

5. Symposium: Designing Video and Audio Learning Events: an Insight Into Visual Literacy in Practice

RATIONALE

Imagine you could use a technology that could capture students' attention that could engage them and bring to them a richer, more meaningful and more vivid learning experience. This technology would not only provide on demand access and opportunities for student interaction; but could also enhance your teaching practice to open up new ways of representing, delivering and sharing your subject discipline. Through the use of this technology you would visualise a process or show how something works, moves or performs live, without the need to rely on purely text forms. With this technology, you would enable your students to 'be there' without the constraints of time, space and safety.

The use of 'streaming' digital video and audio to support web-based learning resources is rapidly becoming an attractive option for many educators. The vision is clear: to move away from the static text-dominated content currently prevalent on the web towards a media-enhanced environment. Video itself can be used in many ways: 'talking head', interviews, video diaries, video labs, simulations, instructional sequences, 'fly on the wall', video help etc. However, the web is not a simple delivery medium. Through the browser video sequences can be linked to slides, text conferencing, whiteboards, video conferencing, shared applications, online assessment and third party web sites. This seamless combination of digital video with other tools offers an opportunity to move beyond the current understanding of video as a simply presentational tool.

The JISC/DNER Click and Go Video project and Click and Go Access for All, have identified and began to meet the need to promote the sharing of practice, reflection on practice and critical examination of the experience of using video and audio resources by students and staff. Although there appears to be some sense of community among technical and support staff, teaching staff users are dispersed and there is therefore insufficient sharing of pedagogic research and evaluation. An unexplored facet is how this technology adds to the visual literacy of participants, teaching and support staff as well as the students. The aim of this symposium is therefore to contribute to the community development and growth of practitioners working in this area, particularly teaching staff that wish to share their experience of designing and evaluating learning events.

The symposium proposes to capture four different examples of visual literacy practice in the areas of namely: Sport Health and Exercise, Chemical Engineering, Postgraduate Induction for Writing and Critical Thinking Skills and Health Sciences. Each paper will describe their rationale, the processes, tools, concepts, frameworks and theories that have and are influencing their work for developing video and audio resources in their particular areas. The presenters will also explore the notion of engagement for learning, on becoming visually literate, students' reactions, and learning outcomes that have emerged through their empirical research.

In addition, the presenters will examine the usefulness of resources developed within the JISC/DNER Click and Go Video such as the Decision Tool (Thornhill, Asensio and Young 2002) and the Three 'I' framework of Image, Interactivity and Integration (Young and Asensio 2002) to inform and assist their work at the different stages of development. The Click and Go Decision Tool has been designed to help and guide practitioners towards achieving educationally meaningful video and audio resources. The Click and Go Decision Tool is intended to provide a way of unravelling the often complex ideas practitioners have for using video and audio and provide a route to clarify their intentions through understanding the primary focus of what they wish to achieve. The examination of the above and other practical tools and theoretical frameworks is intended to enable more informed and researched choices, to the practitioner that wishes to start a new journey in the area of visual literacy.

By looking in-depth at four research examples in an interactive setting, practitioners will be able to also consider how to make their subject more visually appealing, more fun and engaging. Seeing value and recognising the potential of visual literacy for education, is one of the core challenges for the new generation of e-learning technologies (Asensio and Young 2002). In addition, the seamless combination of video and audio with other tools offers the prospect to experiment with these technologies as a focus for networked learning (i.e. learning events that involve interaction and dialogue between learners, teaching staff and the resources themselves). It is equally important to explore how video and audio technologies can indeed provide not just individual but networked learning opportunities, and to consider and discuss within the symposium, what we can do as a community of practitioners to move this forward in the future.

This symposium will be useful to practitioners (teaching staff, developers, support staff, researchers and students) working or wishing to learn more about this community of practice. It is related to the conference themes on design for networked learning, new technologies and the relationship between research, theory and practice. The symposium will involve presentations with examples of video/audio material and the opportunity to engage with the ideas and issues through the use of facilitated discussion groups.

REFERENCES

- Asensio, M and Young, C (2002) The new visual literacy: the pedagogic value of streaming video, European Distance Education Network 2002 Conference Proceedings 395a-395e
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