

Contemporary challenges of MIL: Towards an education for emancipation¹

Desafíos contemporáneos de la AMI: hacia una educación para la emancipación

Desafios contemporâneos da AMI: rumo a uma educação para a emancipação

José Manuel Corona-Rodríguez
ITESO Guadalajara
México
joma_corona@hotmail.com

Guillermo Orozco Gómez
Universidad de Guadalajara
Mexico
gorozco@cencar.udg.mx

Abstract: This article explores the contemporary challenges of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and its potential to promote emancipatory education. Through a historical analysis, it examines MIL's evolution and its consolidation as a critical tool for civic participation in the digital environment. The article addresses the transformations brought by the digital age to communication systems, the information economy, and regulatory frameworks, emphasizing the importance of updating MIL to address the platformization of education, datafication, and generative technologies. It proposes MIL as a vehicle for active and reflective citizenship, capable of transforming the relationship between education, communication, and technology.

Keywords:

Media Literacy, Active Citizenship, Emancipatory Education, Datafication, Generative Technologies, Platformization

Resumen: La Alfabetización Mediática Informativa (AMI) ha evolucionado significativamente desde sus orígenes, transformándose en un conjunto de habilidades esenciales para navegar de manera crítica y efectiva en el complejo ecosistema digital actual. Este trabajo realiza un breve recorrido histórico de la AMI, desde sus inicios como un análisis de los efectos

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de los medios sobre la población hasta su consolidación como un campo de estudio que promueve la participación ciudadana y el pensamiento crítico. Se exploran los desafíos que plantea la AMI en la era digital, como la evolución de las plataformas y sistemas de comunicación, la transformación económica de los procesos informacionales, las mutaciones socioculturales orientadas a la participación, la plataformización de la educación, la datificación de la realidad, los marcos regulatorios y de gobernanza y los retos de las tecnologías generativas. Se propone una actualización de la AMI que incorpore una perspectiva crítica de las tecnologías digitales, promoviendo una ciudadanía activa y reflexiva capaz de navegar las complejidades del entorno digital en búsqueda de una educación emancipatoria.

Palabras clave:

Alfabetización mediática, Ciudadanía activa, Educación emancipadora, Datificación, Tecnologías generativas, Plataformización

Resumo: Este artigo explora os desafios contemporâneos da Alfabetização Midiática Informacional (AMI) e seu potencial para promover uma educação emancipatória. A partir de uma análise histórica, examina-se a evolução da AMI e sua consolidação como uma ferramenta crítica para a participação cidadã no ambiente digital. O texto aborda as transformações trazidas pela era digital nos sistemas de comunicação, na economia da informação e nos marcos regulatórios, destacando a importância de atualizar a AMI para enfrentar a plataformização da educação, a datificação da realidade e as tecnologias generativas. Propõe-se que a AMI seja um veículo para uma cidadania ativa e reflexiva, capaz de transformar a relação entre educação, comunicação e tecnologia.

Palavras-chave:

Alfabetização midiática, Cidadania ativa, Educação emancipatória, Datificação, Tecnologias generativas, Plataformização

1. Media and Information Literacy: A Journey Under Construction

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) has evolved significantly since its origins at the beginning of the 20th century, becoming essential skills to interact critically with digital information (Grizzle & Wilson, 2011). Beyond the mere acquisition of technical skills, MIL encompasses political, educational, and historical dimensions. (Andrelo, 2023; Martínez-Bravo et al., 2020). Initially focused on analyzing the effects of the media (Fedorov, 2011; Potter, 2013), MIL was institutionalized in universities in the 1980s, broadening its focus to the critical study of the media (Garro-Rojas, 2020). Through the Grunwald Declaration (1982), UNESCO recognized MIL's importance in promoting citizen participation and informed decision-making.

Unlike Europe and the United States, the development of media literacy in Latin America has been a more heterogeneous process with its characteristics enriched by the contributions of researchers such as Freire, Martín-Barbero, Kaplún, Quiroz and Orozco (Aparici et al., 2024; Mateus et al., 2020). Their work laid the foundations for educommunication in the region, promoted by organizations such as CIESPAL and ALAIC (Trejo-Quintana, 2017). Since then, the relationship between communication and education has been consolidated as a central axis of research in Latin America, leaving a legacy that has inspired new generations of researchers and laid the foundations for future contributions.

Beyond teaching technical skills, media literacy seeks to train critical citizens capable of understanding, analyzing, and producing media messages (Orozco, 2001). This approach, which promotes learning, empowerment, and active participation, has adapted to an increasingly complex digital environment, encompassing transmedia literacies (Corona Rodríguez, 2018). The importance of this literacy is accentuated in contexts where digital inequalities are significant, demanding inclusive educational policies. However, new challenges arise, such as overcoming the technical and critical division and guaranteeing equitable access to media literacy.

2. MIL in the face of new challenges

For MIL to continue to be a conceptual commitment capable of responding to the challenges of today, it must consider the following challenges on its agenda: A) the evolution of communication platforms and systems, B) the economic transformation based on information processes, C) sociocultural mutations oriented towards consumption, agency and participation, D) regulatory and governance frameworks, E) the advance of platformization in education, F) the growing datafication of reality, and more recently, G) the emergence of generative technologies and mass automation. We propose to reflect on these challenges below and develop proposals that seek a necessary update of MIL as a conceptual category and a socio-educational project aimed at understanding and transforming the education-communication relationship.

3. Communication platforms and systems

During the early years of the Internet, a supposed democratization of the creation of content and information was evoked with much hope and little critical sense, allowing anyone with access to the Internet to share their ideas and opinions with a global audience. Mass self-communication (Castells, 2010) helped to understand the material circumstances and the Digital interactions that make it possible, only in particular and limited cases, to fulfill the promise of the Internet as a space where communication managed to break down temporal and spatial barriers. Although this happened to a certain extent, it is also true that other problems arose and new gaps opened up for the population, especially in the global south, or for historically marginalized social classes (Villela & Contreras, 2021; López, 2023).

Establishing communication platforms and systems has given rise to new forms of interaction and participation, facilitating the creation of online communities based on shared interests or causes. Social movements (Sola-Morales & Sabariego, 2020) such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wallstreet protests, 8M or YoSoy134, as well as the formation of participatory and fan communities (Corona Rodríguez, 2018) would not have been possible without the informational convergence of the media and communication systems, but over time, we have also been able to verify some of the characteristics of the digital communication context that drove these forms of participation have also led to other social challenges such as the spread of misinformation (Valverde et al, 2022), the creation of information bubbles, algorithmic biases (Waisbord, 2020), risks to privacy (Véliz, 2021; Zuboff, 2018), harmful effects on mental health

(Sadagheyani & Tatari, 2021), or the consolidation of monopolistic technological conglomerates with undue power of influence (Klinge et al, 2023), which are among some aspects that remain fundamental to analyze, question and above all cultivate under a critical consciousness from the MIL.

This transformation also raises questions about how platforms and their algorithms determine what content is shown to citizens, what type of information they collect, and how it is used. In a world mediated by platforms and communication systems based on algorithms, informational media literacy must include a critical understanding of how the information we receive is selected and personalized, thus questioning the possible biases and manipulations that automated systems introduce and propagate. This makes MIL a constantly updating field since platforms and their modes of operation change rapidly and require users to adapt continually. This task goes far beyond the efforts and scope that formal education can achieve, which is why MIL as a conceptual proposal and educational project can and should promote positions much more oriented towards the production of culture and informal learning.

4. Economic transformation of information processes

The economic dimension that supports current communication systems and platforms has changed dramatically with digitalization and automation, affecting both the production of media content and personal information and access to it. In the not-so-distant past, the media depended on traditional subscription and advertising models, but today, the economic power of social media platforms and search engines, such as Google or Facebook, has drastically altered this logic (Taricco, 2020; Sued, 2020).

Today, only a handful of companies dominate the communication and information market, which has led traditional media to face significant economic challenges and the need to adapt to new business models. This has consequences (yet to be fully known) for people who see their information sources and communication channels limited to a few companies that cover almost everything.

This change in the media and communication economy has directly affected the objectives pursued by media and information literacy. Users no longer need to learn to access and analyze information but also understand the economic interests behind producing and disseminating content and information. In this sense, today, more than ever, MIL must promote

training and an agenda that helps people be aware of the economic incentives and dynamics that shape the information environment and the dynamics of digital production and consumption. To the extent possible, it must also enable forms of organized collective participation that confront the individualization promoted by current economic and information systems.

Another crucial aspect of economic transformation is the emergence of new labor and creative markets. Digitalization has exploited the creative enthusiasm of workers, especially young people (Zafra, 2017), and outlined work alternatives that they find in creating content, which is a path to hope. In most cases, it only ends up being job insecurity and renewed forms of exploitation (Sued, 2022). From this perspective, MIL must address the relationship between media and information, the economic conditions of those who produce content, and the new forms of work mediated by platforms that generate inequalities and concentration of economic power.

It is essential to demand greater transparency and regulation of technology companies, especially concerning the management of personal data, algorithms, and business models based on the administration of human interactions (Gómez-Cruz, 2022). Without attention to this dimension, large corporations will continue to shape the digital environment according to their commercial interests, limiting plurality and equity. In the educational field, media literacy is crucial to creating critical environments aware of the effects of platformization (Kap, 2024). As platforms become integrated into schools, educators and students must understand how they not only facilitate access to knowledge but also condition educational interactions and student data collection.

5. Sociocultural mutations aimed at consumption, agency, and participation

Sociocultural transformations, driven by digitalization, have altered how people consume information, interact, and participate in public space. Today, some individuals are not passive media consumers but can create and share communicative and informative products, giving them greater agency in their relationship with information, media, and communication systems. Digital platforms allow people to become key actors in the public conversation, whether by participating in debates, promoting social movements, or building online communities (Corona Rodríguez, 2018).

However, this participatory potential is not without challenges and harmful effects. Online participation dynamics are often mediated by algorithms that prioritize the most controversial or emotional content, which can foster polarization and misinformation (Sued, 2020), which implies a severe questioning of what kind of agency and participation is promoted and allowed by the big tech companies that dominate the current communicative spectrum (Apoorva et al., 2023; Klinge et al., 2023). Considering the above, MIL must analyze and question how people can participate in these digital environments, understanding the algorithmic biases and power structures that can influence their interactions. This implies promoting and making visible skills of critical consumption, responsible, ethically informed production, and social responsibility. Digital culture has transformed expectations around authenticity and representation, meaning that communication platforms have promoted models of influence and success based on visibility, creating a culture of exposure that, while encouraging individual agency, also poses risks such as image anxiety, social comparison, and consumption of superficial content. MIL must adapt to this environment, helping people (significantly younger people) navigate the complexities of digital culture and promoting a more conscious and thoughtful use of technologies and screens.

In a context where technology platforms encourage fragmented and personalized interactions through algorithms, often aimed at maximizing individual consumption, a consumerist trend is generated that lacks reflexive sense (Bentley et al., 2021). Faced with this, users are immersed in information bubbles reinforcing their beliefs and preferences, limiting plural dialogue and meaningful interactions. Contexts in which MIL can promote a critical understanding of these dynamics help people question how their media consumption habits and platform design affect their interactions and social relationships.

On the other hand, media literacy can promote a critical attitude that goes beyond the passive analysis of media and information, encouraging activism and commitment to social causes and problems. By providing people with tools to understand the biases, interests, and power structures that dominate the information environment, MIL can contribute to people assuming an active role in information production and citizen participation in favor of an agency that echoes social needs and challenges.

6. Regulatory and governance frameworks

The institutional dimension has been vital in shaping the information and digital environment. As digital platforms have established themselves as dominant players in global communication, governments and international organizations have implemented regulations to protect users' rights, combat disinformation, and ensure equitable access to information (Apoorva et al., 2023). In this sense, MIL must also promote a critical understanding of the legal and regulatory implications that affect access to information, modes of participation, and the importance of privacy, especially for school-aged people.

In this context, it is important to ask how data protection policies influence how users manage their personal information. What role do regulations on disinformation and censorship play in shaping digital participation spaces? Fundamental questions for an update of the MIL capable of promoting an approach based on the protection of digital rights, the public and institutional policies that protect them, and the limits and responsibilities associated with using these platforms and communication technology in general.

The development of public media literacy policies is crucial to guarantee equal access to the tools and skills necessary to participate in the current information environment, especially in contexts of inequality. These policies must be inclusive and consider disparities in access to technology and education. In addition, it is essential to implement regulations that combat disinformation and censorship, promoting a healthy and democratic digital space. The dispute between Elon Musk and the Brazilian government (Nicas, 2024) exemplifies the need for effective regulation to prevent economic interests from prevailing over the law and the rights of citizens. Collaboration between national and international institutions is essential to advance media literacy and regulate the media and technological environment.

Strengthening Democracy is one of the main benefits of implementing effective regulatory frameworks in the digital and media sphere since by providing citizens with critical tools to evaluate information and actively participate in the public sphere, a more robust and genuinely participatory democratic culture is fostered. As social, political, and economic interactions move to the digital realm, people must develop technical skills and a digital ethic that promotes responsibility and commitment to democratic values. MIL thus becomes an essential pillar to ensure critical citizenship that harmoniously combines virtual and non-virtual participation. The ability of governments and international organizations to impose restrictions on large technology companies, as demonstrated by the recent European Union regulation (2021) on Artificial Intelligence, is crucial to maintaining the balance of power and protecting citizens' rights. Many decisions, such as the algorithms that determine what content is visible and affects the flow of information and people's participation, are made opaquely, without users' knowledge or informed consent. MIL must promote an approach that demands greater transparency in the operation of technological platforms, for which accountability and the reduction of technological opacity are fundamental.

7. Platformization of education

The so-called platforms are socio-technical systems formed by companies with specific economic interests and ideologies. These are characterized by owning and exercising ownership of the infrastructure, providing services, processing large volumes of data through automated processes, and basing their operation on algorithmic logic (Srnicsek, 2016). Platformization is then understood as a process articulated mainly from three phases: the commercial intermediation of relations between subjects, the datafication of reality, and the governance of the body and social practices (Sued, 2022). Platformization has reconfigured educational scenarios and processes, transforming them into dynamics, which are increasingly mediated by digital platforms that collect and process large volumes of data to personalize the learning experience. This intensification of datafication raises questions about privacy, autonomy of educational systems, and dependence on closed socio-technical systems, shaping educational practices in a direction contrary to liberalization driven by Freire (1968) and other Latin American educators (Trejo-Quintana, 2017). The rise of platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Canvas has significantly transformed the material conditions in which the

educational process takes place or is cultivated, giving rise to a platformization that, while facilitating access to materials and interaction, also poses challenges for media literacy, as it limits the autonomy and transparency of educational processes.

This advance requires Media and Information Literacy (MIL) to focus on access to information and the ability to interact critically with educational platforms. This is especially important for institutional decision-makers in educational centers since, although students are taught to use these digital tools, they are rarely guided to reflect on how these platforms structure their access to knowledge and how this can influence their learning process.

Platform-mediated education also raises questions about data privacy, primarily because these tools collect personal information that can be used for commercial purposes. This has sparked the interest of researchers and communities in various latitudes to denounce the harmful effects of platforms in how they condition the processes and relationships between students and teachers (interview Faro digital). In addition, they involve forms of sophisticated exclusion, which, under the pretext of supposed innovation, leave out vulnerable population groups, such as students without access to the Internet or technology or older teachers without sufficient operational training to overcome the challenges of access and use.

Platformization in education, by widening the gaps in terms of access to technology (Gee, 2013), reproduces supposedly innovative forms that are nothing more than updated forms of banking pedagogy focused on the transmission of knowledge and individual assessment, instead of encouraging participation and the construction of collective knowledge relevant to society as a whole. MIL must integrate a critical perspective that allows students not only to adapt to the digital environment but also to question the dynamics of power and inequality that underlie the use of educational platforms, especially considering that these intensify educational differences and marginalize large population groups.

8. Datafication of education

We understand the datafication of reality as the growing tendency to convert all aspects of life into measurable and actionable data, with a particular emphasis on transforming social interactions through data processing. From interactions on social networks to physical activities and consumption patterns, a massive amount of data is collected, analyzed, and used by companies, governments, and digital platforms to make decisions and personalize experiences, primarily for economic and commercial purposes (O'Neil, 2017).

Datafication has radically transformed our relationship with information, driving an economic model where personal data has become a valuable commodity (Véliz, 2021) or even a form of power that calls into question democratic systems (Han, 2022). Digital platforms are eager to collect and analyze this data, use it to personalize the user experience, and offer highly segmented advertising. However, this intensification of data collection raises serious concerns about privacy, information security, the creation of echo chambers, and the little or no diversity of the information experience (Zuboff, 2018).

Media and Information Literacy has a significant challenge in datafication because it must provide and build with individuals the necessary tools to understand the mechanisms behind this data economy, identify the associated risks, and help citizens make informed decisions about how they share, transfer, or are stripped of their personal information. In addition, MIL needs to foster critical thinking that allows individuals to question the algorithms that influence what they see and read online, recognizing how these can generate "filter bubbles" that limit exposure to different perspectives (Pariser, 2011). New forms of critical literacy, such as so-called data literacy (Raffaghelli et al., 2023), are increasingly becoming essential, primarily as these categories focus on dynamics that inhabit and transform society and culture.

Citizens must be aware of the importance of critical thinking. How their data is used, and how they can exercise their digital rights to protect their privacy and promote a more informed and diverse public debate. In the educational context, where technological adoption is increasingly widespread, datafication, which transforms our actions and routines into digital data (Van Dijck, 2014), allows third parties to access and analyze that information for their purposes. This situation raises questions about privacy and autonomy in educational processes, especially considering that not many educational institutions openly question this trend (Kap, 2024).

Instead of considering learning as a complex, holistic, and multidimensional process, many digital platforms and tools tend to simplify education in terms of information exchange, metrics and statistics, and academic performance based on standardized tests or interaction with online platforms. This approach ignores fundamental aspects of educational development, such as creativity, critical thinking, and socio-emotional skills. MIL must combat this trend by promoting an education model that recognizes the importance of the qualitative, the personal, and the caring and does not allow learning to be reduced to metrics and a tireless search for efficiency.

9. Generative technologies and massive automation

Self-proclaimed artificial intelligence systems are neither autonomous nor rational and cannot make decisions independently without extensive training that requires excellent computational capacity through enormous amounts of data. The AI we know depends entirely on a much broader network of political and social structures. In that sense, due to the capital needed to develop it on a large scale, AI systems are designed to serve already established dominant interests. From that perspective, generative and automation technologies are political devices or "certificates of power" (Crawford, 2022). Understanding AI as a socio-technical device implies recognizing that it is not only a set of advanced technologies but also a phenomenon shaped by social, political, economic, and cultural dynamics. From this perspective, AI does not operate in isolation. Still, its development, implementation, and effects are deeply linked to the human contexts in which it is developed and intended to integrate.

We share with Crawford (ibid.) the assertion that AI is neither "intelligent" nor "artificial" since its functioning depends mainly on human and material structures. The "intelligence" of AI has a limited capacity to process data according to predefined patterns, without the autonomous understanding or reasoning characteristic of humans. Furthermore, AI is "artificial" only in a metaphorical sense since its development involves a vast socio-technical infrastructure, including human labor (from scientists and programmers to data operators), natural resources (such as minerals to manufacture hardware or water to cool servers) and the political and economic decisions that condition its evolution. Thus, AI does not emerge in isolation but is deeply intertwined with networks of power and resources, reflecting more the social interests and structures that articulate it than a neutral "intelligence."

We use the term AI to encompass forms of automation and generative technologies. AI's ability to create texts, images, videos, and other types of information has raised concerns about authenticity and truth (Craig, 2024), media manipulation, environmental impact (Crawford, 2022), repercussions on employment and professions (Varsik & Vosberg, 2024), as well as the ethical implications of its use (Labrador-Fernández, 2023). This raises important questions about how automation in production affects educational processes and relationships between members of educational institutions.

AI poses risks that could undermine educational quality and the very meaning of education. One of the main challenges is the possibility that AI perpetuates and expands existing inequalities; biased algorithms produce visions that are not very diverse and emphasize reductionist perspectives, especially on crucial issues for society, such as politicization, emancipation, sovereignty, and freedom of thought (O'Neil, 2017). It is essential to recognize that AI cannot replace human teaching due to its lack of transparency and the difficulty in regulating it. Despite the supposed benefits of this technology, its opacity poses significant risks that require a critical approach to ensure that it is used consciously and responsibly despite all its potential effects.

AI implementation in education also poses significant environmental challenges. As has been documented (Crawford, 2022), training AI models requires a large amount of energy and computational resources, contributing to climate change due to the high consumption of water and other natural resources, producing geopolitical disputes in which neocolonial hegemonic visions predominate. In addition, the production and disposal of electronic devices necessary for the use of AI generate electronic waste and toxic pollutants, which usually end up in landfills and dumps in the global south, affecting countries already affected by unbridled capitalism (Fisher, 2015).

Training AI models, especially on a large scale, requires immense computational power that generates heat, increasing the demand for water to cool servers in data centers. This energy-intensive process contributes to climate change and generates tensions on water resources, affecting communities close to these centers. In addition, mining, which is necessary for extracting materials such as lithium, cobalt, and other minerals essential for producing technological devices, is a highly polluting industry.

From the MIL, it is essential to develop initiatives that promote the regulation and creation of more energy-efficient AI technologies and to encourage responsible production and consumption practices to minimize the environmental impact of digital education. The State and international organizations play a vital role in this process, establishing clear regulatory frameworks that address issues such as data privacy, cybersecurity and non-discrimination, and developing their own and transparent technological infrastructures to guarantee equal access to education.

The promises of hegemonic discourses on AI are foreshadowing transformations in the business market, the industrial sector, and the workplace, which means extra pressure on educational systems to update their programs and curricula, all to address information production and management practices that put efficiency at the center as the highest value, leaving aside other fundamental pillars of education such as creativity, abstraction, error, empathy, and curiosity. Why should education adapt to large technology companies' economic interests and operational logic? Education through MIL is crucial to promote visions focused on student autonomy and privileging societies capable of prioritizing their fundamental needs and not uncritically accepting adapting to productive logic not interested in solving or addressing localized and specific problems.

Since AI algorithms are trained with large volumes of data, this data reflects and amplifies existing societal prejudices and inequalities. This leads to automated recommendations, from educational content to selection decisions, discriminating against certain groups or reinforcing stereotypes (O'Neil, 2017). Media and Information Literacy (MIL) must play a crucial role in identifying and mitigating these biases, training people to understand how algorithms make decisions, and fostering a critical attitude toward the results they present. However, it must especially work with managers so that they know the risks of uncritical and unreflective adoption.

The advancement of artificial intelligence poses significant challenges, such as the proliferation of misinformation and the generation of high-quality fake content, which threatens the integrity of the educational ecosystem. From MIL, it is essential to foster a culture of healthy skepticism and ethical responsibility in producing and consuming content, teaching people to verify sources and evaluate the credibility of information. At the same time, training large-scale AI models require immense computational power that generates a considerable environmental

impact, contributing to climate change and generating tensions on water resources. Mining the materials needed for the production of technological devices, a highly polluting industry, further aggravates this problem.

10. Conclusions: MIL as a path to emancipation

The current educational system has not fulfilled all of the promises and expectations that gave rise to it. Instead of fostering emancipation and critical analysis, a paradox is observed in which societies do not always have or dispose of the tools to transform their reality despite the increasing access to knowledge and the in the context of the production of information. This inability to imagine and move towards a future beyond capitalism points to the fracture between the original promise of education and the harsh current reality, where the educational system has been trapped in the reproduction of capitalist power structures that limit its transformative and emancipatory capacity (Fisher, 2015).

Following Fisher, we are immersed in a deeply rooted capitalist realism that makes any economic alternative seem inconceivable. This situation is the product of a constant fragmentation of the narratives and institutions that previously offered us certainties and visions of the future. In terms of Jesús Martín-Barbero (2003), it is characterized by a cultural decentering in which historical, cultural institutions such as the State, the Church, and the Family have been surpassed and supplanted by other narratives and political certainties coming from the market and the industrialization of technology, communication, and culture. In this context, the hegemonic discourses of capitalism have permeated all areas of life, including education, redefining the roles of teachers and students and questioning the foundational pedagogical models. The consequence is an education that is increasingly fragmented, individualized, and oriented towards productivity as a categorical imperative, to the detriment of an integral, critical, humane, and emancipatory education.

Freire (1968) maintains that authentic emancipation is built on shared vulnerability and recognizing interdependence between people. From this position, free subjects commit themselves to their realities without the pretensions of authority but with the will to transform the world. Only in this way can educational processes genuinely contribute to improving people's lives and building a more livable and just world. As Angela Davis (1983) put it in her famous phrase: "In a racist society, it is not enough not to be racist. It is necessary to be anti-racist." It is

necessary to actively engage in the fight against the structural forces that perpetuate oppression, especially those that hide behind discourses of innovation and supposed technological progress.

In this context, MIL must include governance frameworks that protect access, privacy, and security in digital environments, involving civil society in decisions about the use of technologies. Proposals such as the "popular theory of the algorithm" (Siles et al., 2024) allow people to understand and question the algorithms that affect their daily lives from the importance of everyday life. Thinking in an emancipatory key implies a return to the past to imagine the future without forgetting where we come from and how we got here, or as Bauman (2017) puts it, thinking in retrotopia means imagining the future not as a distant ideal, but as a return to the past that reminds us who we are and what our shared aspirations are.

A fundamental condition for freedom is imagining and building the future. Education, in general, and MIL, is a way to reach the future. For that, it is necessary to ask fundamental questions and choose a path in which all people have a place to actively participate in the construction of a dignified, fair, and kind future.

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