Changes of Classroom: Emerging Learning with an E-textbook

Tecnam Yoon

National University of Education, 126 Kongjiro, Seooksadong, Korea

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to investigate the importance of emerging learning with an e-textbook in a public school system. First part of this paper explains benefits and challenges of an e-textbook, and the second part describes how to implement an e-textbook.

Keywords: E-textbook, new paradigm, education, public school

INTRODUCTION

Our concept of 'core ability' has been changing since we entered upon the knowledge-information society. Not only do we need to be equipped with the ability that we can acquire the knowledge but also we must be better able to reorganize information we get and even create new ideas. With this in mind, it is doubtful that existing educational system and book-oriented teaching materials, which consist of lots of memorization and a lack of meaningful context, are appropriate tools to lead to such abilities that our society needs. Many of the people wonder if the e-textbook is an improvement over traditional course books or if they damper the learning experience. So far, it is clear that there are many advantages and disadvantages to using it. Students accustomed to traditional paper-based textbooks typically have to work hard to adjust to this new format, but there is also likely to see the benefit of instantly obtaining textbook with a quick download.

ADVANTAGES OF AN E-TEXTBOOK

There are some advantages associated with using e-textbooks.

First, e-textbooks are efficient in terms of portability. It is not necessary to bring heavy backpacks. Simply to download the textbooks and to save them to a hard drive is only required to do. Second, e-textbooks are costless. They are typically cheaper to buy compared to their printed counterparts. On-demand learning is the third merit. There is no need to stand in-line at the bookstore or wait days for books to arrive in the mail. This makes many students relish in the fact they can instantly receive their textbook, saving time. Fourth, e-textbooks are easy to customize. In fact, the digital format makes it easy to highlight and bookmark certain pages without defacing. Then finally, the rapid speed of searching function makes it easier for learners to find out a specific passage or content they want to find in a textbook.

In addition to the advantages stated above, an e-textbook can offer learning materials in a various way to the students. While traditional paper-based textbooks used in most of the schools are limited to text and photographs, an e-textbook can utilize diverse forms of multimedia to provide a much wider range of contents for students. E-textbook surpasses conventional paper books, because it runs on a personal computer with Internet-connected laptops and contains various learning materials, such as video clips, animation and authentic aids that help students better understand the subject. In this point it is expected that an e-textbook will increase the students' creativity.

Therefore, the introduction of e-textbook has widely affected the learning process of public education, and it will make a considerable change in the field of public education, as well. Recently, selective schools have introduced a tablet PC-based e-textbook that provides study materials in the forms of streaming videos, animated films and virtual reality to their classrooms.

*Address for correspondence

tecnamyoon@gmail.com

Moreover, as an e-textbook can be optimized for tablet PCs, it allows users to use underline texts, write down notes and even use blank pages as a notebook. And it also provides a wide range of interactive functions and programs which allow students to study the contents and evaluate their performances depending on their personal academic levels. What makes e-textbooks even greater is that they could be automatically be updated on the web. They can also be connected to public educational cyber space, as well as national education system.

DISADVANTAGES OF AN E-TEXTBOOK

Opponents to e-textbooks argue that the e-textbook is not yet practical in class, in that they contain various disadvantages. One of weak points is to carry electronic devices. But for a laptop or online connection, no one can assure the main merit that e-textbook has and consequently, miss a feeling of convenience that traditional textbook possesses. And another major disadvantage is that the electronic format may be hard on the eyes. Many students may find they begin to experience difficultly reading the e-textbook if chapters are tedious or long. A third problem is the vulnerability of digital files to corruption. If a computer crashes, important documents could be lost. Additionally, when it comes to e-textbooks, constant upgrades on software programs are always required to do so, in order to support current editions and maintenance.

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTS OF AN E-TEXTBOOK

Despite of these disadvantages, I strongly believe a change of school textbooks is a positive change to public education and other related educational service. With an e-textbook, an equal educational opportunity will be available to students living in rural areas, and those lacking expensive educational services. The majority of textbook experts point out that e-textbook will improve individual learning possible. They also anticipate that using e-textbook will facilitate interaction among peers, teachers and even between students and teachers. And because it is easy to update new information without delay and continuously, it will be easier to teach our students with more current information than with traditional textbooks.

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Tecnam Yoon's research currently includes multi-media and ICT use in education, distance education, the psychological issues of e-learning and individual differences in learning.