Chapter 1

Pedagogical Frameworks of E-Reader Technologies in Education

Nance Wilson
Lourdes University, USA

Vassiliki “Vicky” Zygouris-Coe
University of Central Florida, USA

Victoria Cardullo
University of Central Florida, USA

Jennifer L. Fong
Bowling Green State University, USA

ABSTRACT

E-readers are changing the nature of learning in our classrooms and the nature of classroom instruction. E-readers create a learning environment that prepares students to live in a world where technology is ever-changing and learning is constantly evolving. In this chapter, the authors introduce a pedagogical framework for teaching using e-readers. The complexity of developing and implementing a pedagogical framework using the ever-changing technology of e-readers requires a teacher who is metacognitive. This model emphasizes the metacognitive teacher, putting dispositions at the center of the framework. The metacognitive teacher is informed by her content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, technological knowledge, and knowledge of students.

INTRODUCTION

Reading and learning in the 21st century classroom looks and “feels” different than in the classroom of “yesterday.” Meaning making has become a multimodal, active, and transformative process, requiring a pedagogy that opens paths to new learning possibilities (New London Group, 1996). In order to motivate students to have positive meaning making experiences with books, many educators are investigating ways in which they can “harness” the e-book revolution. Although e-readers do nothing to improve the content of a
book, their technological features make it possible for the reader to have an interactive reading experience. For example, the multi-function e-reader embeds social interactions within the device, and readers can simply “click” on a portion of a text and are given the option to share it through Facebook, Twitter, and/or Goodreads.

E-readers are changing the reading and learning experiences. For instance, in the past students used mainly print based texts and/or computers to read, research, and learn; today students have iPads, Kindle Fires, Nooks, etc. that integrate the two. These devices not only work with trade books but also E-textbooks and they combine the complex functions of the previously separate learning tools. These devices are different than the mobile technology provided by cell phones and are more portable than the traditional laptop. They provide a parallel experience to that of the laptop yet with varied functionality, more portability, and increased connectivity. Additionally, e-readers in the classroom are different from mobile learning in that the learning is still taking place within the confines of the school rather than having students learn on the move.

E-readers are entering our classrooms, through school adoption or Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programs. We view these devices and the technology inherent within them as more than just tools to help accomplish learning tasks; instead, our perspective is that they should be an integral part of the pedagogical framework of the 21st century classroom. E-readers provide for one-to-one experiences while providing students with the skills and strategies to be successful in a world in which technology is not an addition to our lives but an integral part. A pedagogical framework for e-readers in the classroom will map the changing role of the teacher, the learner, and teaching instruction that facilitates learning in 21st century classrooms.

PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORKS: PAST AND PRESENT

A pedagogical framework provides a structure for understanding teaching that occurs in the classroom. It provides researchers, teachers, and administrators with a lens from which to both evaluate teacher performance and train new teachers. A framework identifies the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a teacher who is guiding their students to achieve.

The role of the classroom teacher in 21st century learning is critical; the teacher’s range of knowledge will guide how teaching and learning will take place in her classroom, the opportunities she will create to engage students with multimodal learning, her scaffold for teaching multimodality, and her language with which she will discuss and communicate such teaching and learning (Kalantzis, Cope, & Cloonan, 2010). Teachers will also need to align technologies with standards that represent 21st century knowledge and skills, as well as with content and pedagogy and develop the ability to use technologies to meet students’ learning needs (AACTE, 2010). Teachers will be required to guide students’ reading and engagement with complex print and non-print texts and overall learning through complex digital learning spaces (Coiro, 2009).

Lankshear and Knobel (2007) identified two interconnected elements in 21st century literacies: (1) new technical stuff and (2) new ethos stuff. In their view, the “new technical stuff” involves new uses of technology and new ways of engaging with the world (p. 7). This “new technical stuff” allow us to participate, collaborate, interact, access, and distribute knowledge in more ways than has been made possible with our previous uses of technology (Albers, Vasquez, & Harste, 2008). The “new ethos stuff” is a product of “the new technical stuff.” Central to “new ethos stuff” is not that we use technology to reorganize old practices (look up information online, or write documents using word processing), but that we develop new
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