

Technology in the post-pandemic world of education – a great servant but a bad master

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A close-up photograph of an Iron Man Mark III action figure. The figure is primarily gold and red, with its chest arc reactor glowing brightly. The background is dark, making the figure stand out. The figure's right hand is extended forward, with the palm facing the viewer, and the arc reactor is visible through the chest plate.

IRON MAN

MARK III · HOT TOYS · PHOTO BY NOVA

TECHNOLOGY SAVES THE DAY?

TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING?



Ed-tech speech

Digital technologies revolutionizing learning! Since A.D. X. (Koch, 1973; Postman, 1992)

“Education is broken, technology will fix it”. (Williamson 2020, Birch et al. 2020, Mertala, 2019)

Ed-tech speech is characterized by value-laden, political and deterministic language that leaves no room for alternative interpretations or doubt. (Mertala, 2019, s. 27)





Educational policy

National educational visions, policy recommendations and conclusions are constructed by a dominant global discourse of technological utopia. Some official documents even tend to be based on the blogs and vision papers of consulting companies, Silicon Valley edtech companies, “techno-evangelists” and the like – while research not consulted to the fullest



Technology for better learning?

- Open and distance learning (ODL) can be highly beneficial for advancing equity and access to education.
- Not automatically – focus on inclusive pedagogy, learning design and support for learning.
- Pedagogical accessibility
- Critical lens to edtech – good servant but a bad master



Safeguards and critical considerations

1. A step out of the "digital box", space and time for critical reflection. Where are we now, where do we want to go?
2. Ethical and environmental considerations should not be overlooked (total mass of technosphere exceeds that of biosphere (Takkinen, 2022))
3. Focus on inclusive pedagogy, learning design and support structures (also in terms of monetary investment).
4. Technology serving, not driving the development.
5. Emancipation and engagement of teachers in defining and creating desired digital futures!



Thank you!

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*"Freedom is measured by the amount
of control you have over the things
upon which you are dependent."*

— C. Wright Mills