



iTeach, iDance: Using the iPad in the body-kinesthetic teaching context

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This session explores a particular classroom application of the iPad and extends ongoing research on pedagogical applications of mobile multimedia databases in the physical education classroom. In this study, the researcher identified mobile small group demonstration capabilities and ease of video database access as key characteristics of the iPad as a teaching tool. The described uses include: leading demonstration and discussions, easy access to extension materials, and opportunities for scaffolding of learning materials. This research explores a specific application of the iPad mobile device in the classroom that is possible due to the device's large screen format. It extends the research on a specific classroom application of a mobile device and points to other potential applications. Further research exploring the extension of this iPad application to other body-kinesthetic teaching contexts, such as the general physical education classroom, is needed.

Keywords: iPad, mobile device, multimedia database, physical education

Introduction

The impact of handheld mobile devices on educational practice continues to be an area of considerable interest in both the research and practice of education (Ally, 2009; Kenny, Park, Van Neste-Kenny, Burton & Meiers, 2009; Maag, 2007). However, there is a gap in the literature with respect to descriptions of applications of handheld devices. Song (2007) comments that research needs to focus "more on making use of simple features of handheld devices for educational applications in context" (p. 44). This session presents the findings of an exploration of how the iPad, a new handheld device on the market, can be used in a specific teaching context.

The particular iPad use described in this session is within a folk dance class. Folk dance lexicon and presentation are complex motor skills to teach and often instructors themselves are not experts at every dance movement (Ostashewski, Reid, & Ostashewski, 2009). The iPad allows for mobile on-the-spot demonstration using exemplar videos from a large handheld database. The ability to finely control video playback and display it for small groups of students is a key affordability of this device. Demonstrations of how the iPad is used in this classroom context utilizing the multimedia iTunes application on the device are the focus of the presentation.

Described iPad uses in the classroom

- Demonstration using video clips to present exemplars for student review and expansion of the classroom.
- As an extension of the video iPod or iPhone capable of controlled playback of video.
- Fully mobile demonstrations using images, audio, and video.
- Access to uTube videos using wifi that allow for classroom extension of the multimedia database.
- Student access to short teaching video segments from a multimedia library.

Conclusion

The iPad is a new mobile teaching tool that provides on-the-spot access and playback of video from an iTunes multimedia library. The iPad, as a mobile device, provides a natural evolution from the iPod and iPhone devices capable of recording and displaying video segments from a shared multimedia library (Ostashewski & Reid, 2010). The ability to display video with sufficient audio volume and screen size to provide access to teaching video segments is one key use in the dance classroom. This application of a new mobile tool is likely expandable to other physical education or psychomotor activities where physical skill development towards an expert level is being sought.

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Nathaniel Ostashewski is a former K-12 teacher, currently working as a TPD presenter and educational technology researcher. His expertise is in utilizing new and emerging educational technologies in the classroom and sharing that knowledge with other educators during his 25+ year educational career. One of his current research interests is the use of technology devices, such as the iPhone or iPad, to enhance learning in the classroom.

Doug Reid is a former teacher and professor with experience in educational technology implementation and blended learning. He has designed and overseen many projects that analyzed and improved processes in education, including instructional design, videoconferencing and supervising educators. His PhD is in online education, focusing on capabilities of online teachers and the delivery of learning materials at a distance.

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