

Learning in Micromedia Environments

VISION
POSSIBILITIES
PROBLEMS

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www.preoccupations.org

New media keep breaking the world into
work, knowledge, communications ...

All is falling into small digital fragments, loosely
joined and permanently rearranging to form a
multitude of new patterns, tasks and threads.

We have to learn to live in the micro-cosmos.

<http://www.microlearning.org/>

Microlearning

(2) ... in a wider sense is a term that can be used to describe the way more and more people are actually doing [informal learning](#) and gaining knowledge in [Microcontent](#) and [Micromedia/Multitasking](#) environments (see [Microcosmos](#)), especially those that become increasingly based on [Web 2.0](#) and [Wireless Web](#) technologies.

In this wider sense, the borders between [Microlearning](#) and the complementary concept of [Microknowledge](#) are blurring.

<http://www.microlearning.org/MicroWiki.html#>

Microcontent

(4) MC is reusable and remixable: it is content set free to separate and form new patterns, in the mind of the user, on the screen of a device or within the processing logic of an application.

It is "small pieces loosely joined", enabling new technologies of [aggregation](#) and [syndication](#) and new sociocultural practices (> [Web 2.0](#), [social software](#)).

It allows new "fuzzy" forms of texts, new open patterns of sign, new collaborative practices of communication and semiosis.

<http://www.microlearning.org/MicroWiki.html#>

There are now many more computers and interactive whiteboards. Yet, the basic pattern of lessons and subjects taught has changed relatively little.

... It is still the norm for a teacher to take a class of 20 to 30 pupils through a pre-planned curriculum for a single subject like history, geography or chemistry. The syllabus is set centrally, the testing is externally devised and the pace of the lesson will often be geared to the pupils somewhere in the middle of the ability range.

... pupils still trudge from one four-walled room to another, have their working pace and learning style dictated to them in fixed period blocks of time and are tested by being herded into a large room and told to sit down and scribble with pen and ink on paper as fast as they can for 90 minutes or so.

As Andrew Pinder, chair of the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta), told a conference this week schools are "one of a relatively small number of industries that do not look as if they have changed much over the past 30 years".

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/5021550.stm>

TB-L's original vision

The original thing I wanted to do was to make it a collaborative medium, a place where we (could) all meet and read and write.

<http://www.digitaldivide.net/articles/view.php?ArticleID=20>

The Read-Write Web is a fundamental challenge

Will Richardson's 7 points

- Weblogs
- Wikis
- RSS
- Aggregators
- Social bookmarking
- Online photo galleries
- Audio- & video-casting

(? Calendaring, tasks)

from *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms* (2006)

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Prensky

Digital Immigrants:

- they print out their email
- they write cheques to pay bills
- they use phone books to look up phone numbers
- they don't multitask
- they rarely use online tools personally or in the classroom

Their students:

- use many different media at once
- 'develop hypertext minds'

(Susan Greenfield: 'We need a co-ordinated study, and only the government I think could organise such a study, where we pull together all the information that people are producing both on drugs and on screen culture. We cannot keep the two isolated - we need to think about everything as a whole raft of convergent technologies on young people's minds today.')

A time of renaissance:
collaboration, openness and
innovation

Answers that used to be difficult to find were disseminated by teachers and students were quizzed to see if they'd paid attention.

Now the knowledge itself is no longer scarce — is there a sense in which we should be teaching our kids how to "pull" the information they need instead of "pushing" in advance what we think they might need to know?

Is there a sense in which the always-on information field of the web may be shifting what we think of as education?

Barb Dybwad

<http://socialsoftware.weblogsinc.com/2005/11/01/students-sharing-test-answers-via-blog-cheating/>

... Web2.0, which is not the old web of "I Go Get", but the new web of "Come to Me".

This change in focus demands better understanding of sharing digital assets, designing across platforms and devices, and information being reused and organized externally.

http://www.personalinfocloud.com/2005/07/webvisions_desi.html

The lack of understanding (of) the medium of a Wiki, which is very fluid, but not forgetful, is astonishing. ... They are a jumping off point, not destinations. They are true conversations, which have very real ethereal qualities. Is there no sense of research quality? Quoting a Wiki entry without pointing to the revision is like pointing to *Time* magazine without a date or issue number. Why is there no ... instruction for using information in a Wiki?

Thomas Vanderwal

<http://www.vanderwal.net/random/entrysel.php?blog=1750>

Thanks to the connective nature of hypertext, and the blogosphere's exploratory hunger for finding new stuff, **the web is the greatest serendipity engine in the history of culture**. It is far, far easier to sit down in front of your browser and stumble across something completely brilliant but surprising than it is walking through a library looking at the spines of books. With music blogs and iTunes, I've discovered more interesting new bands and albums in the past year than I did in all of my college years.

http://www.stevenberlinjohnson.com/2006/05/can_we_please_x.html

We're entering a world where people will only watch what they want to watch. So they may well watch short bursts of communication (maybe 30 seconds) or ad funded programming or whatever, but only if it's better, more interesting or more compelling than all their non-ad-funded options.

[russell davies](#)

http://russelldavies.typepad.com/planning/2006/05/grandly_pronoun.html



<http://www.imaginif.com/blog/archives/2005/11.htm#post11612>



http://blog.broadbandmechanics.com/2005/07/in_awe_of_thoma

storytelling will become the key ingredient to
 managing communications,
 education,
 training
 and innovation
 in the 21st century.

<http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/>

... I think that a much better epistemology or theory of knowledge ... says, instead of "I think therefore I am" ... rather "**We participate and therefore we are**".

... It is in participation with others that we come into a sense of self. ... understanding is basically socially constructed with others'

John Seely Brown

<http://www.creatingthe21stcentury.org/JSB5-descartes.html>

Will Richardson

Without question, our ability to easily publish content online will force us to rethink the way we communicate with our constituents, the way we deliver our curriculum and the expectations we have of our students. It also has the potential to radically change what we assume about teaching and learning, and it presents us with important questions to consider:

- What needs to change about our curriculum when our students have the ability to reach audiences beyond our classroom walls?
- What changes must we make in our teaching as it becomes easier to bring primary sources to our students?
- How do we need to rethink our ideas of literacy when we must prepare our students to become not only readers and writers, but editors and collaborators as well?