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Technological Knowledge On Learning Digital Media And Marketing: Career Opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The article builds on Learning by Design and the 'knowledge processes' to describe 'how' learning occurs, while presenting a career model to theorise 'what' students know – the 'knowledge assets' – when learners produce digital and multimodal texts. Changes in consumer behaviour require forms to rethink their marketing strategies in the digital domain. Digital Media personnel are responsible for "planning, developing and directing multimedia, graphics, layout, interactive media, animation and/or digital film projects. " To improve digital marketing engagement, markets must focus on relationship-based interactions with their consumers. The power to influence others in ever expanding social networks in the new knowledge economy is tied to capabilities with digital media production that require increased technological knowledge."The growth of the Internet and the expansion of the World Wide Web (the graphical portion of the Internet) have generated a variety of occupations related to the design, development and maintenance of Web sites and their servers. This article draws on research in primary classrooms to examine the repertoires of crossdisciplinary knowledge that literacy learners need to produce innovative digital media via the 'social web'.

Key Words: Technology, Web, Digital Media, Consumer Behaviour, Networks, Multimedia.

Introduction:

This article examines the knowledge processes that occurred when primary students engaged in multimodal text production with new digital media. It also suggests the need for a systematic way of theorising, grounded in a coherent epistemology, what students are really

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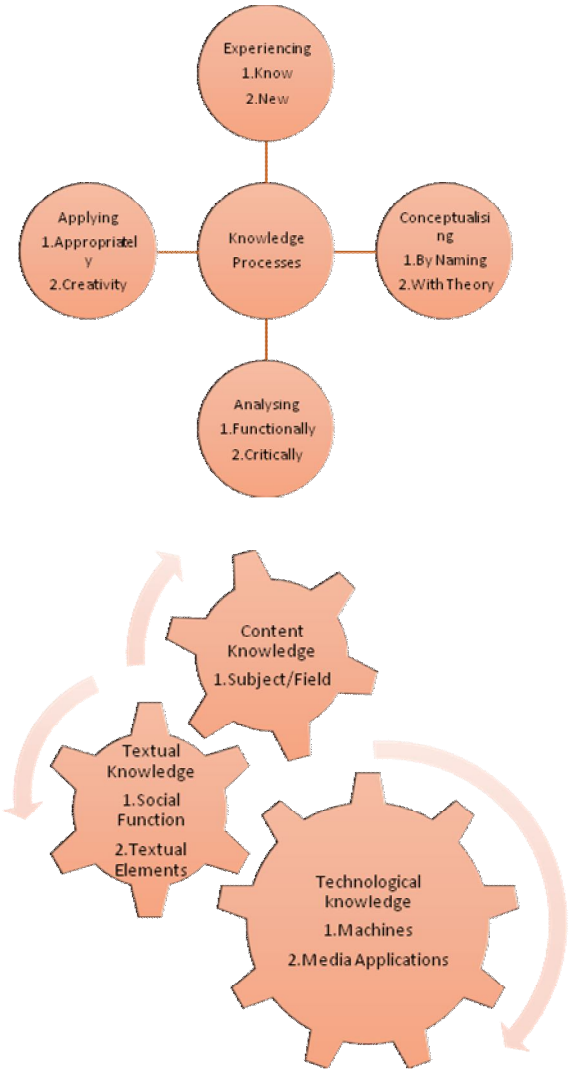
coming to know when they engage in textual practices using digital media. In this special issue, Kalantzis& Cope have outlined a heuristic for theorising 'knowledge processes' in the Learning by Design approach to pedagogy. Learners demonstrate eight 'knowledge processes' across different subject domains, skills areas and sensibilities(see Figure1). It produced a podcast containing this except after participating in a series of digital media-based literacy lessons involving the production of blogs, web profiles, podcasts and movies. A complementary theoretical model is presented here to conceptualise 'what' students learn – the 'knowledge assets'–when they are engaged in digital media production(see Figure2). Figure1.'knowledge processes'(adapted from Kalantzis& Cope,2008).



'Knowledge assets' for digital media design.

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Technological Knowledge:

As new literacies that include digital and media technologies evolve, preparing students to understand and adjust to these literacy demands is critical to current and future expectations for pleasure and work (International Reading Association, 2001. (Leu, Mallette, Karchmer, & Kara-Soteriou, 2005). For instance, teachers may identify with past models of literacy that are paper and pencil bound. However, new conceptions involve continually changing views of reading and writing, particularly with the advent of the Internet (Leu et al., 2004; Warschauer, 2006). Learning by Design, the focus of this special issue of E-Learning and Digital Media, was developed in response to a series of social transformations known variously as the 'knowledge society' or the 'new economy' (Kalantzis& Cope et al, 2005, p. 16).The effective participation of students in a globalised society requires the accumulation of new capabilities and knowledge assets that contribute value to organisations, communities, online networks, and nations. One of the most significant and expanding areas in the new knowledge economy is what can be called 'technological knowledge' – the technical content and process knowledge required for innovative digital media production. This includes knowledge of two areas: (a) machines, such as laptops, cameras, and scanners; and (b) media applications, such as web design and movie-editing software. Primary students enjoy using new technologies for digital media production, but we cannot assume that all students have the necessary skills for participation in the knowledge economy simply because they play video games for pleasure.

Textual Knowledge:

When learners engage in the process of digital media design, they draw on textual knowledge, which includes both knowledge of the social and cultural context in which the text is produced and used and the multimodal elements within the text. These include the visual, audio, spatial, gestural and linguistic design elements that are combined in unique ways to synergistically represent them.(Mills, 2009). Linguistic elements have been categorised in various ways, with linguists distinguishing between the phonological, lexical, grammatical and generic structures of language that form the substantial content of English curricula. Multimedia information and new communications technologies are tied to the hybridisation of textual knowledge. Digital technologies and the related convergence of the

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industries of computing, broadcasting and publishing have contributed to shifts in choices of modes, genres and linguistic structures.

Content Knowledge:

In the process of digital media production, learners also draw upon content knowledge of the text that is produced. Content knowledge refers to funds of facts, concepts, and theories in the designer's head. Depending on the social purpose and audience of the multimedia text, this prior knowledge may draw upon sources such as personal experiences, experts, authorities and other texts. To engage in digital media production involves knowing certain information about the subject represented, including the ability to use certain discourses and domain-specific vocabulary for different communities of online users. Whether online social networking, blogging, microblogging, wikis, podcasting, chat, or the next new hybrid social practice, there is a need to understand what students are coming to know. The 'knowledge assets for digital media production' – technological, textual, and content knowledge – describe in a coherent way the funds of knowledge that learners combine synergistically to create meaning in a digital age.

Career opportunities for a Digital Media Graduate

Animation	Digital Video and Special Effects	Educational Technology
Electronic Entertainment	Game Development	Graphics Designer
Instructional Design	Internet Services and Technology	Media Director
Multi-Media Specialist	Production Co-ordinator	Web Developer or Web Master

"Demand for multi-media artists and animators will increase as consumers continue to demand more realistic video games, movie and television special effects and 3D animated movies. Additional job openings will arise from an increasing demand for Web site development and for computer graphics adaptation from the growing number of mobile technologies. Animators are also increasingly finding work in alternative areas such as scientific research or design services."

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Getting Ready via Digital Media

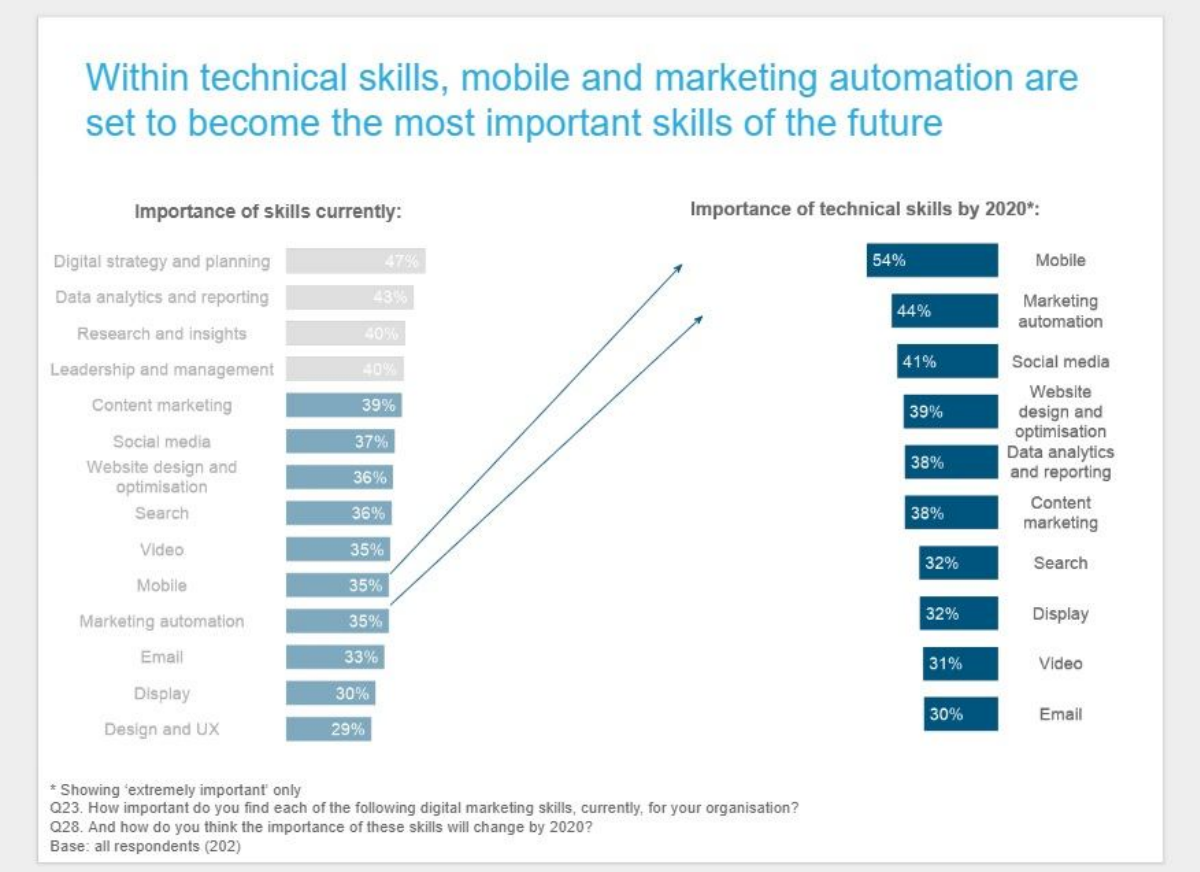
- Develop excellent technical and computer skills, especially Internet proficiency and knowledge.

- Demonstrate curiosity, confidence, assertiveness, creativity, initiative, tact, competitive spirit, enthusiasm, persistence and diplomacy.

- Obtain experience through volunteer, practicum or internship opportunities.

- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in fields of interest to gain information, develop contacts, build mentoring relationships and learn more about career opportunities in a competitive field.

Digital skills in demand



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The Rise of Digital Media Production:

Web 2.0 – the 'social web' The World Wide Web is a significant feature of contemporary life, particularly for communication and social networking since the rise of the 'social web' or Web 2.0 (O'Reilly, 2005). When contrasted with the earlier applications of the World Wide Web, Web 2.0 has increased the ease and reduced the cost of online collaboration, such as polls, blogs, podcasts, microblogs, social networking sites, wikis and other more democratic forms of user-generated content. Also referred to as the 'read–write' web, Web 2.0 provides a means for free, rapid dialogue and instant feedback from significant international audiences (Wheeler & Wheeler, 2009).

Experiencing the Known and the New:

Digital media design when learners engage in digital media production, they experience or perceive new technological knowledge through personal and sensory engagement with digital tools, such as laptops and cameras and a broadening array of software applications for specialist media production. This engagement with digital technologies of textual production involves the self, emotions and immersion in the human and natural world. Like other experiences in the world, this should be conscious, systematic, explicit, and structured. Kalantzis& Cope et al (2005) distinguish between two distinct ways of experiencing: experiencing the known and immersion in new experiences. 'Experiencing the known' involves drawing on familiar lifeworld experiences, prior knowledge, community background, personal interests and the cultural resources of learners. Examples include sharing about favourite video games, brainstorming what students already know about a topic, or using popular multimedia texts in the classroom.

Using her laptop connected to the Internet and a data projector, the media teacher displayed part of the Disney fan site to show an example of a blog for primary-school-age children. The multimodal dimensions of the text attracted their attention – the combination of visual, spatial, gestural, and linguistic elements – and text content about Candace having a secret 'crush' on Jeremy, the fictional male character in the blog, allowed them to experience the known. The teacher used a text with content that was part of their existing lifeworld experiences in order to make links with the 'new' – the knowledge of the conventions of a blog that was remote from many of the students' prior experiences.

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Experiencing the New:

'Experiencing the new' is immersion in unfamiliar, real, or simulated experiences, communities, situations, and texts (Kalantzis& Cope et al, 2005). For example, the same media teacher introduced students to Apple Photo Booth software for capturing and applying special effects to still images. The students worked in pairs on laptops with built-in webcams. Rather than tightly regulate the students' first use of this software, she allowed the partners to experience the new with the affordances of the software. The students soon discovered how to use the 'effects' function, systematically applying effects such as 'pop art', 'colour pencil', 'mirror', and 'sunset'. The students' unreserved laughter erupted across the classrooms as peers collaboratively experimented with the new digital media.

Conclusion:

The shape of knowledge for textual production is changing in the digital age. Sophisticated technological knowledge is now a highly demanded credential for cosmopolitan recognition in globalised networks. This article has provided evidence for an active and dynamic process of 'coming to know' when students create digital and multimodal texts. Learners were guided through a process of experiencing, conceptualising, analysing, and applying new combinations of technological, textual and content knowledge – 'knowledge assets' for digital media design. Creators of digital media in a Web 2.0 network do more than simply reproduce a narrow canon of fixed disciplinary content and print-based conventions. Rather, learners engage in the transformation of existing multimedia designs, creating globally oriented funds of knowledge that are easily expanded and adapted to meet changing criteria for success in the new times.

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