Chapter 8
Assessment for an Unprecedented Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the assessment literature related to the current crisis and compares the differences according to global and local perspectives. The qualitative analysis aims to examine the significant effects of unexpected COVID-19 challenge (restrictions, online learning, remote learning) on learning outcomes (how to redefine assessment in the pandemic) and to identify the best experiences collected (the key modifications assumed in assessment). The data collected from studies published between March 2020 and March 2021 were investigated using coding techniques and thematic analyses. The results of the content analysis demonstrate that in e-learning there are new types of feedback in e-classes, multi-person meetings, remote working, adaptive tools of assessment, and modified strategies. Anxiety, stress, and depression involve taking on new trends: new best practices, new forms of psychological counseling, new attitudes towards assessment and the reexamination of paradigms, theories, and models of representation knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

After March 2020, the entire world of education has passed from normal education to online classroom. According to the exceptional measures (e. g. isolation) there have been adopted different educational scenarios in various geopolitics landscapes and –in part- the most well-known institutes of advanced research shut down and become more hesitant to publish classic works in the fieldwork. It was a global test for academic world, for economic measures (recession), for communication networks and for the efforts to support discoveries (battle for innovation). The conferences have been temporarily closed, the usual scientific events were transformed into webinars, the critical exegesis (element of qualitative paradigm) has become dominant in all the branch of the research and the worry and concern for an undefined future have become a prototype for multiple professional branches. From my previous chapters regarding the assessment (Trif, 2017; Trif, 2019; Trif, 2020) of contemporary educational context,

we can observe that the discourses on assessment have changed considerably. This happened in order to rethink the topics and the themes which also covers the assessment and evaluation epistemology in spite of the new educational climate conditions, health risks, economic tensions, social pressure (social movement in terms of A. Bandura and human agency), new educational experience (e. g. hybrid learning) and so on. As a consequence of this new framework that has become a new normal, it is necessary to assume a different perspective translated into other key research questions or research objective: 1) does the eclectic literature in the field of assessment solve the new (unusual) problems in the classroom or in higher education? 2) how to delimit the most important and possibly unexpected best practices to conceptualize new conventions? These aims of the chapter are not similar to other intellectual exercises because neutralize the idea of assuming a polemic attitude within the current discourse; the role of the objectives is to personalize the approach. This meta-analysis and systematic review of literature was based on electronic search of relevant databases (ERIC, PsychINFO, PubMed, Scopus). The study selection was delineated according to the following steps: records identified through database searching (1000 studies), records screened by reading titles and abstracts (500 studies), eligibility (60 full text studies), studies included in meta-analysis (30). In fact, 30 studies selected as relevant literature for this chapter correspond with different analysis themes (from the seventh categories discriminated) and other reviews and researchers from the topic were not directly linked to these investigation objectives. Finally, the studies focused on the assessment and evaluation were integrated in current critical meta-analysis because they were included in the purpose of the study. Given this, the continuum of content areas indicates a multiplicity of assessment issues at the intersection with a variety of experiences and other concepts (therapy, multicultural therapy, social justice, acculturation, self-stigma, professional advocacy, supervision, applied training models, psychological practice, the cultural self-awareness assessment curriculum, socioeconomic status, privilege, intersectionality, race/ ethnicity, etc.). This illustrates the immense explicit dialogue between different forms of specialized knowledge and their impact on the identity of assessment. This chapter is unique in the literature review on assessment because the purpose is not to analyze and to compare multiple generations of authors and communication in the fieldwork. This chapter aims to classify and to map the knowledge that has been developed on the topic in times of Covid-19 crisis according to the new concepts – remote learning, remote teaching, remote laboratory, remote communication, remote assessment.

BACKGROUND

The qualitative research on the relevant topic between March 2020 and July 2021 reveals the following changes in official discourses on educational issues:

- Challenges concerning curriculum (in COVID crisis there was no interest on planning or less planning, research volume was not adapted to the new social constraints, curriculum was inadequate for the skills);
- Dilemmas about the validity of classic sources, methods and tools of assessment (assessment by portfolio and assessment without portfolio, in viva assessment and online assessment, formative and non-formative assessment, equity and assessment in the era of lack of devices, assessment-based on standards - PISA, TIMSS & PIRLS - versus assessment-based on evidence);

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