EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS: CONVERGING AND DIVERGING POINTS

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In this paper, firstly an attempt will be made to define the concepts of education and communication to clarify their meaning. Then, the functions of both concepts will be analyzed to depict their converging and diverging points which will be further utilized to develop the students' capacity to receive and interpret informations, analyze other people's viewpoints and encourage their understanding and interpretation of the world in a new educational environment.

Finally, there will be an attempt to pinpoint the roles which information and communication technologies play in the emergence of adaptable individuals who can become a "world citizen" while also being citizens of their own country.

In order to define education, firstly it is necessary to determine the characteristics which make up this concept - so that one may reach a comprehensive definition of it.Secondly, what is understood from the concept of communication will be analyzed. Consequently, by determining the characteristics of those concepts, the converging and diverging points will be clarified. Also, a theoretical frame will be delineated to integrate those points into it.

Education may be taken from several different perspectives.[1] Firstly, education can be taken as a "discipline"; such as educational philosophy, sociology, etc. Secondly, education can be determined as a "social service"; such as education for industrial development, education for the health of parents and children, etc. Thirdly, it may be taken as a "social institution." For example, education as an institution which covers formal and informal education. Fourthly, the value of the education may be measured; through "where" (which school/institution) the education was taken (e.g. at Gazi Lycée, etc.) Finally, education may be taken as "intentional culturalization" (which can also be named as "acculturation").

If the concept of education can be taken as a sociological notion and process; if it has a social function; if it is a necessity; and if this functionality is there serve a purpose ; then there will be the need to look at the "intentional culturalization" and define education according to this concept.

II. What is education?
Education, in general, is a process by which we change one's behaviour is changed according to the intentional goals which have been introduced and shaped by the society.[2] In addition to this,due to the globalization phenomena other side as individually influencing to society may also taken into consideration.

Education can be classified into two groups: "Formal education" and "informal education."

"Formal education" is the process in which a person's behaviour is intentionally changed/motivated by educational institutions, so that they will reach the ideal form defined by the society.

"Informal education" is the process in which individuals learn things naturally by themselves, through their experiences in life. For instance, one may learn positive or negative behaviour from television while watching it. A person may take a positive lesson from a film by taking the model of the honest character, or a negative lesson by taking the dishonest character as a role model. The process

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[1] Selahattin Ertütk. E¤itimde Program Gelifltirme. (Anakara: Yarg›c› Matbaas›, 1972) ss 12-15

[2] Ibid

here is incidental. Therefore, we must take into account the relationship between "incidental culturalization" and "informal education."

The definition of formal education covers areas such as "behaviour", "experience", "malice", "change", etc.

"Behaviour" is made up of knowledge, skills, habits, capabilities, manners, and attitude. Experience is gained through the process of "living" it, therefore it depends on practice and this type of learning is perpetual. As a matter of fact, learned material without application is usually forgotten.

"Intention" is basically related to individual and society. Both of them utilize education. Otherwise, it would be a useless luxury to spendtime on education.

Let us show the points mentioned above with a scheme:[3]

"Desirable" is determined by the society. If the capital will be used for either for "manpower training" or "investing on natural resources", this should be evaluated according to the rules of economy.[4] Therefore, this type of spending is taken as an "economic investment." In such a case, decision-making authorities will decide on "where", "why", and "to what extent" the investment shall be made. These authorities should at least be able to make a reasonable "cost-benefit" analysis, so that they'll be able to reach a healthy decision when faced with the dilemma of investing on natural resources or education; for the fruits of education can't be obtained so quickly. It's also difficult to measure the benefits of education in a short term. "Desirable" behaviour must be for the benefits of the individual and the society as a whole. It must also be compatible with the goals of education – especially national education. Therefore, intention will be necessary for the "desirable."
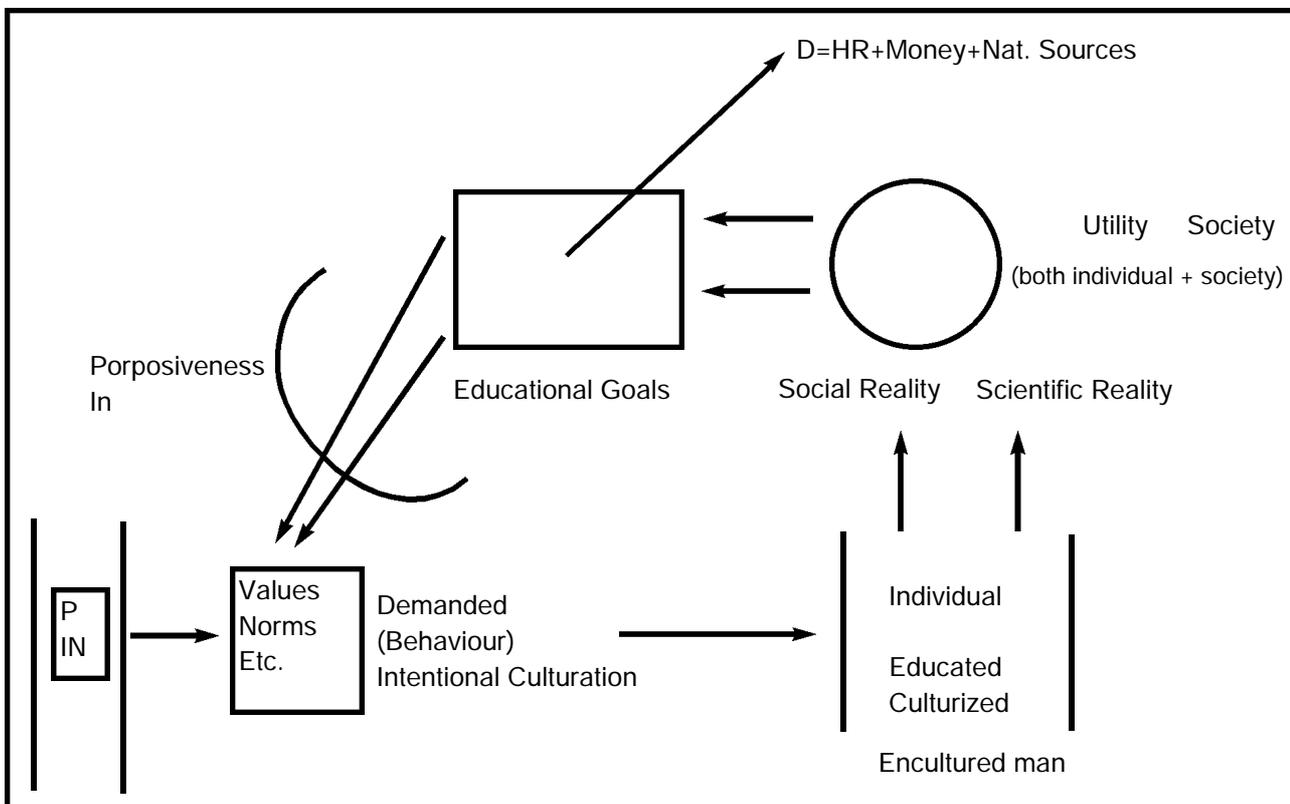
[3] Suat Anar. E¤itim Sosyolojisi (Educational Sociology). Unpublished mimeograph.p.37

[4] P.W.Musgrove.Sociology of Education.(London:Routlage Comp.1976)
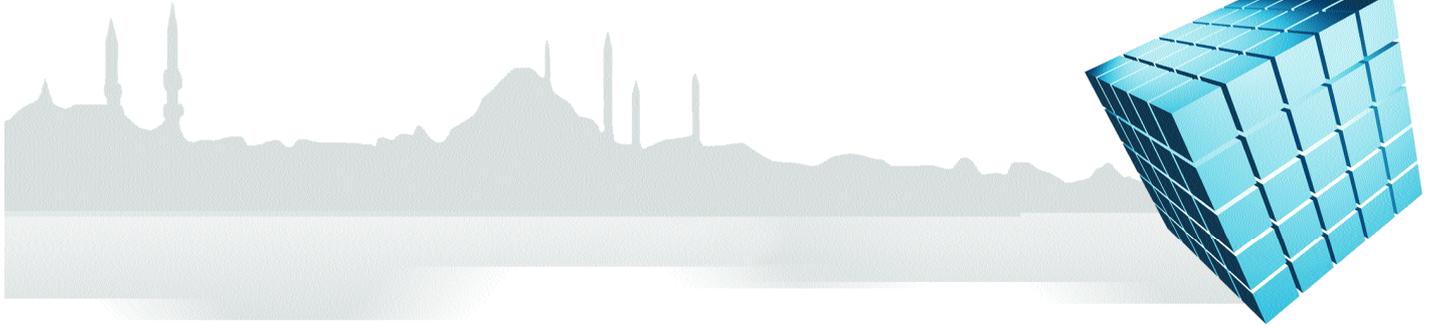
In short, the individual's behaviour will functionally change and he/she will become compatible with the society. However, this doesn't mean that the individual will become the one who simply "obeys", for the individual will also obtain the "creativity" which will alter his/her fate. Through the functionality (viability) of the model, it will be understood that this statement is not a paradox.

III. What is communication?

With a very basic definition, communication is the act of transfering the sender's message to the reciever by using a certain channel, and the transformation of the message into "meaning" after being analyzed by the reciever.[5] Without doubt, if the recipient also has to send a feedback to the received message, he/she should send it through the use of the same channel (medium). In short, it depends on whether the communication is "one-way" (monologue) or "two-ways" (dialogue). One thing that all types of communication have in common is "transfering the meaning." Apart from this basic definition of communication, it should be noted that types of communication are classified from "simple" to "complex."

IV.The functions of communication [5]

It is also necessary to determine the "functions" of communication. These functions can be listed as:
- The informative function of communication.
-The function of communication in changing (altering) culture
- The function of communication in transfering culture
- The economic function of communication
- The political function of communication

The media (channels) of communication are used for fulfilling these functions.

The informative function of communication is used for both transmitting and altering culture.

The political function of communication can principally be used during political campaigns, and as a part of the mass communication system for informing the public on the governments policies. Especially the techniques used to impress the target audience such as audio and visual effects – if used properly – can be very effective and are actively used for propaganda purposes. In short, it refers to the political usages of communication, and the function that aims to preserve the existing political system by responding to the messages that come from the outside world. In a democratic society, the main purpose of communication is to create public opinion[6] In the process of creating public opinion in favour of a cause, it is also necessary to build up a strategy that will try to convince the opposing public opinions on the validity of the opinion that's being advocated. In this process, political socializiation actually depends on making the political system understandable for the general public. This will provide political awareness. The function of criticization and control, on the other hand, will ensure pluralism.

The economic function of communication can be defined as the function which aims, directly or indirectly, to obtain economic "profit."

It generates the "commodity-money" relationship through advertisements. These advertisements not only serve the "profit-making" goal of the economic function of communication, but also serve as a "convincing" factor on the target audience. The economic dimension of communication is of course important in terms of its costs and the profit that it generates. If the profits are more than the costs, it will make a positive contribution to the general economy, for it will enable the people with an education on "Communication" to find jobs and contribute to the production process. This way, the investment on education will turn into production rather than consumption. This situation is also beneficial for establishing a well-balanced educational budget. Naturally, it is also essential to take into consideration the costs of investing on communicational infrastructure.

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[5] Developed by using Musgrove's frame.

[6] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann. Kamuoyu: Suskunluk Sarmalın›n Keflfi. (Translator: Murat Özkök) ‹stanbul: Dost Kitabevi Yay›nlar›. 1998.p.272

If we make an analysis on the basis of the above-mentioned points, we will see that there is a general relationship and interconnection between communication and the functions of education.[7] Education, for its part, has functions of transmitting and changing culture, as well as the function of social, political and economic selection.

The function of transmitting and changing culture is of course related to the society's own natural and indigenous conditions. A society will transmit its principal cultural values, beliefs and customs to its members in order to preserve its existence. Communication, of course, plays a positive and important role in transmitting these values. However, for the cultural changes which will be necessary, certain strategic goals will be defined by the policies of the society or the state. In such applications, education and communication technologies can play an important role; especially on the change of attitudes and opinions. Actually, during the establishment of the Turkish Republic, we saw that such changes occurred in a considerably long period of time. Nowadays, improvements in audio-visual technology have enabled such changes to occur a lot more rapidly and effectively.

The political function is related to the administrative system of the state. One of the state's principal goals is to create citizens who embrace the state's official political regime and views; or more accurately, it has the obligation of preserving the regime. For this purpose, the state makes several adjustments to create collective meanings, values, information, and symbols – for the state can't afford to get into conflict with the citizens. This is also related to the "propaganda" dimension. Every era defines its own "ideal citizen." In Turkey, the "ideal citizen" is defined as the "enlightened citizen" who embraces the modern values of the Republic. But what will happen when these local values will be confronted by sociological reality of globalization, which slowly makes boundaries disappear and creates the concept of internationalism? What will be the new role of the tools, media and effects of communication in this new era? It is necessary to find answers to these questions. Probably, new strategies for communication, new methods and applications for audio-visual communication technologies will be needed to bring us to the epistomology of the future. This will eventually create a new, more "universal" model of education, while at the same time preserving the indigenous culture of the nation-state. In other words, individual freedom should be universalized.

- The third function is the function of social selectivity. From this point, the question of "Who should be given the right for education" has been asked, and societies have developed techniques of selection for resolving this problem (such as the university entrance exams in Turkey.) In education, this (the entrance exam) has been the primary method of selection. Those who pass the exam obtain the right to study. However, if a "globalization" is taking place, it will be necessary to take into consideration the new conditions and changes which might occur. If it's necessary to fulfill several conditions (such as exams) for obtaining the right for higher education, can it be possible to overcome the barriers created by the sociological conditions (which occur because of such selection processes) when trying to critically understand the meaning which is transmitted by the tools of communication? When such an "inequality of opportunities" already negatively affects education, isn't there a further difficulty for people with low income who feel interested in fields of study such as Communication where technological hardwares (computers, editing sets, etc.) are very expensive? Therefore, what's the role of the concept of "computer literacy" in this case? And similar limitations?

V. The need for Communicational Designs for Improving Education [8]
There are shortcomings of educational practices such as ambigious purposes, irrelevant curricular materials and the most important of those, there is

[7] Roland Meighan.Asociology of Education.(London:Villier's House.1986)pp.3-51

[8] Turhan O¤uzkan.Educational Systems.(‹stanbul:Bogaziçi University Publ.1987)pp.97-106 Largely outlined and used.

ineffective or inefficient methods of instruction. Thus we will summarize this issue as an instruction desins systems.

As is known, there have been intensive efforts in recent years towards better understanding of instructional process and exploration of new approaches for improving curriculum planning and student learning.

The design and implementation of instruction is, in fact, a highly complex process. It is composed of a number of interelated parts and functions whose coherent operation is essential for the achievement of desired outcomes in terms of student learning.

There is a growing tendency in the field to view instructional design from standpoint of system concept. This particular concept implies; (a) a special approach to organizational and operational problems of instruction through an analysis of the functional interrelation of the constituant parts, and (b) a technical integration of man and machine in the service of education. Both of these meanings have contributed to the models of instructional designs.

Several modelsof instructional designs are available. Some of these models are simple and include the most essential elements while others are highly elaborate. All of these can contain the learner and the goal to be achieved. Teaching is only means to this end. In this case, what are the elements of instructional design. The model selected for the explanation here is the one presented by Kemp. [9]

- What educational purposes or objectives will be sought?
- What learning experiences will be providedin light of the purpose?
- How can these learning experiences be effectively organized for the attainment of the purposes?
- How will we become aware while the required learning has taken place?

- What adjustments are needed to improve learning performance and system operation?

As it is witnessed information and communication technologies spread rapidly and outcomes are obvious in the world. As a responsible person must one ask these questions: [10]

- What is our role as teachers of communication and education.
- How can we provide students with access to information.
- How can we provide students with help in reaching their potentials as intellectually free members of the global society.
- What kind of roles information and communications technologies play in the development of the citizens in the countries they exist.

Now there are some important elements to think over as:

- Equality of reaching information.
- Development and empowerment for building their own knowledge within their cultural context and as well as the world cultural context.
- Maintaning cultural diversity and retaining pluralism in order to prevent homogenization of knowledge and to provide multiple perspectives and various ways of interpretation of the facts.

Finally, I belive that students must reach to their potential as world citizens of their country. This requires a challenge and those to be encouraged to construct their own understanding of the world based on knowledge. Thus, opportunities are required to be provided to develop their own capacities to recieve information, reflect on it and develop an understanding of different points of view before reaching a subjective judgement. To achieve this goal, education must create a competitiveness and communicational skills for the people everywhere at the world.

[9] Ibid.p.100

[10] M.S.Mc.Isaac.''Education,Communication and Technology in the Information Age.'' Turkey Journal of Communication.2003.pp.154-156