LANGUAGE AS A HERMENEUTIC APPROACH TO EMERGING METHODOLOGIES AND TECHNOLOGIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

María José Ibáñez Ayuso[1]* (iD), **María Helena Damiao[2]** (iD)

[1]Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Francisco de Vitoria (Spain)

[2]Universidade de Coimbra, Centro de Estudos Interdisciplinares (CEIS20), Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação (Portugal)

*Corresponding author: mibanez@ucm.es,
hdamiao@fpce.uc.pt*

Abstract

In recent years, the profusion of methodologies available to teachers, thanks to the advancement of emerging and converging technologies, has created significant educational opportunities, but it also poses new challenges. Among these is the need to train teachers to exercise solid pedagogical judgment when implementing these approaches in the classrooms. One of the difficulties in making these critical judgments is the introduction of commercial terms into academic discourses, which hinder the thinking and assessment of these advancements from an educational standpoint. Therefore, the objective of this research is to reclaim the educational meaning of certain concepts necessary to contemplate these emerging technical and pedagogical methods in the realm of higher education in the face of the reconfigurations these terms have undergone due to the influence of economic ideas introduced by supranational organizations into the collective educational imagination. With this goal in mind, three documents from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development under the "Horizon 2030" program are first analyzed to identify ideas and concepts that have been integrated into academic discourses. Subsequently, from a hermeneutic-interpretative perspective, the meaning of these terms is revisited from the university philosophy and pedagogy standpoint. The results of this research enable an understanding of the authentic educational significance of words like new, valuable, critical, democratization, active, autonomy, or study, among others, which are essential to approach emerging methodological advances and technological approaches from an educational perspective, detached from economic considerations.

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1. Introduction: Higher Education, the Knowledge Society, and Technological Solutionism

Emerging and converging technologies, from advances in nanotechnology, biotechnology, cognitive sciences, computer science, robotics, and artificial intelligence (Postigo, 2021), undoubtedly present

extraordinary opportunities for education. However, they also pose significant challenges to pedagogy, especially in its anthropological (Gil-Cantero, 2022) and epistemological foundations (García del Dujo, Vlieghe, Muñoz-Rodríguez & Martín-Lucas, 2021) foundations, which demand critical reflection on the introduction of these technical innovations and their derived pedagogies in the classroom (Pattier & Reyero, 2022).

In this regard, McLuhan et al.'s (1967) warning about the non-neutrality of technology is receiving increasing attention from educational theory, which calls for a non-instrumental view of these emerging means, as well as the need for a teleological reflection that guides their critical incorporation into educational processes (Luri, 2020; Morozov, 2015; Postigo, 2021; Sánchez-Rojo & Martín-Lucas, 2021; Solé-Blanch, 2020).

In recent years, higher education institutions have witnessed a profusion of technological resources and pedagogical methods to provide greater efficiency in their educational work. Thus, we find a wide variety of new educative means, from *Massive Online Open Courses* (MOOCs) which aim to democratize access to top-level institutions (Chiappe & Amaral, 2021) to the new accreditation possibilities derived from the blockchain that micro-credentials entail (Brown & Nic-Giolla-Mhichil, 2022; Varadarajan, Koh & Daniel, 2023) through the so-called emerging pedagogies such as classroom gamification or STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics) methodologies, among others; which not only aim to place the learner at the center of the educational process but also to eliminate gender gaps, especially by promoting women's access to professions with high labor demand related to the field of engineering and science (Kijima, Yang-Yoshihara & Maekawa, 2021; Pozo-Sánchez, Lampropoulos & López-Belmonte, 2022).

The incorporation of these technologies and pedagogies in the university environment, together with the emphasis of higher education institutions on positioning themselves as cutting-edge locations, using employability rankings, publications in impact journals, and transfer agreements (Barkas & Armstrong, 2022; Garrocho-Salcedo, 2022), has raised misgivings among those who think that the university, in this excessive shift towards technical training, seems to have forgotten an essential part of its formative role (Barrio-Maestre, 2022; Deresiewicz, 2019; Esteban-Bara & Fuentes, 2020; Fulford, 2022).

There is no doubt that, in the coming years, these emerging and converging technologies will generate significant changes in the educational architecture of higher education institutions. The adoption of a Luddite approach to these changes would not only be impossible, as our world is increasingly an 'onlife' space (Floridi, 2015), but more importantly, it would not be desirable if it is to be true to the nature of higher education, a nature that is intimately linked to the new, despite those who point to the obsolescence of the university institution (Frank & Meyer, 2020). In fact, as Llano (2003) points out, today, more than ever, it is worth remembering that "for the university, the current name for fidelity to its own project is innovation" (Llano, 2003: page 33). Similarly, it is not advisable to continue to consider the introduction of these new technologies and pedagogies only from a didactic or instrumental point of view (García del Dujo et al., 2021). Worse still is to consider their introduction as a panacea for the ills that afflict our educational system (Ibáñez-Ayuso, Limón-Mendizabal & Ruíz-Alberdí, 2022; Thoilliez, 2023) because, as Gusdorf (1964) pointed out, focusing on means as a solution to the problems of the university institution is nothing more than consequences without premises.

The challenge for higher education, then, is to understand what kind of novelty is meant by the university institution in order to be able to make a critical judgment about the appropriateness of incorporating these emerging possibilities into higher education. This judgment is becoming increasingly necessary in the face of the overwhelming proliferation of methodologies available to teachers (Laudo-Castillo, 2021), as well as the voices that denounce their limits and dangers (Castillo, 2023; Montanero-Fernández, 2019; Pattier & Reyero, 2022; Pérez-Rueda, 2023). This is because, as Professor Gil-Cantero (2022) points out, "in education, what matters is not reaching Rome but how one gets there. Not all roads are valid, not all means are valid." (Gil-Cantero, 2022: page 26). Therefore, the introduction of these new trends in the classrooms requires not only careful teleological reflection at the institutional level but also the formation

of critical judgment in teachers to enable them to choose the best way to achieve their pedagogical objectives.

A common challenge in establishing a critical judgment on the application of these emerging and converging technologies in any of the spheres of human life (work, health, social, education) is the definition of the concept of "enhancement" that these technologies have for human beings (Postigo, 2021). In fact, the importance of this concept is evident in the notion that enhancement has in the declaration of the transhumanist movement Humanity+, which constantly alludes to the importance of improving human nature, addressing issues such as superintelligence through cognitive enhancement, the selection of the "best children" through procreative beneficence, the "enhancement of love" through biochemical stimulation and the "enhancement" of life expectancy through the possibilities of senolytic technologies (Bostrom & Sandberg, 2009; De Grey, Ames, Andersen, Bartke, Campisi, Heward et al., 2002; Savulescu, 2001; Savulescu & Sandberg, 2008).

However, as Professor Postigo (2021) has shown, it is essential to ask in what sense these technologies improve the human condition: is living longer, being genetically perfect, and having a body with improved capabilities synonymous with a happier life? Equating genetic perfection with happiness fails to realize that human happiness is not achieved primarily through material goods but can be found more related to those of moral order (Postigo, 2021; MacIntyre, 2013). Similarly, equating technological or methodological improvement with better education means confusing final ends with procedural ends (Gaviria & Reyero, 2022), shortcuts with progress (Bauman, 2007), or losing sight of the fact that the fruits of education are not so much measured in material goods as in moral ones (Hansen, 2018).

Analogous to what happens in the field of bioethics when judging transhumanist proposals, where the use of terms such as quality of life, well-being, or productive existence "hardly specify any content or clarify what is to be understood by a better life" (Güell, Echarte & Murillo, 2019: page 203), the same happens in education if we seek to judge emerging technologies and associated methodologies, without first defining the terms we use in such judgments. The infiltration of business logic in the field of higher education, especially from supranational organizations and private entities, has resulted in the adoption in the pedagogical discourse of specific terms more typical of the business sphere than educational (Menéndez-Álvarez-Hevia & Hernández-Castilla, 2020; Turienzo, Prieto, Manso & Thoilliez, 2022). This can lead to erroneous judgments when analyzing emerging methodologies and technologies because they are unconsciously based on commercial rather than educational logic. In this sense, following Peters (1966), we point out the need and convenience of clarifying the vocabulary used in these judgments and going deeper into the meaning of these terms from a university perspective to avoid thinking about these methodologies from a business or technological standpoint, as these meanings are insufficient to clarify an educational judgment.

2. Methodology

This research aims to clarify the trends in the discourse on higher education concerning emerging technologies and pedagogies, given the importance of language for the establishment of critical pedagogical judgments in the face of the temptation of technological solutionism (Morozov, 2015). To this end, a hermeneutic-interpretative analysis is carried out following the approach of educational theory, the discipline in which this study is framed, starting with a bibliographical review of OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) documents on higher education and technology in the framework of the "Horizon 2030" Programme, to discover the terms and logic that have infiltrated educational discourse in recent years and which may lead to confusion when judging emerging technologies and methodologies.

The documents analysed are: *Quatre Scénarios sur l'Avenir de l'Enseignement Supérieur* (OECD/CERI, 2006), *Higher Education to 2030* (OECD/CERI, 2009) and *L'enseignement supérieur à l'horizon 2030: Mondialisation* (OECD/CERI, 2011), produced at the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). Analysis of these documents makes it possible to distill new meanings for terms that infiltrate the discourse on

higher education and certain ideas about innovation and change that are present today in the educational sphere. After selecting these terms, their meaning is revisited from the university philosophy and pedagogy perspective and clarified from an educational perspective by reflecting on the aims of higher education.

3. Documentary Analysis: Infiltrations of Mercantilist Logic Into Higher Education Discourse

In recent decades, arguing that we live in a global information or knowledge society, priority has been given to developing or training competency skills in line with a labor market that has expanded worldwide at different levels of education. To a large extent, the origin of this situation is due to the involvement of new actors in education systems, particularly supranational bodies with an economic and financial focus.

The discourse that these organizations generate on education, the influence that they exert on the political sectors responsible for its regulation, and the institutional links and interactions that they gradually establish lead to the legitimization of these organizations as necessary actors to cooperate with educational entities that, unlike these organizations, have a democratic mandate. Moreover, their central role in the field is inferred: they proactively offer guidance and recommendations, carry out follow-up and evaluation, and are also requested by the States and Regions in the same respect.

The way in which the discourse of these bodies is configured is so well done that it leads one to assume their centrality in educational work in the face of today's challenges. Thus, they proactively propose orientations and recommendations and carry out monitoring and evaluations. Gradually, states and regions are beginning to ask agencies for these orientations and recommendations, monitoring, and evaluations. It is in this situation that we must position higher education to understand the disfigurements/reconfigurations of its aims, missions, structure, and administrative and academic organization, as opposed to the Humboldtian and Napoleonic models that, until very recently, gave this century-old institution its stamp of modernity (Maués, 2019).

To try to capture more objectively the logic underlying the educational discourse at this level of education, especially the introduction of emerging technologies, three documents produced by the OECD in the framework of the Future of Higher Education 2030 Project have been consulted as frameworks for discussion and decision-making.

These supranational organizations have arguably established what Shiroma, Campos, García (2005: pages 430-431) call "discursive hegemony" because of the subtle "argument from authority" it resorts to and the "prescriptive tone" it uses to "anticipate the consensus" they seek to establish. Therefore, the work of "deciphering texts to understand politics" is, in the authors' words above, of fundamental importance to keep higher education in the direction of education and prevent it from going down other paths that detract from its purpose.

Having made these considerations and bearing in mind the established objective, let us turn our attention to the content of the documents above from 2006, 2009, and 2011, focusing briefly on concepts we consider fundamental.

Referring to the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) of the world, the OECD states, in its 2006 document, that it is imperative to make decisions today on how to prepare the world to face both the unprecedented challenges and opportunities of the future. However, the organization does not clarify what this unprecedented "world" is nor the profile of "global citizen" needed; then, without clarifying these assumptions, it strongly encourages policymakers and society to engage in decision-making to meet the challenges of this new world. In this regard, it presents four scenarios that could underpin such decisions, presented and discussed at a meeting of education ministers of the organization's member countries, which are expected to have consequences for structuring the field in question. Concerning new technologies, the organization points out that they have changed accessibility and teaching methods, renewing the time, the learning space, and the pedagogical relationship, providing online contexts

favorable to individualized monitoring of students, as well as the latest knowledge to be integrated into innovative projects.

In its 2009 report, the same organization starts from the idea that higher education geared towards the "knowledge society" must pay particular attention to the achievement of countries' economic goals and, as in 2006, stresses the role of strategic links between higher education institutions and industrial and other enterprises. Thus, its analysis of international policies stresses the importance of research being geared towards innovation, especially of a technological nature, and of academic careers being linked to the labor market, responding effectively to its needs. Noting that it is widely accepted that higher education is a significant factor in global economic competitiveness, it should be guided by strict quality criteria. This document, therefore, seems to call for a significant increase in the number of individuals with higher professional competencies and human capital capable of producing and disseminating knowledge in constant renewal for the benefit of society.

The 2011 publication brings together contributions from academics in the fields of higher education and higher education policy, economics, and technology, as well as representatives of supranational economic organizations. It highlights the exercise of taking up the prospective scenarios previously proposed for this level of education, which are updated and transferred to different fields. Taken together, these contributions, which do not differ from each other or other documents of the same organization, insist on the fundamental role of research and innovation provided by higher education institutions to respond to the challenges, primarily economic, faced by countries in an increasingly globalized world. Emphasis is placed on information and communication technologies because they enable new, flexible forms of human collaboration in research, as well as a revolutionary pedagogical approach. Thus, it is pointed out that the concomitant use of a wide variety of computer resources and communication networks will favor, in formal and non-formal contexts, autonomous, active learning experiences adapted to the pace of each individual. Thus, fostering reflection, critical capacity, creativity, and teamwork enables them to develop projects and solve problems; in short, these technologies will favor a better preparation for the world of the future.

This brief review of three OECD documents, which build on earlier ones and have inspired later ones, jointly marking the path for higher education in this century, provides an insight into the link between this organization and other public and private organizations with which it collaborates, including national governments, many of them democratically elected. As with other levels of education, this link is made operational through the figure above of the "scenarios" outlined by the organization, which are presented as open proposals to the highest political representatives so they can discuss them in person and choose the ones that seem most appropriate for their countries (Damião & Delgado, 2023). However, the way in which the "scenarios" are drafted is far from neutral, restricting the field of discussion to the issues that matter and anticipating answers that are intended to be legitimized. Moreover, it is questionable that organizations without an educational mandate, such as the OECD, offer their mediation with authorities that do have a mandate and, moreover, are recognized by them as fully-fledged interlocutors.

The truth is that this link is becoming even closer and more committed, justified by the claim that its results will improve the world and human beings, leading to "well-being" in the near future. However, we must realize that this approach effectively implies a change in higher education, altering its essence and mode of operation to bring it closer to the neoliberal business paradigm, which has long established the possibility of contributing to immediate profit as the ultimate purpose of education (Maués, 2019). The knowledge that serves this end will, like any other consumable product, be promoted, while that does not contribute to this goal will be neglected. Thus, we run the risk of having a society in which only functional knowledge in this sense exists (Nussbaum, 2010).

Given the importance of the present change in higher education for the development of human beings and the path of humanity, it should be considered and questioned and not uncritically accepted.

4. Discussion: (Re-)Thinking the Discourse of Higher Education in Terms of Its Aims
4.1. The New as Practical Wisdom

The discourse of international organizations, such as the OECD, underlines the centrality of the concept of innovation as a fundamental condition in a constantly changing world. Delving into this notion of innovation, we can appreciate its approach from a production paradigm based on technical reasoning that seeks measurable and quantifiable results as the fruit of such innovation, reminiscent of a notion of progress linked more to the procedural than the teleological (Bauman, 2007). From this innovation-production perspective, one can understand the overwhelming pressure on higher education institutions to account for their innovative capacity in the form of observable, measurable outputs under the umbrella of a transfer or scientific publication (Frank & Meyer, 2020; Garrocho-Salcedo, 2022; Haidt & Lukianoff, 2018). In this context, moving away from the neoliberal paradigm, it is crucial to remember that university philosophy has recognized from its very beginning that innovation does not lie so much in the direct production of tangible results as in the transformation of its students (Abellán-García, Agejas & Antuñano, 2018: Llano, 2003).

In order to understand this affirmation, it is necessary to overcome the false Manichaeism belief brought by modernity that prevents us from understanding the intimate relationship that exists between innovation and tradition by presenting false dichotomies such as future-past (Bellamy, 2021), innovation-fidelity (Llano, 2003) or originality-common (Barraca, 2017). Only by overcoming these fallacious antagonistic relationships can it be discovered that it is tradition that enables innovation in the first place (Damião, 2015). To understand the importance of tradition and innovation in the university sense and, therefore, their centrality in university discourse and curricula, we should begin by clarifying what we mean by culture in this field. Although, in international discourse, there is a certain reification of culture as a collection of objects (Llano, 2007), it is essential to distinguish between the terms "culture" and "cultural products" by following Hadjadh (2020). The ancestral connection of culture with agriculture must be understood as referring to the cultivation of oneself.

Only from this perspective can it be understood that transmission, in its educational sense, does not consist of the vacuous memorization of cultural products but involves the passage from information to training through the transformation of the learner himself, and it is in this transformation where the innovation of higher education lies. As Arendt (1996) pointed out, transmission implicitly carries for those who receive it the possibility of creation and modification; "culture transforms us, not to make us into others but to lead us to ourselves, to increase our capacities" (Bellamy, 2018: page 101). Knowledge gives the person a new look at reality and himself, offering him new categories to think about reality and understand the world. Therefore, the true conception of innovation in its university sense is not performance but knowledge and, more specifically, the formation of practical reasoning. As Llano (2003) points out:

> *The mere application of preconceived schemes is typical of the use of purely conventional technical reasoning. Practical wisdom, on the other hand, which is characteristic of ethics and politics, has a necessarily inventive and innovative character in which innovative technology and artistic creation also participate* (Lano, 2003: page 25).

Understanding the incalculable value of practical wisdom as an innovative and creative capacity with which to situate oneself, in reality, allows us to understand the actual resurgence of character education internationally, not only at the elementary level but also at the university level (Brant, Brooks & Lamb, 2022; Harrison, Burn & Moller, 2020; Kristjánsson, 2023; Morgan & Gulliford, 2022; Torralba, 2022) where there is a renewed enthusiasm for bringing Aristotelian phronesis, in other words, practical wisdom, back into the educational discourse.

This concept of innovation as practical wisdom makes it possible to address the so-called 21st-century competencies more profoundly by combining knowledge with action through discernment and character. Thus, phronesis is exercised as a unifying element of the human person, allowing students to integrate intelligence, will, and feeling in their actions, converting knowledge, through this virtue, into an authentic

knowledge that allows them to understand and judge reality and act creatively. Therefore, from this reasoning, one can understand the dangerous implications of the exchange in curricula of "powerful knowledge" (Galian & Louzano, 2014; Luri, 2020) for a competency approach based merely on procedural matters (Damião, 2015; Reyero, 2023a), without which terms such as "critical thinking" or "creativity" become a watered-down version of their true meaning. If, as in the documents analyzed, we consider critical thinking as the ability to analyze and evaluate information, opinions, positions, and news, it is worth asking: what criteria, other than in-depth knowledge of the subject in question, can be used to judge the veracity of a position? or how will it be possible to analyze a source of information without the rigor that comes from having come into contact with the quality of culture? Today, in the face of the proliferation of fake news and cancel culture, the words of Steiner and Ladajali (2016) resonate even more strongly:

> *What one learns by heart changes with oneself, and the person is transformed by it, in turn, throughout life. Secondly, no one will be able to take it away from them. What one knows by heart belongs to oneself, despite the undesirables who rule the world, the secret police, the brutality of customs, or censorship [...] It is thus one of the great possibilities of freedom, of resistance* (Steiner & Ladajali, 2016: pages 77-78).

Educating students to be critical thinkers means providing them not only with procedural skills but also with the possibility of transformation through knowledge in order to situate themselves before reality with categories of understanding rooted in tradition, which act as a hermeneutic from which to make sense of questions and act in reality. Something similar happens with the competence of creativity: it can only be developed from and with tradition; as Arendt recalled, the past can open up to one (Arendt, 1996) "with unexpected freshness" and tell one "things that no one had managed to hear before" (Arendt, 1996: page 104). Practical wisdom makes it possible to overcome a notion of creativity based on processes of divergence through the use of lateral thinking techniques, such as de Bono's six hats, to place this competence in a new dimension: that of creative habits (López-Quintás, 2009).

4.2. Flourishing as the Fruit of Higher Education

The subtle link established by the above documents between higher education and the needs of a labor market that is difficult to predict in the face of uncertain technological progress has established a relationship between education and its capacity to prepare for employment. Thus, concepts such as usefulness, placement, employability, effectiveness, or performance are introduced into the university discourse. This terminology perfectly aligns with what Han (2017) calls the hyperproduction society, where it is no longer the system that alienates the person but the person himself who is exploited under a power-power paradigm. In addition to this notion of 'useful' education, there is also the discourse of the 'VUCA society,' which generates a dizzying sense of change in which nothing seems to remain (Bellamy, 2020) and creates in the collective imagination a sense of the rapid obsolescence of knowledge (Bauman, 2007). Today, however, when the number of mental health disorders among the new generations is reaching unprecedented levels and adolescent suicide is becoming a common problem in Western countries (UNICEF, 2020), it is necessary to question the supposed "usefulness" of the education given to the new generations for the sake of efficiency and at the expense of the "usefulness of the useless" (Ordine, 2013).

Faced with the discourse of a VUCA world, where certainties dissolve, it is necessary to recover an anthropological view of the student's condition. Reaffirming that, regardless of the changing or even inhuman circumstances in which a person lives his or her life, the condition of this person as *homo viator*, or seeker of meaning, is unalterable, as Frankl's own experience (Frankl, 2008) in the harshness of the concentration camps made clear. Therefore, if we argue that, despite the circumstantial changes in which human beings develop their lives, their condition as seekers of meaning is a constant, what is imperative is to provide people with the ability to orient themselves in reality, to give meaning to their movement.

> *A culture that reveals in time what escapes time, that is the truths that force all intelligence to be directed towards them and towards the ideals that guide the lives of men and the construction of cities. All this remains fixed and stable to give*

meaning to our lives. Without being aware of these goals, we could speed up as much as we wanted, but we would only go further and further into the feeling of an absurd life (Bellamy, 2020: page 203).

This is where the true value of education lies: not so much in its effectiveness in getting people into the labor market but in its ability to bear fruit, enabling people to live meaningful, deep, and fulfilling lives. For this reason, the mission of higher education is, in addition to the technical training that enables future careers, the building of personality (Gusdorf, 2019), especially at a vital moment such as the university stage, where young people are confronted with a fundamental psychosocial challenge: the forging of their identity (Guardini, 2015).

Therefore, it is not surprising that Great Books seminars are experiencing a resurgence of interest in American universities and are increasingly beginning to attract interest in Europe (Torralba, 2022). They are sources of knowledge that, without a practical application from a business point of view, have a unique utility: helping people make sense of reality and their lives. In other words, knowledge that helps people comprehensively inhabit reality (Marín, 2019).

Given that the usefulness of higher education is measured in terms of its effectiveness in generating technological progress or better integrating people into the world of work, it is necessary to reclaim the fruits of education from the perspective of fertility, taking up the idea that university education is not a means to a job or a living wage, but an end in itself:

> *All this makes us think that, while education can act as a means to help us function in certain contexts, it is perhaps also possible to see it as an end in itself, i.e., as an activity that, following MacIntyre (1999), would make us flourish as human beings, regardless of the different spaces and ways in which we do so. If we separate education from politics, work, social, and private life, we still have something left. We are left with aimless, free human flourishing, human development as an end, and no longer simply as a means* (Sánchez-Rojo & Martín-Lucas, 2021: page 3).

In fact, the interest in education from the perspective of human flourishing is arousing strong interest at the international level (Bernal-Martínez de Soria & Naval, 2023), recovering a vision of education beyond its practical application, from a technical and mercantile conception to restore to university education its link with the transcendentals: goodness, truth, and beauty.

4.3. The Study as A Framework For Higher Education Activity

Another aspect found in the analysis of the OECD documents is the importance of placing the learner at the center of the educational process. Thus, expressions are observed, such as autonomy in relation to the students, facilitator or guide in relation to the teacher, and others, such as discovery and inquiry in relation to the process. The aim of these concepts is to overcome teaching centered on transmission and the master class, which seems obsolete in the face of new market needs, but also in the face of a student profile that is essentially different, as they are considered "digital natives." Although this notion of young people who are entirely different from previous generations seems to be questioned from many points of view - including those who question the very notion of "digital natives" (Bonfield, Salter, Longmuir, Benson & Adachi, 2020; Kincl & Strach, 2021) - this assumption of a supposed generational change is still present in the collective educational imagination and is reinforced by documents such as those presented.

This concept, so much in vogue today, which emphasizes the student's autonomy as a starting point, his or her protagonist role in the training process, and the importance of emotions for better learning, is more typical of a client-service relationship than an educational one. Even though this new paradigm is not based on any educational logic, it is not surprising that it has found an ideal terrain in which to flourish: in this postmodern culture that exacerbates the processes of subjectivization and privatization of the good (Barraca, 2017; Reyero, 2023b). Therefore, to reposition these terms in their university meaning, it is necessary to consider them from the singularity of the educational relationship, a relationship different from other helping relationships such as that of psychologist-patient. In this sense, the reflections of Professor Ibáñez-Martín (2015), who takes up Gusdorf's questions before entering a classroom, are

particularly relevant. Thus, it is necessary to consider what a teacher and a student are going to do in class and what each expects from the other.

We believe the key to answering these questions and repositioning the activity of students and university lecturers is, paraphrasing Biesta (2016), to "return the study to the university." If we use Houssaye's educational triad (Houssaye, 2014) to respond to Gusdorf's ideas, we observe that what seems to have paled in the face of the infiltration of these new terms in university discourse is that of study. A study that not only determines the student's activity but also that of the teaching staff.

Placing the study once again at the heart of university education provides, in the first place, a criterion for judging the appropriateness of the use of emerging methodologies. In the face of a discourse in which constructivism plays a dominant role, the importance of the fact that it is the subject that imposes specific access routes is recovered (Luri, 2022). It will, therefore, be the best way to access an in-depth study of a particular content, which will guide the teacher in choosing a method. Secondly, with regard to classroom climate, it can be observed that neoliberal discourses have introduced terms more typical of the service sector, such as quality or user experience, than those typical of the educational field. Once again, the study offers a hermeneutic for thinking about classroom climate and, in particular, a concept that is currently in vogue: trust. As opposed to trust based more on the therapeutic relationship, study reminds us that, according to Recalcati, "in the classroom, trust is generated when the teacher's word is worthy of respect and is only worthy of respect if he is really passionate about what he teaches" (Recalcati, 2016: page 36). In other words, trust is rooted in knowledge, in not forgetting the third element of the educational triad. Likewise, the centrality of the study also makes it possible to provide further depth to terms that appear in the discourse of these organizations, such as transdisciplinarity. This is because the study as a way of life for the university professor, to which he invites the student with his presence, does not only consist of mastering his subject but of a passionate search for truth (Abellán-García et al., 2018). This search involves overcoming a merely scientistic approach and understanding that reality is not exhausted in it (Ibáñez-Martín, 2021) but that it must be done from an open understanding that puts the particular sciences in dialogue with the great human questions (Lacalle, 2018).

Placing the study as an essential part of the identity of the teacher and the student, as well as classroom activity, allows us to understand that to discover, investigate, or be autonomous, we need the subject matter on which we are working. This study, often costly, requires perseverance on the part of the student, a truly active role to enter into dialogue with those voices that speak to the student from tradition (Luri, 2022), as well as an effort on the part of the teacher to give a master class and not a monologue, but a multitude of dialogues. In this sense, regarding the importance of the role of the teacher in university study, it is worth remembering that, as Montanero-Fernández (2019) has pointed out, many of the emerging methodologies continue to require direct instruction for their proper functioning; thus, corroborating the importance of study as the central part of university activity.

5. Conclusion: For A Democratization of Education

In the same way that Esteban-Bara and Fuentes (2020) point out that:

> *To give opinions without knowing, to live without reading, to enter without greeting, to criticize without measure, or to follow the law of minimum effort, for example, are possible identity traits that have a place in today's university, but they are certainly not traits of a healthy and beneficial university identity* (Esteban-Bara & Fuentes, 2020: page 151).

We could argue that effectiveness, employability, autonomy, performance, transfer, and facilitation are words that have a place in today's university, but they are not the words that define a healthy and beneficial institution. As this research has shown, through the analysis of various OECD documents concerning higher education in the framework of the "Horizon 2030" program, different notions of the labor market and neoliberal considerations have gradually infiltrated the discourse on higher education. Parallel to this process, the fourth industrial revolution offers unusual possibilities in all areas, including education. In this scenario, where, in addition, higher education institutions are forced to justify their relevance to those who

label them as obsolete, there is a danger of embracing emerging technologies and methodologies as a form of innovation in higher education without realizing where most university-based innovation lies.

However, as it is now being pointed out in educational theory, emerging and converging technologies are not neutral; they produce significant changes in educational processes. For this reason, it is essential to form a solid criterion with which to judge the introduction of these new realities in university classrooms, which requires clarifying the vocabulary used in such judgments. In this sense, this research proposes three central tenets from which to think about these terms, which also offer a very interesting insight into the research horizons these technologies open up, especially concerning the plural concept of human enhancement in the face of transhumanist and posthumanist concerns. These three tenets are innovation as practical reasoning, flourishing as the fruit of educational action, and study as the identity of university teachers and students.

Along these lines, the discourse of international organizations refers to the possibilities of these new technologies and methodologies to provide "better" training for a greater number of people throughout their lives, resulting in "better" preparation for the world of work. There is no doubt that the democratization of education through emerging technologies and their derivative methodologies will be commonplace in the forthcoming discourse of major international organizations in the coming years. However, as has been pointed out in this research, it will be essential to resist this discourse and demand a critical approach to the true meaning of democratization in higher education to prevent the introduction of commercial considerations under a false umbrella of equality. Because, as with the concepts of "innovation," "utility," or "activity," democratizing university education requires not only that more people can access it but also that they access powerful knowledge due to it. It is, therefore, essential that in the face of the explosion of technological and pedagogical resources that offer unusual educational possibilities, teachers and university institutions can put them at the service of university education, which goes beyond technical preparation for a career and is intimately linked to tradition.

In conclusion, reflecting on the connection between educational means and ends is now more necessary than ever. New methodologies and technologies allow educational opportunities for meaningful education that were unimaginable only a few decades ago. Therefore, given the unprecedented possibilities that these new resources can offer to democratize powerful knowledge, teachers, and institutions must resist economic agendas that can subtly distort the way we think about these methodologies and technologies, making the mistake of introducing them into the classroom without contributing to the true purpose of higher education. In this sense, two aspects are fundamental: first, as this research has shown, it is essential to highlight the fallacy of opposing tradition with emerging methodologies and technologies. Far from being in opposition, it is necessary to recognize each element's potential to contribute to the other. Secondly, in the face of the neoliberal agendas infiltrating educational discourse, it is even more necessary to provide teachers with solid training in subjects such as the philosophy, theory, or anthropology of education to the detriment of the excessively didactic approaches that today make up the teacher training plans. It will be crucial to provide education professionals with solid anthropological knowledge since, in line with Gil-Cantero (2022), the challenge facing education in the coming years will be to determine which transformations of the multiple possibilities offered by emerging and converging technologies contribute to human perfectibility (the goal of education) and which resources derived from these technologies contribute to this transformation educationally.

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