## Chapter XVI

# Globalisation and New Technology[1]:
## The Challenge for Teachers to Become "Translators" and Children, Knowledge Seekers

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## Abstract

*Whether globalisation results in a "métissage" of cultures or the hegemony of one culture will depend on the analytical and social skills of those who make up our communities. The introduction of new technologies in education such as laptops, MP3s, and Ipods and the new concept of mobile learning require an examination of the teacher's role in facilitating innovation, conveying culture, and acting as a conceptual translator. By modeling and teaching students critical and social skills, teachers can help tomorrow's citizens to use the new flow of information to meet the challenges of globalisation.*

# Introduction

Is new technology the magic bullet for education? In many places, policy makers have embraced new technologies as the answer to most of education's ills. They have persuaded the public that spending money on computers and high-speed Internet connections is a concrete, easy-to-understand, quantifiable way to improve education. New technology has been said to reduce dropout rates, increase innovation, and spark student enthusiasm. However, examination of discourse on these issues reveals that new information and communication technologies (NICT) might not be the whole solution.

As we get caught up in the mythical information society ideology, NICT's real usefulness and potential for education often gets overlooked. As its short history shows, NICT's role in education has to be analyzed in accordance with the dynamics of learning and teaching, as well as the aims of education.

The issues that arise in using new technologies in education are much the same as those raised by globalisation. New technologies give us rapid access to incredible quantities of information and vast new markets, but we should ask ourselves: do they always provide us with the tools for assessing and analyzing the information and how reliable is that information? Having the data is useless if we do not have the skills to make links and draw justifiable conclusions. Likewise, globalisation, which could indeed be facilitated by the use of new technologies, presupposes getting different cultures and subcultures to work together, not merely in parallel. Whether globalisation results in a *métissage* of cultures or the hegemony of one culture will depend on the analytical and social skills of those who make up our communities.

In this chapter,[2] we will look at the discourse in specific cases where educators have used new technologies in their classes, or government and administrators have implemented programs to promote the use of new technologies in education. The experiences in these cases may shed some light on the challenges we face in education with respect to new technologies as globalisation increasingly becomes a reality.

# Attitudes to Globalisation, New Technologies, and Education

Some depict globalisation as a kind of crusade, an *épopée*, a grand tale of actors. It is linked with the technological evolution of history, in which archaic resistance to opening up markets, states, and cultures has been overcome, and the right way of doing things has been revealed (Lessard, 1998). Others adopt a more critical

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