

## **Teaching and Learning Creatively in a Multimedia Environment**

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### **Introduction**

The focus of this paper is to discuss various ways of using multimedia technology to teach and learn in a manner that fosters creative and annotative mind. The present use of multimedia technologies emphasizes the application of technological tools in a mechanical way (quick fix). It is important that multimedia applications are used in a manner that challenges curious mind and not to recreate the passiveness of the traditional methods of teaching/learning. The paper examines how creative use of multimedia technologies could help teachers keep abreast of the new and emerging technology in education.

### **Defining Creativity**

Creativity is not a single monolithic concept that is “out there” to be classified as an absolute entity; its definition and property can only be inferred from the impact it manifests. A teacher who is imaginative, innovative, inventive, resourceful, and inquisitive; and who has untiring desire to add to knowledge or to extend the boundary of what is known, can be described as creative. Originality is also associated with creativity; an original idea is described as unique and innovative. Creativity is observed by the end-product which it manifests. Technological advances have made it possible for multimedia electronic devices to be used for facilitating and supporting teaching and learning. But do instructors use those multimedia devices to teach in a creative manner and in such a way that helps students to learn creatively and to have fun at the same time? Do instructors use multimedia in a way that breeches the artificial boundary created by subject matter compartmentability? Do instructors use multimedia to teach in a manner that addresses immediate and future learning problems that are context related? Unfortunately, the infusion of technology and its related media applications is done in a way that fosters the boredom associated with the traditional classroom. The present application of multimedia into education encourages a “quick fix” and rote memorization of information on the part of the students. Some instructors rely on prepackaged materials found in various electronic media to prepare their lesson, and as a result, the process of teaching and learning becomes superficial and less engaging.

The process of teaching/learning creatively using multimedia represents an attempt to overcome the inhibitions toward computers and other technologies as well as an opportunity to gain more confidence in technology use. Gaining confidence will provide teachers with the resourcefulness to engage in troubleshooting. Computer troubleshooting means searching for problems or computer glitches and seeking out

solutions. Such troubleshooting effort provides additional learning opportunities that may result in enriching teachers' repertoire of skills so they become more creative in planning and delivering instruction.

### **The Concept of Emerging Technology and Creative Teaching**

Emerging technology requires awareness on the part of teachers that technology changes at a fast pace and that they need to remain current by constantly up-dating their technical skills. Emerging technology does not simply imply technical skill, it also includes new theories about technology integration, the application of research findings to promote learning, greater interaction between teachers and technology specialists on the one hand and business and industry on the other. Therefore, as teachers use new technologies for instruction and explore new research finding that support their use, they will develop a sense of curiosity; and in an effort to satisfy this curiosity may develop new and creative ways of using multimedia.

### **Conclusion**

This paper is based on the observations of how instructors use multimedia technologies to support teaching and how students apply such technologies in their learning. Valuable ideas have resulted from these observations, and this paper explores those ideas with the aim of developing better insight on how multimedia could be better used to facilitate teaching and learning in a manner that fosters creativity. Technology alone cannot produce meaningful learning; the creativity of instructors is the key to effective integration of technology into the teaching/learning environment.