

LITERARY EDUCATION AND THE MULTIMODALITY APPROACH IN THE POST PANDEMIC CLASS

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Abstract

Literature is an aspect of language education that provokes linguistic development. It is so fundamental that it is indeed described as language in active use. Hence teaching It as a subject should be considered a primal concern given its values and roles in the development of human and the society. The aim of this paper is to identify varied ways the teaching of literature can be influenced positively, using multimedia approach. Language mastery requires varieties of modes for easy assimilation and the use of multimedia to attain this flexible mode is fundamental. In this age of technology, integration of ICTs in attainments of easy mastery of the subject of literature is required in the pedagogical procedures by leveraging on the flexibility of modern technology which enhances the conception of language and reception of basic skills to literature and communication. The paper is interested in ways to employ multimodality to teach literature effectively, significantly in this post-pandemic era when of one metre distance keep, becomes a requirement for stepping out of the chilling grip of the deadly virus and the necessity of mutual avoidance, by leveraging on the versatility of technology for effective classroom practices is required: Hence the focus of this paper on the adoption of multiple mode of teaching and learning the subject of literature in the post- pandemic class.

Keywords: Literary Education, Multimodality Approach, and Post Pandemic Class

Introduction

Multimedia learning through the positive impact of Information, technology (ICT) offers academic businesses opportunity to create rich learning procedures that are highly influenced by myriad of information and relevant resources on the internet. The internet is deluged with the wealth of multi-media rich learning resources that are always waiting to be deployed for the purposes they are meant to serve and in this case enrichment of teaching procedures.

Thus, in this post-pandemic era of safety in distance, especially in the public spaces, classes' may not need to follow the traditional mode and arrangement. With the introduction of compulsory measures against public gathering or grouping, leveraging on the wealth of ICT and

multi-media would keep classes running at highly enriched levels of teaching and assimilation. Sankey, (2006:4) asserts that:

a multi-medial course may include an interplay of elements in variations, such as interactive diagrams, images, videos and audio materials, simulations, interactive quizzes and crosswords! Powerpoint lectures with audio and hyperlinked examples

The above submission offers the privilege of multiple representations of the major concepts of learning within the course materials and may take the mode of either visual or aural or even both forms. This process enhances the learners attention and interest rate, learning is viewed easier and simpler as assimilation is effortlessly facilitated. This essay is focused on the deployment of these technological tools towards the process of language production, assimilation and interpretation. The paper therefore discusses the benefits of ICT, multimedia learning, its principles as well as its implications on multimodality in the teaching of language.

The Concept of Multimedia Learning

Birch and Gardiner (2005) submit that multimedia has been successfully applied to many disciplines and has resulted in abroad based learning methodologies and effective outcomes. Kozma (1991:1) describes learning with multimedia, as "a process within which representations are conducted and procedures, performed sometimes by the learners and sometimes by the medium. However, in a more crystallized form, put multimedia learning further as:

Learning with books, television, computers and multimedia environments. These media are distinguished by cognitively relevant characteristics of their technology symbols and processing capabilities...these characteristics and instructional designs that employ theory interact with learners and task characteristics to influence the structure of mental representations and cognitive process.

Koza's view of multimedia learning is one that facilitates cognitive enhancement and ease of delivery, this is in contrast to Clarks' (1834) view of multimedia as mere vehicles that deliver

instruction but do not influence student achievement anymore than the truck that deliver groceries, cause changes in our nutrition. Concluding that "... in short, media do not influence learning under any conditions". However, the position of this paper remains vividly in contrast to the above. This paper rather sees learning multimedia learning as an active and constructive process which enriches learner's cognitive capacity and facilitates new level of assimilation and cognitive output.

What is Media?

Before delving into the details of multi-media, it is instructive to examine what actually is media. The technology of media, is determined by their characteristics, such as slides, a powerpoint, T.V. radio, posters and others, Haas (1989)asserted that, the cognitive effect of these characteristics, if any, are usually indirect characteristics such as size, shape, and weight makes it more likely that a student would learn with a book while on a bus, but not a computer, though of course this is changing as computers get smaller, lighter and paper, on the other hand, some cognitive effects of technology are more direct. For example, the size and resolution of many computer screen is such that reading text may be more difficult than it is with books. Haas (1989) expresses some level of restoration to easy accessibility of computers by comparing the size of a computer system to a book especially while on a vehicular motion or in situations other than classes or of comfortability. This opinion was expressed based on the available technology of the time. Unlike the contemporary age where term media has taken various technological inventions that aid the pedagogical process. For instance, television, radio, and the news paper are different types of media. In the computer world, media is also used as a collective noun but refers to different types of data storage options. Computer media can be hand drives, removable drives CD-ROM or CD-R discs, DVDs, flash memory, USB drives and others. Tech Terms.com (2022)

What is Multimedia communication?

Haliday (1955), Hodge and Kress (1988), and Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) as well as Hasset and Curwood (2009) articulated multi-modality as a composite "modes" communicative forms. Such as digital, visual, spatial, musical and many more within varying system of sign which manifest meanings that are cognitively recognized and understood. Hasset and Curwood's (2009) describe "text" as expanded to include multiple modes of representation which combines

elements of print, visual images and design. Benzemer and Kress (2008:71) defined a mode as a socially and culturally shaped for meaning making while Hassett and Schieble (2007) underscored the use of computerized type design and photo-mechanical printing technologies create visual texts with various levels of meaning significantly. Therefore, multimodality refers to various channels employable in teaching or presentation of information via multiple visual channels an order to realize meaning. Therefore multimodality is a creative process of arriving at the point of meaning understanding with the aid of diverse modes that are made visible within such analysis. Kress. (2003:1) asserted that “the world told”, is different from “the world shown”. In other meaning there is a more positive learning outcome in a visual oriented mode of learning than than the traditional talk teacher- talk of teaching alone.

Literary Education and Multimodal Approach

Literature teaching is a text-based teaching: Teaching of literature requires selection of broad reading materials with extensive more of reading for adequate references and mastery. However, teaching literature in the post-pandemic 21st century requires new rules of engagement to align with the “new normal” ways of living that the deadly Corona virus precipitated the universe into distant interaction and compulsory spatial living, teaching a class of literature therefore demands a revolutionized way of engagement. Hence a look at a multimodal approach as a way of engaging a literature class for more effective teaching and learning outcomes in the post-pandemic era

Researchers such as Albers and Hardy, (2007), Alvermann, (2008), O'Brien & Beach (2009) argued towards a radical shift in the ways of engagement of 21st century art class. Lankshear and Knobel (2007) suggest two interrelated elements in contemporary literacies procedures: (1) new technical stuff and (2) new ethos. The two elements considered fundamental in the engagement of the 21st century pedagogy. The “new technical stuff” according to Lankshear and Knobel designates not only new technological orientation but also forges a new way of being and social interaction (7). In other words, the 21st century technology can be engaged towards a moral delivery outcomes to carryout the same task. With regards to teaching literature, “new technological stuff” allows both the teachers and students to forge a whole new idea about the entire process of teaching and learning by engaging models such as Podcasts, Powerepoint, YouTube, videos and a few others. Albers, Vasquez & Harste (2008) argued that

the new technical stuff allows for greater participation, collaboration and distribution of knowledge that has not been possible with our previous uses of technology. For instance lessons can be packaged in podcasts or digitised and to recording and made available to students via the URL link.

The “new ethos stuff” Sanders and Albers (2009) submitted that it develops from the new technology which is far from mere surfing of the net or use of the computer but it is central to the development of new ways of being when working with the new technologies, sharing experiencing, innovating such as video podcasts, photo edit and morphing of images, voice notes and so on. Indeed, the level at which two social networking sites have changed the face of Social and global communication is revolutionary. Lenhart, Madden, Maggil and Smith (2007) submitted the percentage of teens that use internet is unprecedentedly high on regular basis with 93% of them having profiles on the net. Therefore, contextuasing modern technology into classrooms via multimodal approach is a welcome development.

Miller and Mc Vee, (2013) observed that the way multimodality is perceived and enacted is in tandem with how technologies are developed and used for designing and delivering learning content. That means, multimodality has more to do with the individual user than even the very technology being used. The collaborative practices applied with technology which include the methodologies or mechanisms that teacher adopts to produce meaning for students. Significantly, the social context around multimodality is a prime factor in the meaning making process. Just as indicated above concerning the individual factor in the use of technology, the cultural practices of the people determines how they are disposed to the use of the available resources Kress(2001) asserted that multimodality emphasizes situated action, considering the social context as a key factor in generating meaning which underscores human cultural disposition, personal beliefs and institutional contexts; rather than emphasizing the attributes, behaviours and the system of the available resources. For Alayer (2001) Multimodality in learning is an active student-centred approach which offers students opportunity of choice of the resources of learning mostly relevant to them. This, is multimodal approach. Students have the advantage of selecting the learning content such as words and images into some coherent visual and verbal models especially through the use of technology of information. In sum, the essence of multimodality is to provide different types of resources to students for stimulating learning in productive manners.

ICT and Literary Education

The acronym ICT refers to information and communication technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. It is similar to information technology but focuses principally on communication technologies. This include internet, wireless networks, cellphones, television and radio, etc TechTerms.com (2012). It also includes the various services and applications associated with video conferencing and distance learning, Nwosu & Ogbomo, (2009).

Contextually therefore, since teaching is essentially a communicative process and the success of it relies heavily on communication, it is sufficing to admit that the mode of such communication employed to engender the delivery of knowledge should be accorded a primal focus. An exemption in the beneficiary list is what Sahibu and Yahaya (2014) opined as that becoming a potent platform for transforming the society into information and knowledge based society. Because it has offered itself as a conduct to ferry almost a human activities to utmost attainment. As a linguistic endeavor, ICT has actively contributed to the ease of content delivery in the teaching of literature. The following are various ways ICT which can positively influence the outcome of literature learning in a multimodal approach to teaching.

- i. It enhances access efficiency through digital multimedia technology which can be used to make access to learning materials more efficient than point media or audio recorders because multimedia (visual, audio, and texts) presentation can create stronger memory link than a single medium alone.
- ii. ICT enhances authenticity by using video to teach literature and the internet video materials can bring natural and context-rich linguistic and cultural materials to the learners, while the internet enables the learners to access authentic news and literature in the target language.
- iii. It enhances literature comprehensibility through learners control and multimedia connotation. Comprehensible input is necessary for language learning but useful learning materials must also contain enough unfamiliar materials (Krashen, 1985 in combination. with a text definition, is more effective in teaching (literature) unknown vocabulary than mere picture in combination with text definition, (Egbert, et al 1999 Hamson-Smith, 1999, Slabery, 2001)

Conclusion

This paper has explored the effective alternative means of multimodal approach to enhance pedagogical process of learning the concept of literature in school on this post-pandemic era. The need for Nigerian academic institutions to improve and update the education provided to Nigerian learners through effective and risk-free approach of multimodal has also been emphasised.

Obviously, the ravaging pandemic has paused the global human operation and interactions for a while now and man exists in isolation in fear of the virus spread, the globe cannot be halted. This apart from the enhanced pedagogical value, multimodal approach to teaching, especially of the literary concepts in the classroom, encourage isolated, and independent and active learning from distance thereby making lessons more interesting for teachers and learners.

Multimodality approach to learning denotes the use of more diverse and more motivating methods to teach in order to make learning more enjoyable even from isolated distances through the use of the ICT which allows greater access to computers, or cell phones for academic use. This approach, which is individualised in nature, makes teaching more focused and tailored to learners intellectual capacities. It is this fascinating flexibility regarding when and where the task is executed by both parties, that projects multimodality as an effective approach to manage process of pedagogy in pandemic season and beyond.

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