Chapter 13

Macromedia Director–MX Lessons Development (MAD–LED) Model: The Immediacy of Online–Distance Teaching–Learning in Multimedia and Real–Time Environments

Jameson Mbale
Copperbelt University, Zambia

Manish Wadhwa
Salem State University, USA

ABSTRACT

Dissemination of teaching-learning information through online and distance-learning methods can only be effective if the materials are interactively presented among all the stakeholders, that is, the teacher, the learner, and the content itself. The content being used need to dynamically respond according to the prevailing learning circumstances that may demand the interactivity involving text, video, audio, graphics, and animation in a real-time environment. Based on this premise, Macromedia Director-MX Lessons Development system, abbreviated in this work as MAD-LED Model, was envisaged. The MAD-LED Model utilises the combination of nonverbal immediacy and multimedia Macromedia Director-MX technologies. The situational variable of teacher nonverbal immediacy is associated with student’s motivation to study and is thus essential for effective classroom instruction. The multimedia Macromedia Director-MX tools such as cast, stage, score, and control panel are used to design and develop animation utilising the text, video, audio, and graphics.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-9995-3.ch013
INTRODUCTION

Online and distance learning methods are becoming highly popular these day. The growing demand is because of the ease of accessibility and reachability as compared to conventional classroom learning. In order to provide a highly interactive online and distance learning environment, Macromedia Director-MX Lessons Development Model, abbreviated as MAD-LED Model, was envisaged. It must be noted that the latest version of Macromedia Director-MX now goes by the name Adobe Director. We used an older version of the same and hence call it Macromedia Director-MX Lessons Development Model, abbreviated as MAD-LED Model. It can be easily called AD-LED Model based on the newer version name of Adobe Director and hence Adobe Director Lessons Development Model. In truth, it does not matter what this model is called, what matters is how this model is implemented and what is its impact on the online teaching and learning. The model was automated to build highly practical lessons that were demonstrated before the learners. At every lesson, the teacher, lecturer, education administrator, instructional technologists, software designers, or software developers identified the relevant resources to be used to build online lessons.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Traditional teaching comprises of teacher and learner interacting in a classroom setting. In a lecture based class, a teacher lectures throughout the class time, and students, for the most part, listen and occasionally interact with the teacher. Also, there are students who are introvert types and don’t feel comfortable interacting in front of others. This limits their interaction ability. With the advent of technology and learning tools, education became more reachable to people, including those who live in remote areas as well as those who, for some reason, could not have access to a physical classroom setting. This led to introduction of online and distance education. This was where the lesson was projected to remote site where the teacher was not physically present in the classroom. One important conclusion reported in the paper by Simonson, M. (2006), is the research that found that students have positive attitudes about online learning, and that computer anxiety is not a problem for most students. Well-designed online courses were reported to produce more positive learning outcomes and to be related to overall student satisfaction. Harris, R. A., & Nikitenko, G. O. (2014) compared the online learning with brick-and-mortar stating that, “Overall, students enrolled in the online section (cohort) performed better on the post-test than did students enrolled in traditional ‘brick-and-mortar’ classes in quantitative-skill-based-course. An age variable shows that older students performed much better than younger students on the post-test.”

The challenge with online mode of teaching is the delivery of practical lessons, as the teacher is not physically present as in conventional classroom setting. For the theory lessons it is acceptable as the learners just sit and listen. The lack of interaction leads to boring lectures and thus leading to short attention span and little learning. Such kind of education thus demands the preparation of online practical lessons of courses using the Information Communication Technology (ICT). That is where another challenge arises regarding the utilisation of ICT technology on the preparation of the lesson. Not only is this a matter of preparing a lesson, it needs to be highly interactive. Harasim (1996) states that “Online
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