

Preface

This book collects the abstracts of the ATEE Florence Spring Conference 2020-2021. The Conference has been organized by the Department of Education, Languages, Interculture, Literatures and Psychology of the University of Florence, under the auspices of Association of Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE). Due to the insurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Conference which was originally planned as a face-to-face event for May 2020, has been postponed to 28th and 29th October 2021 and held completely online. Despite the challenges that schools and universities are experiencing for the digital transformation imposed by the epidemic condition, the Organising Committee decided to confirm the meeting, although only online, to give all authors the opportunity to engage a public discussion on the role of digital technologies in our societies to promote social justice and equal opportunities within the context of Teacher Education. This was the main theme of the conference and the recent events corroborated the idea that a critical approach to the understanding of the implications of technological developments for education is needed today more than ever. All in all, the abstracts included in this book refer to the main sub-themes of the Conference, namely:

Teaching critical media/digital literacy in multicultural societies

Research on media and digital literacy has emphasised the potential of education to foster the critical understanding of the relationships between media, information and power, particularly referring to the media (mis)representation of – and the (online) hate speech against – historically marginalized communities, as well as to the underlying ideologies that naturalise – or question – discrimination and social injustice in the wider society. To what extent – and how – teacher training and education may reflect and incorporate critical media/digital literacy to prepare teachers to teach in multicultural contexts?

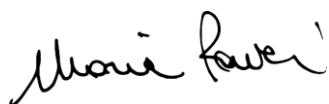
Decommodifying teacher (digital) education

Many practices and discourses of “digital education” nourish a wider process of reconfiguration of education into a commodity state, which strongly contrasts with the notion of education as a collective public good. Technology giants are reshaping the very nature of schooling on a vast scale. Through their philanthropic presence in schools, they are influencing the subjects teachers teach, the tools they use, and the learning models they adopt. How can teacher education and training about educational technology and/or media literacy critically approach the commodification of school education?

Digital technology and equity for inclusive teaching

Developments in the area of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) do not necessarily correspond to an increase of access, participation and learning. Data on the impact of ICT on social inclusion in a large sense are still controversial. However, some positive results have been found on the use of digital technologies to design inclusive teaching, especially when it is combined with approaches to design inspired by principles such as Universal Design for Learning. How to prepare future and in-service teachers to design digital inclusive teaching? What impact may teacher education about digital technology have on teachers’ capacity to design learning for all?

We thank all keynote speakers for having confirmed their participation, despite the uncertainty that accompanied the organization of the event. We are also greatly indebted to the referees, for the time spent in reviewing the abstracts, and the chairs of sessions who supported the delivery of Conference nurturing and moderating the discussion within the panels. Special thanks are finally due to the members of the Organising Committee, and all the bodies that collaborated for ATEE Florence Spring Conference 2020-2021. Last but not least, we thank all the authors and participants, without whom the conference would not have been possible.



Chair of the Conference