Culturally Relevant Applications of Digital Audio Workstations in the Heterogeneous GT Classroom

Chris Deason
Full Sail University, USA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss, explain, and share how the author has used culturally relevant instructional methods (i.e., hip-hop pedagogy) and Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) in K-12 classroom environments to impact learning motivation and learner achievement from 2005 to 2012. Emphasis is placed on the elements of hip-hop culture (i.e., rapping, graffiti art, beat making, and break dancing) combined with DAWs to impact learning motivation and learner achievement in the heterogeneous Gifted and Talented (GT) classroom. Recommended hardware and software is discussed. Examples include audio interfaces, cables and microphones required, recommended audio recording software, and classroom environment preparations. Photographs and illustrations are included to make the chapter applicable to practitioners in classroom environments and educational researchers.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Prior uses of DAWs combined with hip-hop culture include the following:

1. Applications of DAWs to generate social studies-based hip-hop audio CDs for high school age adolescents in the Upward Bound program at Texas Tech University.
2. Applications of DAWs and hip-hop pedagogy to impact reading motivation in an after school program for 4th and 5th Grade children at Oakwood Elementary.
3. Applications of DAWs to impact writing achievement via rap pedagogy at Midway Elementary.

The applications of DAWs to generate social studies-based hip-hop audio CDs for high school age adolescents first took place in the Upward Bound program at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas in 2005. Olthouse (2013) claimed that multi-literacies like writing, rapping, art production, audio production, and other seldom-employed authentic assessments are essential to gifted and talented education. The Upward Bound program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their pre-college performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits. The Upward Bound program often serves *gifted and talented* (GT) high school students starting in the 10th grade. Warne, Anderson, and Johnson (2013) warn that many gifted education experts have found that Black, Latino, and Native American students are less likely to be identified for gifted programs than Asian American and White students. The goal of Upward Bound is to recognize GT students, often from minority and underprivileged socio-economic classes, and increase the rate at which these participants enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education. Most of the learners in Texas Tech's Upward Bound program were Latino and African American learners. Ramos (2010) reminds us that Latinos are underrepresented in gifted and talented programs.

Implementation of DAWs and hip-hop pedagogy to impact reading motivation for gifted and talented 4th and 5th Grade children also took place in Oakwood Elementary school in the West Texas Panhandle in 2008. This particular mixed-method case explored urban elementary children's motivation to read via a culturally relevant computer environment based on results of the Motivation to Read Profile (MRP) questionnaire, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) theory Interview Protocol, and several ethnographic data collection methods. CRP theory framed the case and addressed the problem of cultural discontinuity between home culture and school culture.

Lastly, applications of DAWs to impact writing achievement took place at Midway Elementary in Central Florida between 2011 and 2012. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Quantitative data included district assessment scores

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