



Educational software monitors and incapacitates students.



The Swiss association 'EconomieSuisse' has called to intensify the use of digital opportunities at school for individual student support. The textbook would be replaced by electronic devices with supervising tutorials. The students are apparently supposed to learn individually with the help of digital media, but would this also promote maturity, self-reliance and independent thinking?

EconomieSuisse, umbrella organization of the Swiss economy, recently called to intensify the use of the digital opportunities in elementary school for individual student support. Especially the subjects of German and Mathematics are supposed to be taught digitally in future.

In so doing EconomieSuisse refers to Joerg Draeger and Ralph Mueller-Eiselt of the German Bertelsmann Foundation. The two experts are convinced that the digital future of learning will proceed machine-controlled and individualized. The textbook should therefore be replaced by electronic devices with supervising learning programs.

Joerg Draeger: "The software 'Knewton' screens anyone who uses the learning program. The software minutely observes and records what, how and at what speed a student is learning." With these data the software attempts to "optimize" the students in a given direction.

Politicians and leading media in Switzerland and Germany are also promoting the introduction of "digital education" as an opportunity for individualized learning. This new school reform promises to solve many quality deficiencies in present education: Children should use electronic media such as computers, interactive digital tables or tablets in order to become more independent in the future, more competent and better qualified for their day-to-day work. At least this has been promised by IT companies like Google, Microsoft, SAP or Deutsche Telekom – which are the driving forces behind this reform. But competent experts critical of this reform are raising their voices. Not only do they express massive concern, but based on experiences of other countries and on many scientific studies, they classify "digital education" as a huge step backwards rather than one of progress, or even as a danger.

The students seem to learn individually using digital media, but in reality they put into practice only what the learning program says, with no mutual reaction to or from other students

. This leads to the disempowerment of the students and ultimately enables the construction of a system for the control of humans.

The Swiss think-tank Gottlieb-Duttweiler-Institut (GDI) sees this development as follows: "We are thus entering an age of self-imposed dependence – in a sense a kind of lifelong childhood. Big Brother transforms into Big Mother who cares for us and makes complex decisions for us. Less prosaic: "We are mothered by a surveillance apparatus."

from rg.and.hm./js.

Sources:

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