

Discussion 2: Distance Education Technologies and Media

1. Simonson describes a wide variety of distance education technologies.

- With which of these technologies would you be most comfortable as a teacher? Why?

Correspondence study is the most comfortable distance education technology I use as teacher. This approach to distance education uses any communication system to connect the teacher and the learner (Simmons, 2019, pg. 84). It is the most traditional form of education, and it has been part of my teaching styles for years. My lesson plans have not been limited to the use of this form of technology. I also use prerecorded media. Prerecorded media has been part of distance education for many years and includes audiotapes, CDs, DVDs, and video tapes (Simmons, 2019, pg. 85). These two forms of technology have been on field of education for years and they are not costly technologies.

Last year, the Two-Way Audio/Video technology was adapted by my school. This approach uses regular telephone lines to send and receive audio and video signals (Simmons 2019, pg. 91). A camera, a microphone, a smart board, and a flat screen were installed in every classroom. This technology allows students at home to interact with those in the class like if they were in person. One of the disadvantages of this form of technology is that it is very expensive.

- Would you be as comfortable with that technology as a student? Why? – why not?

As student I am comfortable with Correspondence Study when other forms of technologies are incorporated. One of them is Desktop Two-Way Audio-Video. Desktop systems use personal computers and the internet to connect local and distance learners with the purpose of sharing video and audio information from a remote source (Simmons, 2019, pg. 96). Streaming video allows viewers to play the video and audio as they download from the source. They do not need to wait for to the video file to be downloaded. An example of this form of technology is Zoom which is used in education to connect students and teachers. As student this platform allows me to connect with my professors and classmates. I can interact with them in real time regarding our location.

- What about your students: what technology is more appropriate for them? Why?

I teach Middle School and Correspondence Study and Prerecorded Media are the most appropriate technologies for students. Kids at these ages are distracted very easily if other forms of technologies are used. Desktop Two-Way Audio-Video is the form of technology secondary institutions are using since the pandemic started. Its implementation requires certain skills from learners that middle schoolers have not developed yet. Gonser (2020), says that without the rules of a physical classroom and the lack of physical interaction with classmates and teachers, middle school students need extra help to build up the self-regulatory skills needed to succeed in an online learning environment.

2. As you read the chapter by Kinash, Birt, and Judd, what did you find especially interesting? How might you use that information on your own professional practice?

I found especially interesting how the numbers of students with disabling conditions have increased in distance education in the last 15 years. During those years researchers investigated about how to support online learners with disabling conditions in higher education (Moore & Diehl, 2019, pg. 297). *The framework of enabling and disabling effects of technology for diverse learners studying online* is well explained in this chapter. It uses ladders to represent technology and the snakes to represent the disability. There are two stand - along ladders in this diagram that promote students' success during and after university. Assistive technologies like hardware and software help students to access curriculum. And digital capital and digital culture promote the use of technology for people of different backgrounds and different beliefs (Moore & Diehl, 2019, pg. 297). The diagram also shows two snakes next to the ladders: hegemony and stigma of assistive technology. Hegemony represents majority groups which judge and discriminate students with disabling conditions. Stigma of assistive technologies refers to how those students with disabilities underestimate their potential and refuse to use technologies. In my own professional practice, I will participate on professional developments that promote the use of technologies in the classroom. More knowledge on this field will help all students, including those with disabilities, to succeed in their future career.

References

1. Gonser, S. (2020, September 3). *How to Help Middle School Students Develop Crucial Skills This Year*. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-help-middle-school-students-develop-crucial-skills-year>
2. Moore, M. & Diehl, W. (2019). *Handbook of Distance Education*. Routledge.
3. Simonson, M., Zvacek, S, & Samaldino, S. (2019). *Teaching and learning at a distance education*. IAP-Information Age Publishing