimed at growth of personal trust and the emancipation of its own identity.

In this perspective, between the different procedures for analysis and between the different procedures that lead to a sort of re-learning of itself and therefore of deepening of identity and personal autonomy, we also include those forms of self-reliance that may derive from look at yourself, that is always a reflexive gesture, as can be seen its image returned by the mirror.
The metaphor of the mirror can also be used inside the procedures of experiential learning, using the full force of the metaphor that, over all, can find further enrichment in the context of technology, where audiovisual recordings seem to be a dynamic mirror. This mirror gives images and actions, figures and movements. The video thought as a dynamic mirror, means that the teacher look and look again itself in action in professional practice, places a distance between itself and its profile. The distance is transformed in a critical distance and, consequently, in reason of conscious self-determination, in a willingness to break the stereotypical behaviors and to overcome the resistance to change.

2 THE REFLECTIVE LEARNER

Moved by the awareness of needs incessant of the person and the continuing and ever new scenarios that you disclose in postmodernity, dominated by the speed of the transformations economic, social, technological, military, political and geographical, think again at minimum knowledge or to a bundle of basic skills, both transverse and not to the inner resources of the person can become operation loser [1].

Starting from the premise that there can be no professionalism without the ability of reflection in action and reflection on action, the reflexive paradigm can be considered useful in the process of professionalization of docent without for this to be considered as a panacea of professionalization. It is a possibility of continuous redefinition of competences, of growth of the autonomy and the responsibility of everyone, placing as the fulcrum of the construction process of teacher professionalism the professional identity, its continuous exploration and its continuous redefinition [2]. The professional identity in this sense is to be a feature of becoming, something to which head, where the sense of the question "Who Am I?" finds its basis only if the professional knows it can be someone other than what it is [3].

The hope is that in educational contexts in general, act, in primis, teachers professionals in the process of teaching/learning facilitators of this process, and that they are also reflective professionals or possess the reflectivity such as competence, are able to assume a posture reflective and capable of acting in reflective practice.

The reflectivity is a hermeneutic process on the experience, a deep investigation on because we assume certain modes of action. Is the mirror that promotes the change and the personal and professional growth, a mode of continuous learning that imposes the applicants 'identity crisis'.

The reflective posture is occasional, spontaneous; an occasional reflection on a particular practice that does not lead to assume awareness on action and to a subsequent change in the action [4].

The reflective practice is instead a permanent attitude, an integral part and an integrated professional identity. It is the inferential process that draws, with awareness at the baggage of experience, putting themselves at a correct distance from the practice and using the theory to formalize specific knowledge of action. The reflective practice relates to the make or operate reflexive, referring to the complex of the modes, strategies, processes put truly underway in reflection. The reflective practice allows to build new knowledge that can then be used by the teacher in action; it is based on an idea of "reflection" which is the fruit of the link between thoughts, feelings and action, aimed at giving meaning and to stimulate further action [5].

To learn to be professional in the process of teaching/learning and look again itself in the mirror of reflection, brings the teacher to assume the imprint of the researcher, a mindset that puts him in the condition, faced with situations uncertain, contradictory, ambiguous, to open real gangs of investigation. The teacher is interested to build forms of knowledge that are functional for the development of professional practice. Reflecting on the practical everyday work, trusting in his baggage experiential and using the theory to increase and assess your own practice, is able to develop a self- training process that generates new knowledge [6].

In this perspective, the teacher will have the possibility of not only being an actor in eclectic in the process of teaching/learning but will generate a process of continuous learning so that his professional identity is not an obstacle to the achievement of the teacher as a reflective practitioner.

When we talk about professional identity we refer to a process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences. The professional identity is to be considered not only responding to the question "who are at this moment?" but also "who I want to become?", a sort of anticipatory reflection so that the reflective process can contact both on the activities carried out as on those imaginative and future-oriented, as possibility, as "desired professionalism" which enables the teacher to look beyond, to
think and decide which professional want to be. This is the way he presents himself and manifests itself as a guide fruitful for those who have been entrusted, as expert who re-organizes learning that interprets the situation by proposing models for the self-learning, as a professional that urges the autonomy.

In the process of teaching/learning the teacher, a reflective practitioner who re-organizes learnings, considers the knowledge as resources to be mobilized, works in the context class for situations problem, basing the didactic act on activities that can integrate the various branches of knowledge and enable heuristic processes in real contexts. Watch in a strategic way to design, negotiates training projects with the students, uses evaluative styles capable of stimulating the growth of personal responsibility and the thrusts in favor of development [7].

In the face of a teacher authentically reflexive, we will have a student capable of being the protagonist of learning and well disposed to become a pilot of his existential spacecraft.

In this way the learner becomes authentically protagonist of their own learning, capable of reflecting on the practice of the educational situation because, as well as for the teacher professionalism, also the learner "learns to be" in the action and with the reflection on the action.

Along this path the technological apparatus and, in particular, the video technologies can help and can support the pupil in reflection on what should be doing and, more generally, about his formative experiences.

It is not difficult to pass from the reflective teacher at the learner reflexive, self aware, that does research. Today what it calls from multiple parties is that the school "teach us to be". More becomes complex social life, the more it becomes complex dialog with the services, the more you must make strong capacity of exploratory subject. If the knowledge, information helps the subject to know the world, there is a need that is able to possess.

In this sense the use of video technologies in the process of teaching/learning can be useful not only to the teacher, but also to the learner; the video can be for the learner a mirror through which to know and to recognize, a resource meta-cognitive for the pupil who learns.

The reflectivity of thought, the ability to think in the context of formation of which is the protagonist, can make the student a "pupil reflective", capable of giving meaning to what they learned in the context class also in the complexity of the society in which he lives and acts.

3 THE VIDEO TECHNOLOGIES

The use of a video recording in a process of formation is certainly more advantageous, for example, of an audio recording; in addition to being able to "hear" the verbal communication or the stamp, the tone, the pauses and the volume (paraverbal communication), allows to "see" the mimicry, gestures, posture, expressions, movements, the communicative distances between the actors involved, the context that occupy and the way we move in that space, and being "durable, malleable, shareable" [8] allows us to observe and analyze in a rigorous way the phenomenon, even at times subsequent to its occurrence.

The video recording allows us to collect data that return aspects "tangible" in a specific experience, allowing a reflection meticulous and detailed, thanks to the possibility to observe it and re-watch it in time. The moviolizzazione both spatial and temporal of the event (made possible by video technologies, increasingly sophisticated, but at the same time characterized by great usability with the advent of digital technology) provides a video feedback that can be decoded and analyzed, allowing a reflective deconstruction of the experience filmed and its conceptual reconstruction [9].

Resuming the construct of "a reflective practitioner" of D. Schön, we can understand that the video is as a mirror assembly; the reflectivity inherent to the video is a component of the conceptualization and social action [10]. Recover in video raises awareness of the action and allows the actors to understand their practice and sometimes to improve their subsequent actions [11].

When in learning contexts we use the video, we run the risk of decrease in product from "consume", also quickly, without taking the time both in the construction phase is that of enjoyment. It is desirable instead the production in order to share experiences and the development of a sense of community with the objective of objectify, conceptualize and share practical and theoretical constructs, stimulating the dialectical exchange between research and action as well as between theory and practice [12].
Only in this perspective the video recording can be for the researcher does not simply a given but a data source from which to obtain answers plausible for questions of research and corroborate or less the initial hypotheses.

Whether it be the video recording a dialog or an interview, a debate or a lesson, a team meeting or a seminar, the study group should use the video to stimulate activity reflective in order to share or study a particular practice for the development of educational research or to explore new phenomena, ask questions and find possible interpretations [13].

We can find two modes that can lead to a reflection useful and beneficial for the group in formation after the latter has viewed a movie. The first mode affects the understanding of a specific standards in the context of a professional act. The objective is to seize the competence located in the professional while carries out its own activities. The second mode affects the implementation, in a given situation, the standard that the participant aspires to achieve. In this case the group in formation is guided by an experienced trainer, in the process of definition of competences are located. In a second time will be necessary to use precise analysis tools to launch a reflection process that involves a dialectic between theory and practice [14].

The video-pedagogy involves the art of choosing the right conceptual framework for a shared reflection. The conceptual framework of reference on which will be divided the reflective action, must be selected and defined with accuracy: it is essential to specify the point of impact of the video feedback [15].

Finally it will be useful to establish the principia in steps of recovery which will be the choices of the Director and the extent to which will be able to feel "free" to move, which must be the scenes or the moments that will be taken, the possible interventions of post production, especially in the assembly step, the manipulation degree of the video. These crucial aspects that define inter alia the position of one or more of the cameras in space, are closely linked to the objectives of research, and "in respect of the issues of nature assiologica that always in search (and especially in investigations in the educational field) must be protected" [16].

The use of the video, especially by the advent of digital technology has increasingly pervaded the world of vocational training, from sports reality in the world of dance from the medical-health education and so on. In all those situations that include a process of teaching/learning and its acquisition of a knowing how to do practical, the video is an instrument of wide use. Video in more or less long are mounted by the trainers and shared with students to observe and then reflect on a given act practical.

Here we aims at proposing a broader and widespread use of the videos, to be targeted and put in plays whenever it seems essential to deal directly with the oneself in term of personal identity, to foster a thoughtful learning method and a high level of self – awareness.

The research of J. Tobin, D. Y. H. Wu, D. H. Davidson, although intended for analysis of anthropological type and comparative, have had a result that indirectly confirms the thesis that here we support. In fact, when, at a distance of twenty years have considered to repropose the images shot in the eighties and have thought to share it with those who had been the protagonist, in fact have triggered a process of reflectivity at multiple levels made possible only by the use of video technologies. The "Stop Time" with a rec [17] and slide it back with a play, gave to J.Tobin and to other researchers, the extraordinary opportunity to develop together with the parties involved, the most interesting moments of joint reflectivity, at several levels, allowing a "co-reflection on the events" [18].

Movies watched are both real and artificial: are real since they were made by recording a typical day in a nursery school; are artificial since the recorded images were selected and transformed into a movie that has aspects of narrative and dramatic and therefore has characteristics of artificiality. These movies, built by assembling the recorded images in natural contexts, operate as reactive and stress in an open and non predictable reactions and speeches in the participants [19].

Nearest to us and in a pedagogical exquisitely cutting is the research conducted by M. Altet and I. Vinatier on the use of video technologies for the analysis of practices [20] in the context of teaching and training. In particular the research group uses video technology to facilitate the analysis reflective of the practices of teachers in their educational act; M. Altet [21] and I. Vinatier depart from the premise that the profession of teacher you learn with the action in the action and with the reflection on the action.

Starting from this postulate, M. Altet and I. Vinatier, video recording the activities carried out in the classroom to allow a "review" of the didactic act. Experts examine the video and propose
interpretations that will be subsequently discussed with teachers. For the comparison between experts and teachers the French researchers have suggested a model called *entretiens de co-explicitation* (literally: talks of co-explanation). Following experts and teachers review the video trying to come to the construction of a shared analysis by repositioning the reciprocal and recursive. The shooting video plays a central role: to be able to review in action and reflect on that action with experts, allows the teacher in formation of awareness not only of content, but especially the situation teaching in its entirety and in the variables in play [22].

Without prejudice to the criticality that is also easy to encounter all these experiences demonstrate various issues.

The productive use of video recording allows you to acquire portions of reality to be submitted in a second phase to a hermeneutic analysis to understand, evaluate and investigate an experience that lived [23] from the inside does not always allow to grasp the particular, the report and other aspects that the video recording allows us to detect. It is in this perspective that we must seize the educational potential of recorded video to retain experience, to detect and disseminate the positive aspects, to assess the criticality, for setting up and making living community of practical. The possibility to use the video recording as a tool for learning reflective.

It goes without saying that under the profile of the fruition of these aspects are or can be copresent, even if their actual dosage is not equal in the different experiences since remembered here.

For the assumption of this our work touches us emphasize especially the relief which the recorded video can have in the reflexive learning both in didactic perspective (school learning) both in the perspective of teacher training and is finally in the wider context of adult formation and then inside that important segment that is indicated as experiential learning.

In this direction, it is worth remembering that Doris Ash, has used the video technologies for deepening the development of the learning in informal settings, providing details that are beneficial to the development of our thesis. For the studious American, it is necessary that the researcher developments appropriate criteria that lead to a proper balance between complexity and reductionism (date reduction), which allow them to pass from the macro to the microanalysis by assigning to each category the wide variety of data collected and observed [24].

Once again, however, predominates the heuristic interest, but they are very important steps toward our speech: it is not only to assimilate the video recording (or other technological resources) to the mirror to qualify therefore inside the reflective learning. We believe that this assumption can be proven by the evidence we have offered.

4 CONCLUSIONS

It’s necessary to make a further step forward and not confine itself to use instruments that have reflective valence, inside of reflexive contexts. It is not enough to use tools that facilitate the impact with the metaphor of “the look and look again itself”, but it is essential to operate in learning experiential the metaphor of the mirror (understood as physical mirror, the traditional one, and/or as dynamic mirror, technological and digitized).

The metaphor of the mirror means to engage to make mirror, to work to reflect, to build video recordings, to learn to videorecording and also to understand how it is possible to simultaneously manage the long field and the first floor, the great and the small, light and shadow, the datum of the relief and the particular (apparently) negligible. Different is the individual that become make mirror. “To be mirror” means to be a copy that does not copy, a surface that reflects, allowing the other to recognize each other as separate. It means discovering the opacity of the existence that does not depend on others that by ourselves.

The strength of the metaphor is undisputed. All that remains is to try to make it become experience.

REFERENCES


[5] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.