ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

Year 2 - number 46 Wednesday 14 november 2018

The social and psychological aspect in e-Learning

What role do the social and psychological aspects play in e-Learning mode education?

When talking about e-Learning we need to consider training under every facet.

When it comes to online education, it is of fundamental importance to consider, among the various others, also the social aspects.
The writer and researcher Guglielmo Trentin, states, in "The educational and training sustainability of e-Learning", that "*fostering the social dimension of education in e-Learning means to consider Internet not only as a vehicle for the distribution of e-content but, above all, as a resource able to encourage distance interaction between all the actors of the training process* ".

Trentin, in his book, focuses on the value of socialization and how important this for the e-Learning approach. The social dimension is possible also thanks to the support of network technologies that allow the creation of training paths as an interactive and collaborative form, without ever losing focus on the learner-user. We should consider e-Learning platforms as environments in which people meet (as it happens in real life) and interact with each other as in a sort of learning community.

How important is it "knowing how to relate" in an e-Learning path?

Originally, traditional training was based upon the relation between students and teachers and most of the time the latter "escaped" from students' requests for dialogue, meant as knowledge transfer. Dialogue is not only this: it can have not only a cognitive but also and above all formative connotation.

E-Learning fills the typical gaps of traditional training, as it allows relationships between teacher and pupil based not only on educational background, but also as on the sharing of ideas, thus creating new opportunities.

Trentin says that network technologies' tools are needed for socialization to play an important role in online training. These are tools designed to allow students to share their experience with others in order to "collaborate" together and discuss the training that is being undertaken.

Also psychology plays an important role in this context: involving and being involved is essential for the student. He/she acquires an important concept that is the importance of feeling part of a system, in which he/she has a high decision-making power in defining with the teacher the topics and objectives to be achieved (something that does not happen in traditional training).

Considering social and psychological aspects in a training path means overcoming and breaking down the traditional obstacles present in one-way teaching relationships, in favour of a learning model based on the user's relationships. e-Learning is a tool that can give a sense to self-construction through others.