Ed Tech: More hype than hope?

Scott Thornbury

Self-Directed Learning Using Digital Tools Will Take Center Stage…

"The schools that will stand out in the year ahead are the ones creating space for multi-modal learning environments"

This cycle of *hype, hope* and *disappointment* is perhaps the biggest lesson to be learned from the 20th century.

Selwyn, N. (2011) *Education and Technology: Key Issues and Debates,* London: Conitinuum, p. 59.

Techno-fundamentalism: 'a straightforward enchantment with technology and desire to benefit from continued technological progress.'

Selwyn, N. (2014) *Distrusting educational technology: Critical questions for changing times*, London: Routledge, p. 37.

The use of mechanical aids in the classroom is justified only if they can do something which the teacher unaided cannot do, or can do less effectively.

Pit Corder, S. 1966. *The Visual Element in Language Teaching.* London: Longman, p. 69.

Teaching Foreign-Language Skills

WILGA M. RIVERS

© The European Commission

'Has the Language Learning Laboratory Failed?' In Wilga M. Rivers, 1981. *Teaching Foreign Language Skills,* 2nd edn.

"What can we learn from past experience?"

1. "The materials available ...have been tied too closely to a particular theory of language learning."

2. "Teachers have not been supplied with simple-to-operate equipment, readily available at the times it is needed."

3. "Very few language teachers have been given more than a perfunctory training in the use of hardware..."

4. "We need user's reports in which teachers share ... accounts of how [technological aids and materials] were used."

5. "Language teachers should meet with media technicians in detailed discussions of ways in which the needs of language learners can be served most effectively by using the full potential of the equipment."

6. "Before requesting or rejecting expensive equipment teachers should analyze what the expensive equipment does which makes it effective as an aid to language learning and then study less costly ways of doing the same thing."

7 "Above all, we must be able to demonstrate in a convincing way, through improved student learning, that the cost of the equipment... is justified."

Americans alone discard 100 million computers, cell phones and related devices every year, at a rate of 136,000 per day….

It takes roughly 1.8 tons of raw material… to manufacture one PC and its monitor.

Crowther, H. 2010. One hundred fears of solitude: The greatest generation gap. In *Granta*, 111, p. 115.
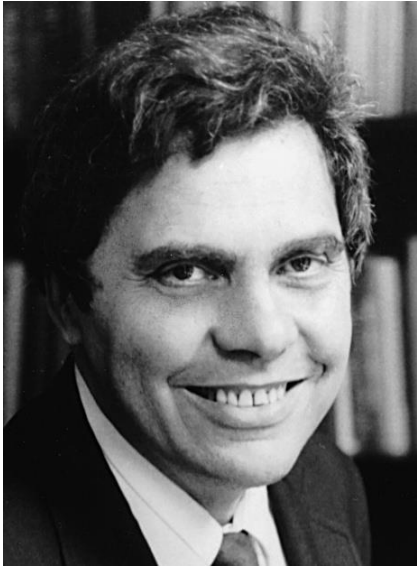
Neil Postman

1931 - 2003

"What is the problem to which this technology is the solution?"

1. The input problem

2. The output problem

3. The interaction problem

4. The feedback problem

Brothers and Sisters

This week Sorie and Mark talk about big families (**#1337**) and brothers and sisters (**#1338**).

Recommended

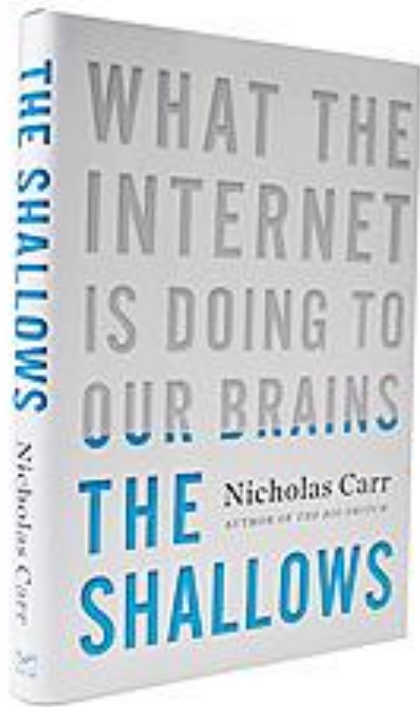**Arranged Marriage**

Recent Videos

Do you want a big family?

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Elllo is created by Todd Beuckens, an English teacher based in Japan. Feel free to **contact him** at the address listed for feedback, requests, or point out one of those annoying typos!

www.elllo.org

Digital media offer massive input but at a low level of engagement:

"The Web is a technology of forgetfulness"

"When we go online and, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning.

It is possible to think deeply while surfing the Net, just as it's possible to think shallowly while reading a book, but that's not the type of thinking the technology encourages and rewards."

Carr, N. 2010. *The Shallows: how the Internet is changing the way we think, read and remember.* London: Atlantic Books, p. 115-116.

Some schools are experimenting with iPads and whatnot, but—at least here in Japan—things are still too fragmented to be worth the effort.

Personally, as a teacher, I've found it to be a nightmare to try to get a class of students to download and manage an app, to set up an account, to keep track of their logins and passwords, to access books once they're bought. And then to deal with all the device issues: "Teacher, I forgot my iPad;" "Teacher, my battery is dead;" "Teacher I can't connect to the internet." Despite the wishful thinking, the market is still overwhelmingly demanding paper books, at least for graded readers.

http://eltjam.com/elt-entrepreneurs-marcos-benevides/

"Technological interactivity is meager compared to human interaction… Technological interactivity does not guarantee an educational encounter".

McPake, J. & Plowman, L. (2013) 'Seven myths about young children and technology', *Childhood Education,* 89/1

http://strathprints.strath.ac.uk/42463/1/Plowman_McPake_2013_seven_myths_about_young_children_and_technology_.pdf

1. The input problem

2. The output problem

3. The interaction problem

4. The feedback problem

5. The motivation problem

It is becoming apparent that wired students use technology less to learn than to distract themselves from learning.

Crowther, H. 2010. One hundred fears of solitude: The greatest generation gap. In *Granta*, 111, p. 108.

1. The input problem

2. The output problem

3. The interaction problem

4. The feedback problem

5. The motivation problem

6. The data problem

Digital technologies are perhaps more commonly used as an "information tool" than as a "learning tool".

Selwyn, N. (2011) *Education and Technology: Key Issues and Debates,* London: Continuum, p. 80.

Education is not the transmission of information or ideas. Education is the training needed to make use of information and ideas.

Hieronymi, P. (2012) Don't Confuse Technology With College Teaching, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Aug 13, 2012.

Language learning is intrinsically related to face-to-face communication and immersion in the target culture, in 'real' (physical) rather than 'virtual' settings…

Study on the Impact of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and New Media on Language Learning. EACEA 2007/09. European Commission.

While other classes in the curriculum activate mostly the brain, the language class engages the whole body, its emotions, feelings, desires, and projections.

Kramsch, C. 2009. *The Multilingual Subject,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 191 and p. 210.

The Costs of Big Data

Short-sighted investments in analytics are hurting students and teachers alike.

By John Warner

We are in the midst of what I can only think of as a mass delusion among so-called K-12 education "reformers" that technology is the key to improving schools. This has resulted in $1 billion being spent on iPads in the L.A. Unified School District.

http://www.slate.com/articles/life/inside_higher_ed/2014/07/data_analytics_use_in_colleges_spark_controversies_and_questions.html

'Only those who know nothing of the history of technology believe that a technology is entirely neutral.'

Postman, N. 1985. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the age of Show Business*, London: Methuen, p. 86.

What is one thing you wish you had known/done when you started out learning languages?

I wish I had known that language learning happens for real when emotions and people are involved. […] People who reach genuine fluency in any language have had life experiences, have lived it through and with other people.