

Farewell to linear reading: new ways of reading and telling about us



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"The technology
alone is not enough. We also
have to put the heart into it".
Jane Goodall.

Having coffee as family, gathering around the table and telling a story, is more enjoyable when quite a few people have something to contribute. The story is enriched by including different tones or perspectives, stand out situations that could go unnoticed by others.

Information and communications technology (ICT) make possible to transcend face-to-face limit and to create collaborative stories, in a mediated way, so the tools are appropriate according to circumstances and the user's own convenience or benefit.



This situation occurs in parallel with software and hardware. If we talk according to formative, research and educational terms, these components are created to fulfill a specific function, but users are the ones who find multiple ways to appropriate about it. They imagine other possibilities that contribute in their transformation or update.

María Elena Giraldo Ramírez, Ph.D. in Audiovisual Communication and Advertising and member of the Education Research Group in Virtual Environments (EAV from the Spanish acronym) of the UPB, explains that now the simple technological utilitarianism is demystified, and quality accompaniment is thought by of ICT in different contexts of society.

For 17 years, this research group belonging to the School of Education and Pedagogy, is concerned about designing formative coherent proposals according with people's needs, integrated with analogue or digital information and communications technology.

"There is not need on teaching how to use technological devices, but thinking about what happens to us as subjects when faced the use of technology and how we rationalize it, how we make it our own and how it transforms us", explains Giraldo Ramírez.

Hiperhexus is a methodology, that supported by collaborative writing, offers a way to appropriate ICT for the different areas of knowledge production.



"Hiper nexus strengthens conventional writing, in addition to technological mediation and collaborative work". Gloria María Álvarez Cadavid

This perspective implies creating individual and more specific formative proposals based on observation in the field. Evaluated processes do not occur in an equivalent way in all users and contexts.

On the way to achieve its objective, EAV uses an interdisciplinary vocation that reflects about the training process accompanied by a guiding action or mediation. From the triad: technology, communication and education, in which designers, communicators, pedagogues and engineers take part strengthen the proposals they deploy.

In this dialogue between different knowledge, and with the backing from Production of Texts and Hypertexts Literature Specialization program students, a concern about how to create narratives that could be linked among them and also had a supporting software appears. This question would be the origin of a research project focused on hypertextuality and known as Hiper nexus.

An education, contents and knowledge project

Speaking on hypertext documents does not imply referring exclusively to digitality, since we are hypertexts beings, meaning that all the time we are in the disarticulation of the linear logic of information. When we read a magazine or a newspaper, we jump from one article to another without a predetermined order or, in the case of orality, when a story is told, it is possible to stop, to emphasize a situation that evokes the narration and then, recommence what was proposed at the beginning. In digitality this is understood as hypertextuality.

Hiper nexus project consists on a collaborative hypertext writing methodology in digital content production, associated with research lines: Uses and social appropriation of technology on diverse contexts formation; and, New teaching and learning environments.

"Although with apparently simple functional characteristics, hypertext goes beyond connecting words, what it interrelates are information, thoughts and knowledge, forming multiple universes of meanings, networks of gist, as it happens in human mind", Gloria María Álvarez Cadavid affirms, research group coordinator and teacher in charge of the project.

Let's link stories

In Hipernexus, a person begins to tell a story, then another person who can continue it intervenes, expand or mediate and, simultaneously, all members of the team are aware of the transformation the story undergoes, while nurturing and strengthening collaboratively both the exercise of traditional writing as the integration of ICT in education.

"Technology not only does things for us, but also with us".
María Elena Giraldo Ramírez.

Several moments or "creative stages" are necessary for achieving this, as they are named by the methodology in the platform Hipernexus:

1. **Schemed conceptual design:** this stage serves as the initial structure and is carried out by each member who will participate in the preparation of the future text constructing a concept map.

2. **Narrative processing:** it constitutes putting into words the concept design, a coherent text is organized and emphasized on the links and connections that will be included.

3. **Publishing:** it is the moment of final disclosure of the contents and generated links.



Graphic interface.



"Technology does not determine society: it shapes it. But neither does society determine technological innovation: it uses it".
Manuel Castells.

4. Dialogue: it occurs during the writing process, when the texts are read, the author is recognized, and the connections are identified to form a large collaborative document that contains hyperlinks, Álvarez Cadavid explains.

These four moments involve meaningful changes in relation to the traditional way of writing, such as "the reader stops being a passive actor and begins to interact with the text and with the author and other readers indirectly, it means, he plays a decisive role in the use and interpretation of the document", says Álvarez Cadavid. In other words, Hipernexus could be applied not only in education but in the business sector because it does not have a prescribed use. It can be adapted to the needs of the user, a factor that becomes one of the biggest differentiators of this methodology that has its





Gloria María Álvarez Cadavid, project researcher.

greatest ally in writing.

Texts can be enriched when audiovisual resources are linked another distinguishing element. It validates the creation of Hipernexus as a digital platform. It brings teachers and students closer to the appropriation of ICT for learning and knowledge management purposes. It develops a new type of computer tool and reuses or updates group learning elements because it has repository properties for the activities carried out by the different teams.

Currently, this platform + methodology is used in the University by the Master in Education, in the Digital Content for Education course, here the content ceases to be a product and becomes creative processes of collaborative construction where learning transits. Hipernexus is part of the technology portfolio that the UPB can transfer to other market sectors.



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Data sheet

Project name: methodological proposal designing and develop of a synchronous and asynchronous system for the collaborative creation of hypertext and hypermedial documents to strength the teaching and learning processes in the field of Higher Education

Keywords: Hypertext; Collaborative writing; Appropriation of ICT; Digital content.

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