



Technology: The change in culture and education

Digitalisation is one of the biggest challenges of our time because it changes all our life – private and professional, it has a speed of development and thus producing a rapid change incomparable to any other technological turn we ever had where we have to answer the question, whether this speed of change can still be in accordance with human life. The step to artificial intelligence makes it impossible to know in detail what the neural networks are generating – a threatening loss of human control.

What kind of abilities and skills do future generations really need to master these coming challenges? This needs to be answered from educational point of view, and so the basic statement for this task is: School has to play a key role in media education.

Taking up this challenge four basic questions are to be highlighted: (1) what does a child need best for its development?; (2) what is the best way to learn basic cultural technologies?; (3) what are the risks related to the use of digital tools?; and (4) how can we deal with the tremendous economic interest standing behind the digitalisation of schools?

All these questions have to be deeply considered and answered when speaking about the introduction of digital media into schools. On this background in Germany – as one example – a media curriculum for Waldorf schools¹ has been developed. Key factor is that the use of digital devices and learning how to use them in a meaningful way must be age-appropriate. Therefore, it is very helpful to take as an orientation the big steps in the development of the child and young people which are the basic guideline for the holistic education in Waldorf schools: the 7-years periods. In period 1 to 7 children learn by playing and it should be the time (including the kindergarten) of total media abstinence to not disturb the natural learning program of the child. Ages 7 to 14 children learn mostly by interaction between the teacher and the child and between the children's peer group. This again is a time where no use of digital tools is best for basic learning and for getting settled well into the world. Here an intensive involvement of the parents is urgently needed. From 14 to the end of school students are to understand digital technology and the use of the tools as well as coding.

ECSWE is representing the European Waldorf schools from 28 member countries and is advocating in the European Union for their alternative pedagogy. One of the key topics is media education in schools. So it was possible just recently that some of these key messages make it into a report of the European parliament “on education in the digital era”². This has

¹ Struwelpeter 2.0: Media competency and Waldorf Education;
Published by “Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen (2015)

² (Toom report A8-0400/2028, adopted in the parliament on 11th December 2018).



been achieved by close cooperation with other NGO networks, ECSWE is a member of. Several parliamentarians adopted basic ideas and put them into their amendments.

Some quotes out of the Toom report shall demonstrate our successful lobby work: “digital learning strategies also need to take into account research on the detrimental effects that early use of digital technology may have on the development of young children’s brains”; “digital technology should be an integral part of a learner-focussed, age-appropriate approach to education (...) to prioritise the well-being and healthy development of children”; “mastering basic transversal skills, such as numeracy, critical thinking and social communication skills, is a fundamental prerequisite for the acquisition of digital skills and competences”.

Dr. Richard Landl preko 30 godina predaje i sudjeluje u vodstvu u Rudolf-Steiner-Schule u Dortmundu, u waldorfskim školama u North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), u Njemačkom savezu waldorfskih škola te je njemački predstavnik i predsjednik krovne organizacije European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE) u sklopu koje lobira interese waldorfske pedagogije pred tijelima Europske Unije.