EX-ORDIUM

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
PEDAGOGY AND HATE SPEECH
di Anna Paola Paiano

In 2019 a man can die of insults by words typed by users who forget the weight of words have carried out a splitting of the analogical and digital identity through the screen filter (Turkle, 1997). Unarmed in the face of this linguistic slaughter we must activate reflections around pedagogical devices capable of counteracting hate speech by promoting processes of "gentle revolution" based on forgotten cognitive and value categories: freedom, patience, kindness, gentleness and gift. We are faced with a dangerous flow of events narrated and commented on with words, badly written and full of envy and violence and that is why we must redefine the style with which we speak on the net and spread the positive attitude of the choice of words with care and awareness, because words are important. Here we want to present a theoretical-practical pedagogical platform in order to increase the level of awareness of what is declared on social media. Therefore it is urged to convey the messages appropriately by promoting a debate that uses a respectful and non hostile language, avoiding that the network can become a free zone where everything is allowed and educating the reference communities to a responsibility understood levinasianamente, remembering that the insults are not arguments, as stated in "The Manifesto of communication not hostile to politics" and therefore we must begin to improve the level of public debate. And this is why it is deemed necessary to develop pedagogical reflections aimed at training women and men whose primary objective is to prevent and combat incitement to hatred, violence and intolerance.

Nel 2019 si può morire di insulti lapidati da parole digitate da utenti in rete che, dimentichi del peso della singola parola, hanno compiuto una scissione tra identità analogica e digitale attraverso il filtro dello schermo (Turkle, 1997). Dinanzi a questo massacro linguistico dobbiamo attivare delle riflessioni attorno a dispositivi pedagogici in grado contrastare gli hate speech promuovendo processi di "rivoluzione gentile" basata su categorie cognitive e valoriali dimenticate: libertà, gentilezza e dono. Ci troviamo di fronte a un pericoloso scorrere di eventi narrati e commentati con parole, mal scritte e piene di livore e di violenza ed è per questo che dobbiamo ridefinire lo stile con cui si parla in rete e diffondere l'attitudine positiva della scelta di parole con cura e consapevolezza, perchè le parole sono importanti.

Qui si vuole presentare una piattaforma pedagogica teorico-pratica al fine di aumentare il livello di consapevolezza nei confronti di quanto si dichiara sui social media e a veicolare i messaggi in maniera appropriata promuovendo un dibattito che utilizzi un linguaggio rispettoso e non ostile, evitando che la rete possa diventare una zona franca dove tutto è permesso ed educando le comunità di riferimento a una responsabilità intesa levinasianamente, ricordando che gli insulti non sono argomentazioni, come dichiarato ne "Il Manifesto della comunicazione non ostile per la politica" e pertanto si deve cominciare a migliorare il livello del dibattito pubblico. Si reputa dunque necessario sviluppare riflessioni di natura pedagogica orientate alla formazione di donne e uomini il cui obiettivo primario sia quello di prevenire e contrastare l'incitamento all'odio, alla violenza e all'intolleranza.

1. *Beyond the screen, we are alone*

Digito ergo sum. We are very sorry Mr. Cartesio if we use your quotes inappropriately to describe one of the most lively discussions related to social media and the affirmation of one's self on the web. *Homo sapiens* gave way to *homo videns* thanks to the use

of a screen to communicate, almost as if he were stretching his hand, using less and less words and more and more images.

As Umberto Galimberti describes, social media are the most formidable thought conditioners, as they radically change our way of thinking, transforming it from analytical, structured, sequential and referential, into generic, vague, global, holistic (Galimberti, 2005). Our phones are not accessories, as Sherry Turke states, but they are psychologically potent devices that change not just what we do.

I exist if I am on line. My opinion exist if i am tethered, if my phone is connected. So I am the words I write. I affirm my existence and my identity by typing. The discourse on identity can take shape, it can literally take shape, faced with a double movement in which metropolitanization and the crisis of the modern, as Abruzzese says, having overcome the strong construction of a collective metropolitan dimension realized almost entirely through television, media which has standardized and united, we are in a phase in which social media have deconstructed the real and have given birth to new forms of identity. This is the time of ephemeral stories, those that last 24 hours and then vanish, those that do not build our memory, those that deserve oblivion. But is this oblivion perhaps a departure from one's own responsibilities towards what one writes?

This writing for itself, without creating conversations, produces, in my opinion, a strong departure from that sense of collectivity typical of the modern and globalization, it is a narcissistic movement that the digital ego produces. I am what I type, for better or for worse, and I like myself.

Social media killed solidarity. This is a strong statement, based on the network individualism[1] theory of Rainie e Wellman (2012).

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[1] Dall'altra, nell'individualismo connesso le persone riscoprono la propria tendenza ad una qualche forma di coesione – magari ridotta all'essenziale *togetherness* di Bakardjieva (2005), come semplice «essere insieme» – non tanto nell'appartenenza comunitaria o nella partecipazione associativa, ma nell'essere

The time of solidarity belongs to the function and history of the mass media, although this story has often been written in such a way as to believe that the consumer industry was the main factor of disaffection with social bonds. The degree of emotionality and spectacle of generalist language succeeds or at least has succeeded in constructing solidarity-type sensitivities which are certainly more distinct than the institutional and intellectual traditions linked to all ideological forms and vertices of community. But social media announce a reverse process. Even so the media are connected to the qualities of generalist languages – they have the ability, or at least they can have it, to be powerful individual prostheses, intense expressions of their own person, and precisely because of this precious anti-visual quality, they can also become destructive, catastrophic factors, viral with regard to the traditions of solidarity, values – privileged by collective identities. It is true that – in the practice of networks, in the natives of cyberspace – there is a strong community need, but it is an alternative to historical models of solidarity, to social and identity links that characterize it as a modern quality. That of social media is closer to the law of the pack and not of values.

Sherry Turkle said Texting has killed Empathy. It is a very strong statement but she analyzes that "Across generations, technology is implicated in this assault on empathy. We've gotten used to being connected all the time, but we have found ways around conversation – at least from conversation that is open-ended and spontaneous, in which we play with ideas and allow ourselves to be fully present and vulnerable. But it is in this type of conversation – where we learn to make eye contact, to become aware of another person's posture and tone, to comfort one another and respectfully challenge one another – that empathy and intimacy flourish. In these conversations, we learn who we are."

parte di reti connesse quasi casualmente, prive di una vera spinta aggregativa (Rainie & Wellman, 2012).

While in online conversation, in a typed conversation, we lost our image in the mirror, we lost the sense of alterity.

We only recognized ourselves in a selfish way. We lost memory, we lost empathy. but we are resilience and we want to believe that technology asks us to confront human values, to re-create a way of use technology in which people first want to talk and touch other people. We have to think how we, as pedagogists, can do the difference. in which way. and we are not looking for the simplest and shortest way, and, moreover, we do not want to face up with an anachronistic theory that demonizes ICT and young habits. We therefore want to analyze the reflections on the theme of the relationship between media and social reality, favoring an ecological perspective, but in the sense of systems that cohabit and collaborate in the construction of an environment that is not only medial, but also economic, cultural and social (Morin, 1980).

2. *We do not feed the hatred*

And it is in this loneliness that one can die of hatred. In 2019 one can die of insults stoned to death by words typed by web users who, forgetting the weight of the single word, have made a split between analogue and digital identity through the screen filter (Turkle, 1997).

Faced with this linguistic massacre we must activate reflections around pedagogical devices capable of counteracting hate speech by promoting processes of "gentle revolution" based on cognitive and value categories nullified by the de-responsibility for writing: solidarity, empathy, memory.

We are faced with a dangerous flow of events narrated and commented on with words, badly written and full of envy and violence and that is why we must redefine the style with which we speak on the net and spread the positive attitude of the choice of words with care and awareness, because words are important.

From the epistemological point of view, first and then methodologically, in this paper we have taken up the challenge of not conceptually opposing the offline and online, but of opposing

positive constructs to deteriorated social relations that give life to the linguistic violence of our times. Our option wants to anchor itself to the hermeneutical vision of the relationship between means of communication and redefinition of social relations: a perspective that intends to understand the union and synergy of mediated relational universes and unmediated relational universes. Within these two fundamental intersections, people cross paths of identity construction and orientation in public space that imply the management of complex communication skills and the use of multiple cognitive resources, including the symbolic resources offered by the media and those that can be reached by face to face relationships. The same availability of different devices within the home, which Rainie and Wellman read in terms of chance for the development of forms of netting together (idem), which can instead be read as a form of progressive social isolation despite spatial coexistence, as in Turkle's research entitled Alone together (Turkle, 2011). So our role, as pedagogist, is to face up to the complexity of our age opposing a new sense of democracy, creating a new sense of community starting from the construction of a public and free space of education. We mean a re-new educative environment animated by three concepts:

Solidarity, as collective link. We have to drive our pedagogical efforts to a new attention toward human beings. Moreover in this present time, that tens to kill the humanity and promote solitudes, we have to catch the uniqueness power of fragility here intended as the honnethianan intersubjectivity that recognize the strength of the others and make it the point of revenge, recourse. As Aristotele said, friendship is a fundamental feature of human beings, and solidarity is closely linked to this. How can we construct a society without solidarity? As intellectuals, we must be open to confrontation between different ideas and purposes, understand the reasons for dissent, the critique of tradition, to give life in public dimensions to a debate open to all points of view, where conflicting voices and different are not feared and trivialized as provocative. In many cases, democracy is also this, an open

confrontation on our future. True solidarity aspires to a life together, making ourselves similar to the other.

Empathy, putting oneself in someone else's shoes. We have to construct a dialogical pedagogy which provides to assimilate other subjectivities and to implement the grade of participation for the construction of a world less violent and focused to consider the differences and feeding the empathic processes. here we need Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence enhancing empathy as the ability to understand the point of view of the other. In this way the design activity to construct an open and solidarity community needs of men and women with a strong empathic nucleus that enable interaction, exchange, dialogue of a plural nature that breaks the boundaries of the present time and finds value in planning for the future.

Collective memory. So we need solidarity and empathy, but we also need memory. Because our time is full of ephemeral stotytelling that does not fix stories. But Ricoeur says us that the everyone's identity, everyone's story is never the product of an individual and egocentric act, but it is always the result of all the encounters experienced in the course of existence. In other words, the Self of each one is the result of many combinations, of many interactions, of all the experiences acquired in the family, in the various areas of life. Therefore we must listen and respect the stories of others because they are part of our identity. Also, Ricoeur says that the Self is built also through stories, the stories they told us from children and, in this sense, converges with Beizon and Brumer in attributing great importance to the narrative: we are our stories as representation of the internal and external world. And this world is made up by a plurality traced by the lives of men and women. and their storytelling is also a co-construction of collective memory, derived from mirroring that each of us and translating with respect to the differences of each other into a unique and common story.

3. *Conclusion*

Our hopes for this essay is to are that it engender discussion on this topic as reply to a more and more society beyond the screen featured by a great sense of loneliness and solitude and on which the hate speech become stronger and stronger. We hope to work jointly for a public and free space for education in which actively engaging critical analysis of how hate speech and opinions, for example, are founded in institutionalized systems of privilege and subordination. We have to systematically discriminated against marginalized voices, to counter unequal representation.

As Taylor puts it, «our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. The Silencing of Words that can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being» (Taylor, 1992, p. 25).

If we relate this question to the perspectives described earlier, we can see traces of the guidelines for how teachers should respond to hate speech in education: to prevent words that wound (Appelbaum, 2003; 2008), to establish a critical dialogue (Mayo, 2004) and to use affirmative action pedagogy (Boler, 2004). An affirmative action pedagogy to prevent the hate speech and not to cure it. Megan Boler discusses a different tactic for responding to inequality in her classes which she has called affirmative action pedagogy. Nothing that 'power inequities institutionalized through economies, gender roles, social class, and corporate-owned media ensure that all voices do not carry the same weight,' so that 'different voices pay different prices for the words they choose to utter'. Boler combines elements from Butler's work (communication as a force for rethinking) with elements from critical race theory (freedom of speech is not equal in an unequal society). With this in mind she formulates affirmative action

pedagogy, where teachers have a responsibility to balance the power relations in school and society.

One encourages a voicing of the hostilities in order that they may be critically addressed; the other privileges marginalized voices by setting ground rules to create a space in which, uniquely, the unheard may be heard.

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