



Crucial Topics in Foundations of Education: International Perspectives

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Google and the End of the Teacher?

Digitalization of Schools and the Changing Purpose of Education

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Jack Ma, the former CEO of Chinese tech company Ali Baba, claims in an interview that education worldwide needs to change. “Knowledge” is no longer a matter for education; computers will provide that. School should instead function as a place where students learn to be innovative, creative and to dream. Teachers should stop lecturing and coach the students through personalized learning trajectories.

Today digital educational platforms organize practices of schooling all over the world, and they are produced and sold by multinational companies such as Google, Apple and Microsoft. Through these digital products, commercial business actors define what school is; what is considered as useful “knowledge”, how students can learn and how teachers can teach.

Departing from a study of persons working at ed-tech companies this lecture will engage with a dream about a school where students’ learning is extremely individualized, knowledge is something placed in cyberspace and the teacher – if needed at all – is a coach ready to meet students far beyond school buildings and timetables in order to foster entrepreneurs for the knowledge economy. Time, place, authority, knowledge are fundamental parts of education but get negotiated through the invitation of business actors into school. The commercial actors within the ed-tech business are not only retailers of digital platforms, but also of an imagined future of education shaping the conditions of today.