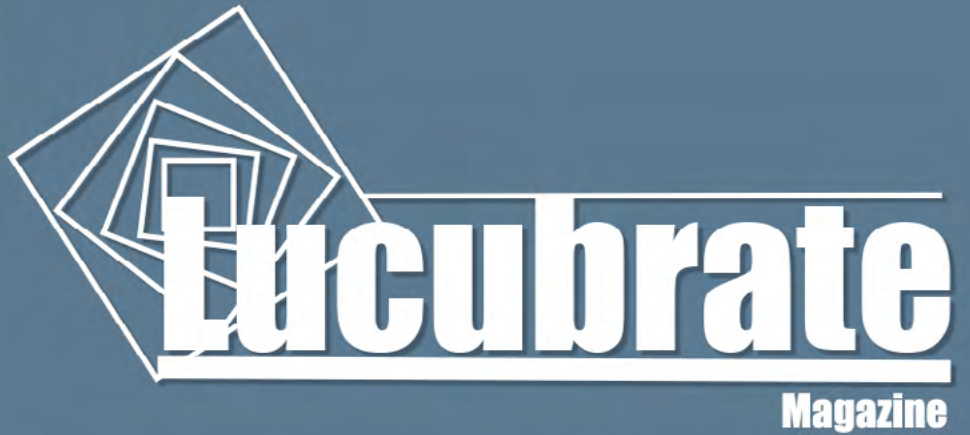


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The logo for Lucubrate Magazine features a stylized white outline of a cube or a series of overlapping squares on a dark blue background. To the right of this graphic, the word "Lucubrate" is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Below "Lucubrate", the word "Magazine" is written in a smaller, white sans-serif font.

Lucubrate

Magazine

The title "Learning Environment" is displayed in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font. The text is superimposed on a background of numerous light-colored wooden blocks, some of which are arranged to spell out the word "LEARN" in black letters.Learning Environment

Photo: Pixabay

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EDUCATION SYSTEMS MUST BE WILLING TO ADAPT

By Professor Nita Temmerman (PhD)

There are certainly lots of criticisms levelled at educational institutions about what they do and what they don't do. Educational institutions are often referred to as agents of transformation. But in many instances, they have not sufficiently adapted to 21st century realities. We all know amazing teachers who are doing remarkable things and individual institutions that are places of positive transformation. This is not about them. This is about the broader educational system in which learners are subjected to what might be best described as obsolete.

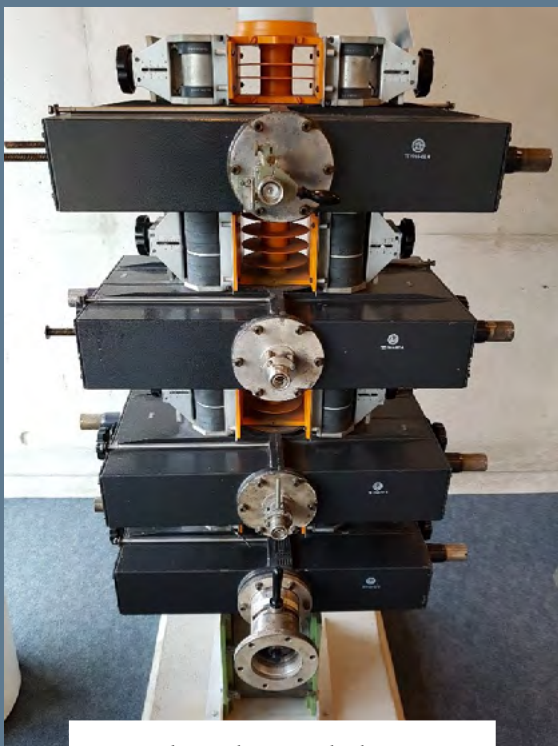


Photo by: Karl Skaar

Developing Creative, Flexible, Lateral Thinkers

We as educators talk a lot about the importance of guiding learners to learn how to think, how to reason and how to critically evaluate information. We talk about the importance of learners experiencing how to successfully work in teams, how to collaborate and how to problem solve. We talk about the importance of preparing them for the real world of work. We talk about the importance of developing creative, flexible, lateral thinkers who will be active participants in, not just passive consumers of, the future. Then we have them sit passively in seats, talk at them and have them work through artificially separated out content, at the same rate, for a set period of time. The principal goal seems to be to

make sure they all pass the same tests to progress to the next level where they do it all over again.

But we know that the skills and attributes appropriate for today's fast changing world include the ability to be flexible and resilient, to be adaptable, to employ multiple strategies to arrive at different solutions to problems and even the same problem; and to present ideas and explore them creatively individually and with others.

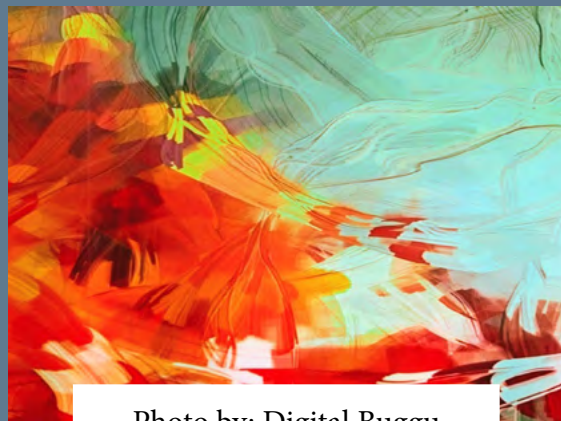


Photo by: Digital Buggu

Active Learning and Meaning-making

The recognition of these facts requires a shift in the kinds of tasks we invite learners to undertake, the kind of thinking we ask them to do, and the kind of criteria we apply to appraise their work. It involves learners in learning by doing, whether that comprises building a product, being part of a musical production, cultivating a garden, creating healthy weekly menus for the local hospital, beautifying the local community and so on. It is active learning and meaning-making that is transferable and connected to authentic everyday life circumstances.

Changing the Look of the Physical Learning Environment

It involves learners in setting goals cooperatively, working in partnership with others and communicating ideas and decisions clearly and effectively. It requires the facility to take and manage risks, adapt and call on a repertoire of behaviours depending on the circumstances. It means continuously evaluating the situation to determine what is and is not working, and accordingly make considered decisions based on facts and information.

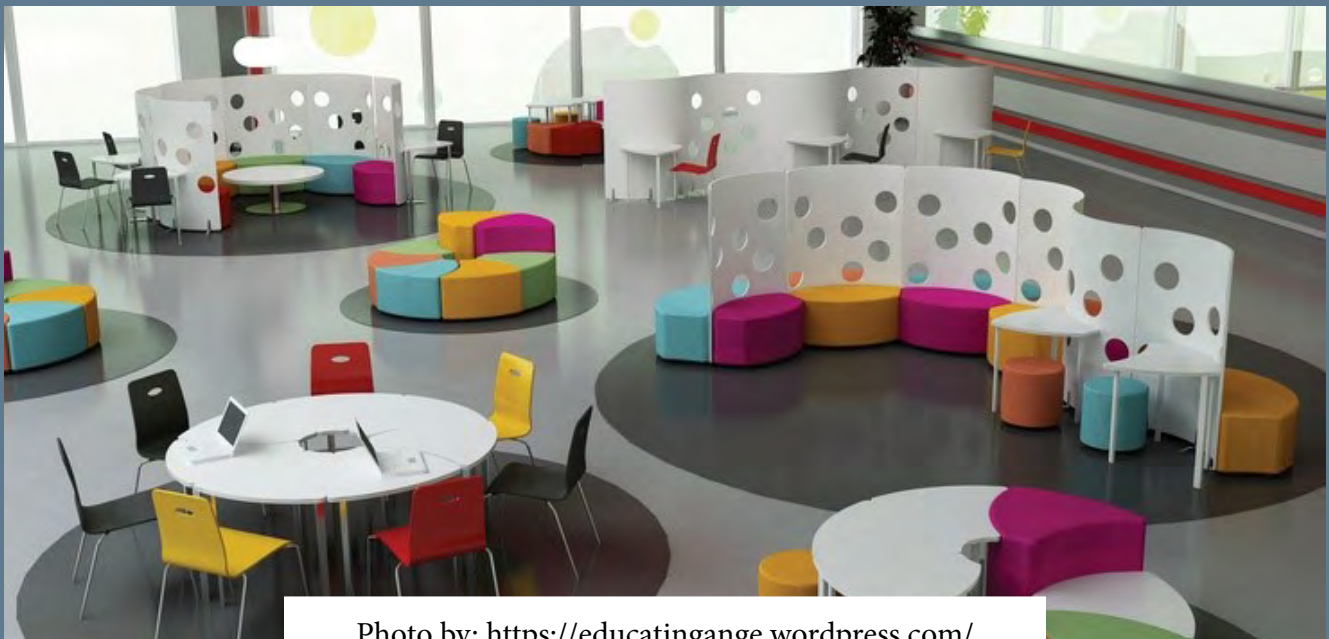


Photo by: <https://educatingange.wordpress.com/>

It might also mean changing the look of the physical learning environment. It might mean having learning spaces that can be transformed to suit the learning taking place and ones that acknowledge not all learners learn the same way. Ones that have adjustable furniture and incorporate technology in meaningful ways. Learning environments that promote multiple modes of learning and opportunity for learners to break into groups and spend quiet time alone, and encourage the development of creativity, teamwork and collaboration. Learning spaces with lounges, quiet zones, pods, moveable glass walls students can write on that make learning fun.

A Shift in Perspective

None of the above means compromising the learning of key discipline knowledge, understanding and competencies. However, it does mean a shift in perspective about how they are covered including finding improved ways to cross discipline boundaries, to better connect learning and to emphasize active learner participation in the learning process.

Professor Nita Temmerman (PhD)



is a former university Pro Vice Chancellor Academic and Executive Dean, Faculty of Education. She is currently Chair of two Higher Education Academic Boards in Australia, visiting Professor to Ho Chi Minh City Open University, Solomon Islands National University, as well as invited specialist with the Hong Kong CAAVQ, invited external reviewer with Oman Academic Accreditation Authority (OAAA), registered expert TEQSA Australia and published author.

TECHNOLOGIES AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

By Chief Editor, Karl Skaar



Illustration: Pinterest

Learning takes place in multiple settings, and the learning environment can be structured or unstructured, and the teaching in different contexts can complement each other. Formal and non-formal education occurs mainly in structured settings in the form of institutions (schools, community centres, multimedia centres, learning villages/cities, computers, mobile phones, etc.). Learning environment stimulates students' engagement in the learning process and influences their behaviour.

What is the Learning Environment?

Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. The term also encompasses the culture of a school, class, or social network. Learning environment includes how individuals interact with and treat one another. It also describes the ways in which teachers may organize an educational setting to facilitate learning (conducting classes in the ecosystems, grouping desks in specific ways, decorating the walls, utilizing audio, visual, and digital technologies).

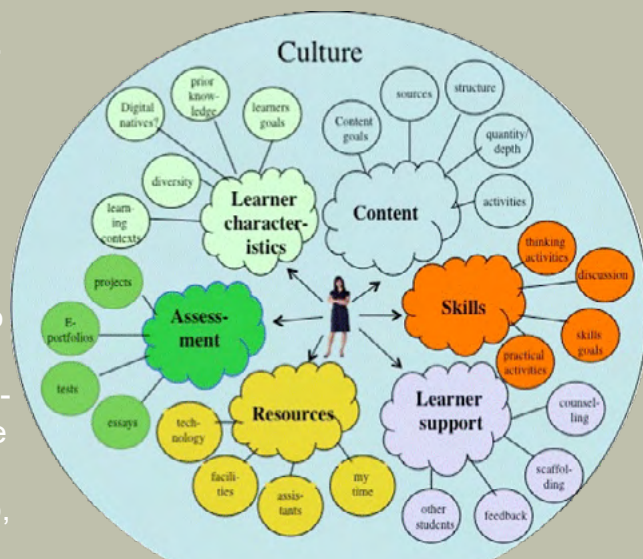


Illustration Learning Environment: A.W. (Tony) Bates

Is Learning Environment Important?

UNESCO emphasises on that “learners in supportive environments have high levels of self-efficacy and self-motivation and use learning as a primary transformative force.” Welcoming the learner –child, youth or adult– in an environment where they can feel safe and nurtured for is very important for the development of each and the society as a whole. Addressing the issue of the learning environment comprehensively and systematically is even more critical in countries with limited financial resources [1].



Educators may also argue that learning environments have both a direct and indirect influence on student learning, including their engagement in what is being taught, their motivation to learn, and their sense of well-being, belonging, and personal safety. For example, learning environments filled with sunlight and stimulating educational materials would likely be considered more conducive to learning than drab spaces without windows or decoration, as would

schools with fewer incidences of misbehaviour, disorder, bullying, and illegal activity. How adults interact with students and how students communicate with one another may also be considered aspects of a learning environment, and phrases such as “positive learning environment” or “negative learning environment” are commonly used about the social and emotional dimensions of a school or class [2].

Make the Learning Enjoyable

Students learn in many different ways in very different contexts. Since learners must do the learning, the aim is to create a total environment for learning that optimises the ability of students to learn. There is, of course, no single optimum learning environment. There is an infinite number of possible learning environments, which is what makes teaching so interesting. Today it is possible to use the mobile phone as a tool to make the learning enjoyable.

New Technologies and Social Media for Learning

Technologies are merely tools that can be used in a variety of ways. What matters more is how techniques are applied. The same technology can be implemented in different ways, even or especially in education. So in judging the value of technology, we need to look more closely at how it is being or could be used. In essence, this means focusing more on media – which rep-



resent the more holistic use of technologies – than on individual tools or techniques themselves, while still recognizing that technology is an essential component of almost all media.

Around 2005, a new range of web tools began to find their way into general use, and increasingly into educational use. These can be loosely described as social media, as they reflect a different culture of web use from the former ‘centre-to-periphery’ push of institutional websites. The main feature of social media is that they empower the end user to access, create, disseminate and share information quickly in a user-friendly, open environment. Usually, the only cost is the time of the end-user. There are often few controls over content, other than those imposed by a state or government, or where there are controls; the users themselves impose them. One feature of such tools is to empower the end-user – the learner – to self-access and manage data (such as online courses) and to form personal networks [3].

Will we find the students on social media more than in the traditional classroom? Alternatively, will the near future combine them?

[1] UNESCO (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/strengthening-education-systems/quality-framework/core-resources/learning-environment/>)

[2] The GLOSSARY of EDUCATION REFORM (<http://edglossary.org/learning-environment/>)

[3] A.W. (Tony) Bates: Teaching in a Digital Age (2015) Tony Bates Associates Ltd

THE CYBER WORLD FOR LEARNING

(From Collin Latchen, ed (2017): Using ICTs and blended learning in transforming technical and vocational education and training, pp26-28)



Illustration: Twitter

One of the defining features of development today is the emergence and expansion of the cyber world, stimulated by the spectacular growth in internet connectivity and mobile penetration [1]. We live in a connected world. An estimated 40 % of the world’s population now uses the internet and this number is growing at a remarkable rate [2]. While there are significant variations in internet connectivity among countries and regions, the number of households with such links in the global South has now overtaken those in the global North. Moreover, over 70 % of mobile telephone subscriptions worldwide are now in the global South [3]. Five billion people are expected to go from no to full connectivity within the next twenty years [4]. However,

there are still significant gaps among countries and regions, for example between urban and rural areas. Limited broadband speed and lack of connectivity hamper access to knowledge, participation in society and economic development.

Redefining aspects of our life

The internet has transformed how people access information and knowledge, how they interact, and the direction of public management and business. Digital connectivity

holds promise for gains in health, education, communication, leisure and well-being^[5]. Artificial intelligence advances, 3D printers, holographic recreation, instant transcription, voice-recognition and gesture-recognition software are only some examples of what is being tested. Digital technologies are reshaping human activity from daily life to international relations, from work to leisure, redefining multiple aspects of our private and public life.

Such technologies have expanded opportunities for freedom of expression and for social, civic and political mobilization, but they also raise important concerns. The availability of personal information in the cyber world, for example, brings up significant issues of privacy and security. New spaces for communication and socialization are transforming what constitutes the idea of 'social' and they require enforceable legal and other safeguards to prevent their overuse, abuse and misuse^[6].

Creativity, cultural innovation and youth

New forms of cultural and artistic expression have emerged in recent years. These are the result of acculturation impelled by the growth of connectivity and cultural exchange worldwide. The process is driven largely by young people. We see a new public aesthetic being expressed, rich in its inherent plurality, and we encounter a new willingness to innovate with form in each of the domains the youth inhabit, from fashion to food, music and personal relationships. The more than one billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24 in the world today are the most informed, active, connected and mobile generation the world has ever seen^[7]. It is estimated that over 90 % of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 in the world today are on some form of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. They spend considerable time on social media exploring and sharing the results of this exploration.



This generates an environment of greater awareness and understanding of other cultures and an engagement with issues of aesthetics worldwide, leading to a recognition of the importance of other knowledge systems. Cultural diversity has become increasingly relevant as a source of invention and innovation; it is today a valuable resource for sustainable human development^[8].

[1] International Telecommunication Union. 2013. Trends in Telecommunication Reform: Transnational aspects of regulation in a networked society. Geneva, International Telecommunication Union.

[2] ITU. 2013. The world in 2014: Fact and Figures. Geneva, ITU.

[3] ITU. 2014. Trends in Telecommunication Reform, Special Edition. Fourth-generation regulation. Geneva, ITU.

[4] Schmidt, E. and Cohen, J. 2013. The New Digital Age: Reshaping the Future of People, Nations and Business. New York, Knopf.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Hart, A.D. and Hart Frejd, S. 2013. The Digital Invasion: How Technology Is Shaping You and Your Relationships. Ada, MI, Baker Books.

[7] 'Youth-support' by Chernor Bah, Chair, Youth Advocacy Group for Global Education First Initiative (GEFI); Panel discussions: 'Enabling conditions for the delivery of quality global citizenship education: Where are we? Where do we want to go?' Global Citizenship Education: Enabling Conditions & Perspectives, 16 May 2014, UNESCO, Paris. www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/pdf/ChernorBah_16May2014.pdf [Accessed February 2015].

[8] UNESCO. 2009. UNESCO World Report Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue. Paris, UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001852/185202e.pdf> [Accessed February 2015].

The world is changing all around us. A skilled population is the key to a country's sustainable development and stability. We know that obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. To contribute to skill people over the next ten years and beyond, we must look ahead, understand the trends and forces that will shape our business in the future and move swiftly to prepare for what has to come. We must get ready for tomorrow today. We will make it possible for youth and young adults all over the world to gain skills they can use in the labour market or to create their own jobs. We will make it possible for every person to have lifelong learning opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their aspirations and contribute to their societies.

The Lucubrate project started in 2017 by NKB. The aim for the project is to become one of the world leader in knowledge transfer independent of the country you live in. The Lucubrate Magazine is a part of the Lucubrate project.

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