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RESEARCH ARTICLE

MULTIMEDIA USE BY TEACHERS IN SAUDI ARABIA SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Previously, the education system in Saudi Arabia used the traditional way of teaching without adopting any type of technology in the classroom, but with the quick development of using technologies in communication, multimedia has become significant technique used in teaching and learning in Saudi education system. Using Multimedia includes video, text, images, and audio to prepare lessons for students at different levels of education (primary school, secondary school, and universities). In this paper, the researcher focus on how Saudi educators utilize certain materials to advance in formation and comprehension in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION

Using multimedia technology in the Saudi Arabian education system as a part of class can be an exceedingly attractive resource for students. This form of technology offers numerous advantages to improve education. Above all, technology integration has the potential to expand students' experiences and abilities. Students go to the class consistently as the course appears to be engaging, rather than the conventional classroom environment, which for many appears to be boring and does not match the students learning styles or to the technologies that they are using outside of school. Researchers have found that integrating technology can be an excellent tool for the learning context (Merc, 2015). One aspect of the technology is multimedia, which gives a complex multimodal experience, introducing content, through illustrations, pictures, sound, and video. It has been demonstrated that a blend of words and pictures dependably incorporates an expansive measure of data (Mayer, 2001). Among the benefits of sight and sound are being able to pick among media to show well-structured data (Larkin and Simon, 1987), utilizing a few representations to enhance memory (Penny, 1989), empowering dynamic handling (Ainsworth, 1999), and showing more information without delay (Sweller, 2005). Students can better learn by engaging in multimodal delivery of the information presented in the classroom.

Along these lines, for teachers to accomplish their objectives for learning, it is imperative to utilize an assortment of showing techniques and to make the classroom environment invigorating and engaging. Technology access in classrooms has been relentlessly developing in the most recent two decades and instruction is encountering an expansion in classroom technology requests (Leaman and DiLucchio, 2015). For example, with the access of new technologies, multimedia is progressively acknowledged as a method for a number of subjects including, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), primary language, math, science, and others.

Literature Review: Based on observations of the teachers in Saudi Arabia I will be focusing on two aspects of how multimedia is integrated. The areas of integration of multimedia include: (1) *Digital Storytelling*, and (2) *Web Applications*. The research concerning these applications indicate that their use will benefit both teachers and students.

Digital Storytelling: The production of a digital storytelling welcomes the storyteller to utilize both old and new proficiencies (Yildiz and Selim, 2015). The procedure of making a computerized story empowers the storyteller to develop, look at, and shows computerized proficiencies (Williams et al., 2014). A huge number of teachers are interested in exploring methods to engage their students by using images, audio and video elements in their instruction. Digital Storytelling can provide educators with a great tool to use in their classrooms.

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Researchers such as Hibbing and Rankin-Erikson (2003) and Boster, Meyer, Toberto, & Inge (2002) have indicate that using multimedia tool in teaching assist students learn new information as well as helps in the comprehension of the difficult material.

Web Applications: There is an interactive media application is rising with the reason for giving information to a group of onlookers over a wide land range. A software application being made possible by means of the Internet in with a Content Management System (CMS). These resources make a course content deveryly tool that provides education to 10-20 million individuals for business and schools (Merc, 2015; Leaman and DiLucchio, 2015).

CMS applications are able to deliver instruction to and from everywhere throughout the world by means of the Internet, delivering the content with illustrations, sounds, and video. One of the abilities of a CMS is its use of hypertext, which permits learners to move rapidly between content pages then onto other resources on the internet with the click of a mouse (Amine et al., 2012; Kassim et al., 2014). Also, CMS allows educators manage their website's digital content, collaborate on different projects, upload, edit, and delete content from a website.

Project: This paper describes an exploration concerning how Saudi Arabia educators currently use multimedia in their classroom. The research is focusing on

1) how often do educators use multimedia in the classroom, and 2) what types of multimedia are they using? The data was collected using a survey tool and follow-up interviews with selected teachers to cross check their answers about the classroom use of multimedia in Saudi Arabia. The research is mixed method design based on two methods, which are the qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative primarily focuses on gathering of mainly verbal data rather than measurements. Gathered information is then analyzed in an interpretative manner, subjective, impressionistic or even diagnostic. Quantitative design on the other hand, involves with only measurable data are being gathered and analyzed.

Data Collection: As researcher of this study, I asked permission from the teachers who I chose to become participants by sending to them a formal letter informing them the purpose of my study and why they were chosen as participants of the study to ask for their permission and consent. The purpose of the letter was to make want the teachers aware of the purpose of my study, in order to motivate them for their participation and cooperation. Upon their approval to participate, survey questionnaires were sent to all identified respondents.

The survey instrument used included open response and multiple choices questions to collect data. The in-person interviews were requested from respondents with whom the researcher had the chance within meeting in person. For those respondents who were not physically present, an interview via Skype was set up in order to gather the same amount and quality of information from them. As part of the interview process, the researcher also asked the respondents questions concerning the survey instrument to assure that the data collected was accurate.

SURVEY RESULTS

The participants of this study were twelve (12) Saudi Arabian teachers from primary to university education level. The teachers surveyed ranged from primary to university level. The breakdown of the surveyed teachers were K-4 (17%), elementary (17%), 5-8 (25%), and (41%) university. The university teachers were a math and a computer science teacher, and the primary and elementary school teachers were social studies and language teacher. For the entire group there were 7 female (58%) and 5 males (42%). The teaching experience of the teachers was ranged from two to ten years.

The teachers will be surveyed using a questionnaire, which includes the following questions:

- How familiar are you with multimedia technology using in the classroom?
- What multimedia creation tools do you use?
- Do you prefer using multimedia technology in your teaching? Why?
- What most closely represent the frequency of multimedia usage in your classroom?
- What ways do you integrate technology and multimedia in your lessons?
- What advantages do you see of using multimedia technology in the classroom?
- What disadvantages do you see of using multimedia technology in the classroom?

The data analyzed in this study were both nominal and ordinal. Nominal data are those data, which are differentiated by a simple naming system. Ordinal data are those, which are set into some kind of order of their position on a specific scale. The collected was analyzed using the Microsoft Excel Statistical Package. The collected data also included multiple choice and open descriptive responses. The open responses were analyzed by Frequency Counts and Percentages.

Question 1: How familiar are you with multimedia technology using in the classroom? Familiarity of the respondents to multimedia technologies shows that 42% identified themselves as somewhat familiar, 42% of the respondents had average and above average knowledge, while only 16% admitted that they are very familiar with multimedia technology. This cross section makes them a good fit for this study, since they already have a wide range of experience as to how a teacher can inculcate knowledge to its students with the use of Multimedia Technology.

Question 2: What multimedia creation tools do you use? From a provided list of five different multimedia creations tools (PowerPoint presentations, Audacity, Animoto and Video) used by the respondents, they indicated that 43% of the respondents use PowerPoint presentations as their tool in teaching. Aside from PowerPoint presentations, it was also evident that videos and audio were also prevalently used by the respondents as it made up 26% and 22% of the population, respectively. Only 9% of the respondents used Animoto as their tool in teaching using multimedia technology.

Question 3: Do you prefer using multimedia technology in your teaching? Why? Respondents' preference on using Multimedia technology in technology shows that some of the

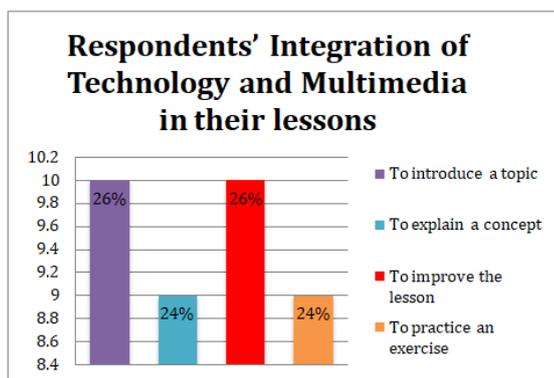
respondents would prefer teaching using multimedia technology because it can greatly assist the students with their learning and later on, allow the student to improve in some academic areas. Aside from that, respondents would prefer multimedia technology when teaching as it enables them to organize their files, especially those pertaining to the students' records. However, for the 8% of the population's states that they would prefer traditional teaching as this method has been more effective to some students compared to integrating multimedia technology.

Question 4: What most closely represent the frequency of multimedia usage in your classroom? Table 4 shows that 50% of the respondents uses multimedia technology in their classroom everyday while the other half of the respondents only uses multimedia technology every other day and less than 3 days a week, respectively. With these data alone, we can easily conclude that most of the respondents are really making use of multimedia technology in their daily discussions.

Table 4: Respondents' Frequency of Multimedia usage in the classroom

Category	N	Percentage
Every day	6	50%
Every other day	3	25%
Less than 3 days/week	3	25%
Total	12	100%

Question 5: What ways do you integrate technology and multimedia in your lessons? Figure 1 show us that 26% of the respondents integrate technology and multimedia to introduce a topic and another 26% of the respondents to improve the lesson discussed. Twenty-four percent of the respondents also integrate technology and multimedia to explain a topic and to practice an exercise. Clearly, the respondents use technology and multimedia in many different ways in order to attain efficiency within their students.



Note: Respondents were allowed to pick more than one answer to this question.

Figure 1. Respondents' Integration of Technology and Multimedia in their lessons

Question 6 and 7: What advantages and disadvantages do you see of using multimedia technology in the classroom? Four of the respondents indicate that the advantages of using multimedia technology in the classroom not only has an impact on the students, but it also affects the teacher's way of teaching. It supports a lesson, easy to explain a concept via technology and attract students' attention. Other respondents

mention that multimedia technology enhances communication skills in the classroom. Integrating assignments with formats that using graphics and conversations will increase students' creativity. As a contrast, a disadvantage that respondents' point is that lacking in face-to-face communication occurs if student totally depending on using technology. Moreover, in some special cases, technology in classroom does not make sense for some students, so it is difficult to force the students to understand the lesson via technology.

Conclusion

Basing from the results of the questionnaires given to the selected respondents of this study, teachers in Saudi Arabia have already begun to adapt to trends and use these tools to in their profession and to ensure better output from their students. For example, K-4 teachers are using PowerPoint as a creative tool including alphabet sounds and pronunciations, secondary teachers and college instructors are using it to provide a visual component as part of the lecture process. Also, teachers adopt digital storytelling in their assignments which can be used to enhance instruction and how educators who learn to create their own digital stories improve multiple skills. They can develop their skills by using software that contains a variety of multimedia tools including working with, images, text, audio, and video. The respondents are using multimedia across a spectrum of integration, to the extent that even the resistant teacher had begun to integrate technology. The teachers surveyed that they want to ensure that they are educating their students in the best way possible, while making sure that they are using the available resources applicable for learning. To answer the research question on (1) how often do educators use multimedia in the classroom? The researcher found that 50% of the respondents use multimedia technology in their classroom every day. For the second question (2) what types of multimedia are they using? The respondents identified that PowerPoint presentations were the most used multimedia tool, with 43% of the respondents using it as their tool in teaching.

Reflection

As of a few years ago, the education system in Saudi Arabia used a very traditional way of teaching, without adopting any type of technology in the classroom. Currently, technology now exists in classes and is becoming essential part of the teaching process. Some teachers like the changes that happened in the Saudi Arabian education system, because they believe that using technology help instructors to deliver their ideas in an effective way. While the majority of instructors surveyed are not in favor of integrating multimedia technology in teaching, they still are complying with the ministry of education directives concerning technology integration. This resistance may be associated with their experiences, as they have taught for so long without technology that the addition now seems a burden. Additionally, what may be effective for one teacher's teaching style or course may, may not be as effective to another teacher or a different class. This idea was supported by the teachers varied answers when questioned about the pros and cons of multimedia technology in teaching. As someone who is a member of the Saudi Arabian teaching profession, this researcher feels the responsibility to be cognizant of what is new and innovative as it applies to

teaching. I should always be aware of new strategies and techniques in which I can possibly use to improve my performance and my students' performance as well. I should not be stuck in one single approach method of teaching as I am dealing with a variety of students who have unique needs and demands.

With technology, I have an additional tool which can be integrated to address those needs without compromising the quality education I can offer to them.

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