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How English-Language Arts Teachers Perceive and Use New Media in Schools Today

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The research objective of this study is to examine junior/high school English-Language Arts (ELA) teachers' perceptions of and integration of new media into instruction. Sixty-two junior/high school ELA teachers in a southern California county responded to a five-point Likert-type attitudinal scale and provided written responses to open-ended questions about their perceptions regarding integration of new media into instruction. Findings from the study indicate that the participants perceive that they have access to limited basic technologies and that their schools do not provide much support to integrate new media into instruction. Furthermore, while the ELA teachers perceive new media as crucially important to students' learning and social lives outside the school, they minimally integrate new media into instruction for several reasons. The findings suggest that building infrastructure in new media to enhance ELA teachers' instructional practices requires coordinated and concerted efforts from school districts, and state/federal government.

Keywords: English-language arts, teaching, technology infrastructure, new media, information and communication technologies (ICTs), multimodal and multimedia literacies

INTRODUCTION

English-language arts (ELA) teachers teach in new environments characterized by new media; that is, social communication and interactive communication technology such as the Internet, video, websites, social network media, iPhone, and iPad. The International Reading Association recognizes the burgeoning role of new media in the society when in its position statement: *Integrating literacy and technology in the curriculum* (2000) states: "literacy educators have a responsibility to effectively integrate these technologies into the

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literacy curriculum in order to prepare students for the literacy future they deserve" (http://www.reading.org/downloads/positions/ps1048_technology.pdf). The complexity of the contemporary literacy practices suggests that ELA teachers need to integrate new media literacy practices into English curricula to provide a culturally relevant mode of instruction (Morrell, 2011; Lapp, Flood, Heath & Langer, 2009). In fact, most literacy education researchers challenge ELA teachers to leverage new technology, students' functional literacy abilities, and social interests to create relevant, engaging, and life-long learning for learners. Such researchers recognize that students need teachers who understand the proficiencies and proclivities youth bring to bear on their reading of and production of diverse textual forms (Author, in press; Alvermann, 2008; Dede, 2011; Jenkins, 2006a).

However, the situation with many schools across the U.S. suggests that classrooms where new media are "effectively integrated into the literacy curriculum are sometimes scarce and hard to find" (Labbo, 2006, p. 2005). Hutchison and Reinking (2011) argue that "some empirical evidence suggests that integration [of new media] has been relatively sparse among literacy teachers" (p. 313). Cammack (2003) argues that "even though many literacy educators do not fully integrate or even understand some of the technologies used by adolescents, those technologies are nonetheless crucial in understanding the literacy practices of these adolescents" (n.p.). Indeed, many ELA teachers do not feel adequately prepared to integrate new media into instruction (Stolle, 2008). Moreover, research in new media is largely grounded in theory; hence, there are limited, reliable, and data-driven studies on how ELA teachers practically integrate new media into instruction (Reinking, 2010). Researchers contend that new media have been over-theorized without matching empirical studies to provide insights on how ELA teachers perceive and use the technologies (Alvermann, 2002, 2008; Reinking, 2010).

The objective of this study is to examine junior/high school ELA teachers' perceptions of and use of new media for instruction. Four research questions guided the study:

1. What are the teachers' views regarding availability of new media for instruction?
2. What are the teachers' views of support they receive from their schools?
3. What are the participants' perceptions regarding the usefulness of new media?
4. What are the teachers' views about integration of new media into instruction?

This study is significant in that it provides insights into literacy instruction and new media technology in the context of junior/high school English-language arts. ELA teachers in junior/high schools are specifically charged to develop the literacy practices of all students across different subject areas (Hutchison & Reinking, 2011). Moreover, English literacy is foundational to all subject matter learning. In addition, new media afford unique literacy practices that go beyond print-bound texts to include multimodal and multimedia literacies (Kress, 2010). These arguments suggest a need to understand ELA teachers' perceptions and use of new media for instruction, particularly in a southern California county where most students are bilingual and where ELA instruction is especially crucial for teaching/learning across all school subjects. Also, this study bridges the gap between theory and practice of new media?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, I review literature on ELA teachers' perceptions of integrating new media into instruction to contextualize the current research. Limited studies have examined ELA teachers' perceptions of integrating new media into instruction to facilitate and support teaching and learning. In a national survey of 1,441 K–12 teachers' perceptions of integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) into literacy instruction, Hutchison and Reinking (2011) conclude that educators in the U.S. integrate new media into curricula at low levels and that they perceive some obstacles to their efforts

to adopt new media into instruction. In a related study, Hutchison and Reinking (2010) suggest that while the majority of the teachers agree that integrating ICTs into literacy instruction is important, the educators indicate that several barriers prevent them from adopting technologies into teaching. Stolle (2008) examines how 16 high school teachers share their stories about literacy and technology and indicates that many of the educators are constrained by "tensions relating to access, knowledge, fear, and benefits" (p. 65). The present study builds on the findings from these quantitative studies by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data so that information from interviews can be used to complement the statistical data and provide the teachers' perspectives and voices.

Other studies have investigated teachers' integration of new media into instruction to support students' learning. Such studies largely focus on teachers of all disciplines without paying a particular attention to ELA educators even though the field may call for adoption of specific kinds of new media. Petko (2012), in a study of teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their use of new media, contends that educators are more likely to use ICTs for teaching if they perceive themselves as competent in using the technologies. Lai and Chen (2011) investigate factors that influence teachers' adoption of blogs for instruction and conclude that educators' personal innovations, perceived ease of use, school support, and the potential to help students learn are crucially important in their decision to integrate the technology into teaching. The present research extends the findings of these studies by specifically investigating ELA teachers' perceptions of how they use new media in classrooms.

Some studies have examined the gap between K–12 grade teachers' actual adoption of technology into teaching and their espoused beliefs. Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Sadik, Sendurur and Sendurur (2012), in a study of K–12 teachers' views on using new media during teaching, argue that educators' integration of technology into instruction is influenced by their beliefs rather than factors such as students' needs and school cultures. Kopcha (2012) contends that teachers perceive lack of vision and access to technology as the most important barriers they face in integrating technology into teaching. Karchmer (2001) explores the perceptions of 13 K–12 teachers who use the Internet for instruction and suggests that they perceive many constraints, including lack of time, concerns for safe internet use, and lack of appropriate grade-level materials on the Internet. The current study extends the findings by examining middle and high school ELA teachers' views of their use of new media for instruction.

In summary, the literature review shows that limited studies have examined ELA teachers' views of integrating new media into instruction. In addition, researcher differs in their findings about teachers' perceptions of adopting technology into teaching. Hence, there is a need for further research to fully understand ELA teachers' views on this important topic. The present study builds on the existing research by examining ELA teachers' views of integrating new media into teaching. Furthermore, this research is different from previous studies which are generally quantitative. The present study collects both quantitative and qualitative data so as to triangulate the findings and gain a deeper understanding of ELA teachers' perceptions.

METHODOLOGY

PARTICIPANTS

Sixty-two ELA teachers participated in the study. Thirty-three (53.22%) teachers were from junior high schools while 29 (46.78%) were from high schools. Also, 14 (22.58%) participants were male and 48 (77.42%) were female. Furthermore, 35 (56.45%) teachers were Mexican-American while 22 (35.48%) were Caucasian. The age of the teachers

ranged from 26 years to above 60 years. Fourteen (22.58%) teachers were between 36 and 40 and 12 (19.35%) were between 31 and 35 years old. Ten (16.13%) and nine (14.52%) participants were between 41 and 45 and between 46 and 50 years old, respectively.

While 24 (38.71%) teachers taught ELA between 11 and 15 years, 20 (32.26%) taught the subject between six and 10 years. Eighteen (29.03%) teachers taught 8th grade and another 18 (29.03%) taught 7th grade. In addition, 13 (20.97%) participants taught 9th grade while nine (14.52%) taught 10th grade. Moreover, 29 (46.77%) teachers indicated that they used new media to a moderate extent, 21 (33.08%) to a large extent, and 11 (17.74%) to a small extent in their personal activities. Finally, 28 (45.16%) participants indicated that they used new media to moderate extent, 18 (29.03%) to a large extent, and 13 (20.97%) to a small extend in their instruction. Appendix A provides the summary of the biographical data of the teachers.

THE SURVEY

The first draft of the survey had 71 items. The development of the survey was based on the research questions, theories of new media, and review of existing literature previously conducted in this study. I frequently revisited the research questions to make sure that survey items align with them because development of questionnaire items as a "method must depend on the formulation of a core research question that is amenable to being answered through a survey" (Baumann & Bason, 2011, p. 414). The draft of the survey contained 69-item 5-point Likert-type attitudinal scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Applicable, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). Section A (items 1 – 9) dealt with biographical data such as level of education and teaching experience. While in Section B (items 10 – 24), the teachers responded to statements about their views of availability of new media, they responded to statements about their perceptions of support that schools provided them to use new media in Section C (items 25 – 28). Section D (items 29 – 43) dealt with statements relating to the teachers' views of relevance of new media for ELA instruction while they provided answers to statements regarding their views of how they integrated new media into instruction in Section E (items 44 – 69).

Finally, the teachers responded to 10 open-ended interview questions: (1) What are you views regarding using new media for English-language art instruction? (2) Does your school provide support for you to integrate new media into instruction? If yes, describe the support the school provides. (3) What are your views regarding the assumption that new media facilitate teaching/learning of English-language arts? (4) What are you views regarding the assumption that new media is crucially important for the youth to live satisfying lives? (5) Students need the knowledge and skills associated with new media to have productive lives as adults. What is your reaction to this statement? (6) What are your views about the notion that new media allow students to use different modes and media for communication and negotiation? (7) If you use new media for instruction, describe such specific English-language arts activities. (8) What do you think about the statement that new media offer students the skills for social networking and hence a better chance of success in this information age? (9). Do you face challenges in using new media in you classrooms? If yes, explain. (10). What can the school district and government do to assist you to integrate new media into your instruction?

A focus group of four ELA teachers (who did not participate in main study) was asked to respond to the survey. The teachers (male and female) differed in their levels of experience in using new media for instruction. Based on the group's suggestions, two items were added to the initial draft, bringing the total questions to 71. Also, two professors of education read the survey and provided input. Their suggestions such as rewording some items for clarity and defining a few terminologies were used to improve the survey.

Baumann & Bason (2011) argue that researchers have the responsibility to develop clearly worded survey items.

To ensure the usability of the survey, the initial draft of the survey was piloted. The survey was emailed to six junior/high school teachers who completed and emailed the draft back within a week. (The teachers were not included in main study). The final copy of the survey had 71 items, 11 open-ended questions, and five boxes for informational items. Cronbach's Alpha (α) was used to determine the internal consistency reliability; that is, how closely related the set of items were in the survey. The reliability coefficients show that the survey has good internal consistency within each cluster at .78, .49, .83 and .85. The final version of the survey was administered during the main study.

PROCEDURES

Recruitment of participants and administration of the survey relied on *tailored design method*, which involved "using multiple motivational features in compatible and mutually supportive ways to encourage high quality and quality of response to the surveyor's request" (Dillman, Smyth, Christian, 2009, p. 16). First, an e-mail was sent to school principals in the county (site of the study) to obtain their permission to administer the survey. Next, an e-mail was sent to all the 89 junior/high school ELA teachers in the county to ask for their cooperation in responding to the survey. The following day, the researcher personally distributed 89 copies of the survey to the teachers at their schools. A week later, the researcher returned to the schools to collect completed copies of the survey. In all 62 (69.66%) teachers returned their completed survey.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive analyses were performed to provide summaries of the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics provided measures of central tendency such as mean, median, and mode while measures of variability included the standard deviation. Thematic analysis approach, a method involving identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within data (Creswell, 2013), was used to analyze the participants' responses to the open-ended questions. The written responses were read many times to identify themes that ran across the data. Furthermore, the researcher simultaneously coded the raw data and constructed categories that captured the themes across the data. Similarly, informational items listed by the participants in boxes such as ELMO cameras and promethran board were read several times and tabulated and converted into percentage scores. Finally, the teachers' responses were tabulated to show narrative texts, quotations, differences, and similarities.

For reliability of the themes and validity, the researcher ensured that the themes represented the whole set of data. Also, another professor was asked to identify themes across the data to test if the themes identified by both analysts were compatible with the data.

RESULTS

The objective of this research is to examine the participants' perceptions of and use of new media for instruction. Next, the results are presented according to the research objectives identified at the beginning of this research. Some statements that reflect the views of the majority of the participants are quoted to support specific findings.

THE TEACHERS' VIEWS OF AVAILABILITY OF NEW MEDIA FOR INSTRUCTION

Teachers' perceptions of availability of new media are important because such a factor greatly influences their decisions on whether to use new media and the extent to which they use them. Table 3 shows that the participants expressed high frequency of availability of new media in their schools, with scores ranging from high agreement (M = .95; SD = .69) to (M = 3.93; SD = .31) on a five point Likert-type scale.

Data analysis indicated that the ELA teachers expressed high rates of agreement with the statement that they had access to the Internet in their classrooms, with a mean of 3.93; had computers in classrooms, with a mean of 3.54; and had computer multimedia for instruction, with a mean of 3.09. However, the ELA teachers showed a low rate of agreement with the statements that iPhones were available for instruction in their classrooms, with a mean of .95; had laptop computers for students' personal use during instruction, at a mean of 1.03; and had iPad for instruction, with a mean of 1.44. The participants showed a low rate of agreement with the statements that their students had access to social network sites in class, with a mean of 1.36; students had access to online games, with a mean of 1.20; and had digital video recording equipment for instruction, with a mean of 1.32 (see Appendix B for data summary).

The teachers listed examples of new media available for instruction in their classrooms. For example, 62% of the teachers indicated they had ELMO document cameras and projectors; 14% stated they had promethean interactive whiteboards, and 5% indicated that they had Edmodo[1] in their classrooms. Also, 4%, 2% and 1% of the teachers indicated they had interactive student response systems, iPad, and Prezi[2], respectively.

In a written response to the open-ended questions, a teacher wrote: "The school has allowed some freedom to visit websites that can be utilized for instruction. Before, the computer was blocked with filters." Another participant noted: "Classrooms do not have computers. Teachers must make an appt [appointment] to use computer labs months in advance." Another teacher stated: "Sometimes we have the equipment but there are too many policies for using them. For example, I did one video conference with an author once and my students enjoyed it. However, I had to ask permission from the District to use the equipment. After that I said: "forget it!" I never bothered to do another one." Another participant stated: "I grew up in an era where new media were not overly used, so I am unfamiliar with them. I don't have access to new media." A teacher argued: "We [teachers] have access to Mac lab, PC lab, laptop cart, iPads, and digital camera. However, our students do not have access to them."

THE PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS OF SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOL

Teachers' views of support schools provide are an important factor in whether they will use new media for instruction in their classrooms. Table 4 indicated that the teachers expressed positive attitudes, with scores ranging from (M = .92; SD = 1.09) to (M = 2.46; SD = .69) on a five point Likert-type scale.

The data analysis showed that the teachers had a medium rate of agreement with the statement that their schools had media specialists to provide technical support and

[1] ***Edmodo*** allows students in a class to connect and collaborate, share content, and access homework, and grades.

[2] Prezi is a cloud-based presentation software and storytelling tool for presenting ideas on a virtual canvas.

resources, with 2.67; provided regular workshops to update their knowledge of new media, with a mean of 2.46; and that the school districts provide regular workshops, with a mean of 2.19. However, the teachers indicated a low rate of agreement with the statement that their schools provided release time for teachers for learning about new media, with a mean of .92; provided cybercafé for teachers, with a mean of .95; and partnered with a university to provide training, with a mean of 1.08 (For a data summary of the data analysis, see Appendix C).

The teachers listed in the box the kinds of support provided by their schools. For example, 31% listed peer assistance (teachers communicating and sharing ideas with each other), 9% identified coach assistance, and 3% mini-trainings. In their written response, a participant wrote: "the school provides a limited support." Another teacher noted: "Yes, my school provides a few teachers iPads and ELMO cameras and projectors to implement technology in their classrooms." Another participant stated: "The school is trying to upgrade technology and purchase new media, but the training and support are missing." A teacher wrote: "I would like guidance and instruction on how to implement new media to a higher degree than I am now."

THE TEACHERS' PERSONAL VIEWS OF THE USEFULNESS OF NEW MEDIA IN ELA INSTRUCTION

ELA Teachers' personal perceptions of the usefulness of new media as a tool for instruction are a strong factor in their decision to use or not use the technology in their classrooms. Table 5 showed the teachers expressed strong positive attitudes with the views of new media as a useful tool of instruction in ELA classrooms, with scores ranging from (M = 2.80; SD = 1.34) to (M = 3.83 = .37) on a five point Likert-type scale

Data analysis indicated that the participants indicated a high rate of agreement with the statement that ELA teachers should prepare students to ELA have productive professional lives, with a mean of 3.83; prepare students to synthesize information, with a mean of 3.72; link with students' outside school literacies, with a mean of 3.68; and use new media to promote students' active engagement with learning, with a mean of 3.56. Furthermore, Table 5 indicates that the teachers showed a high rate of agreement with the statement that new media are important to acquisition of new knowledge, with 3.50; new media facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing with large-scale communities, with a mean of 3.29; and new media can contribute to critical and analytic literacy skills in ELA lessons, with a mean of 3.29 (see Appendix D for the summary of the data analysis).

In the informational box, the participants listed their personal views of the usefulness of new media in ELA instruction, including 77% who noted that new media added new or greater dimension into lessons and 72% stated that the technologies captivated their students' attention. Furthermore, 77% of the participants suggested technologies provided literacy practices their students needed outside the classroom while 61% wrote that new media empowered students.

In the teachers' response to the open-ended questions, a participant writes: "Nowadays, social media offer greater accessibility to career choices and networking opportunities for youths." A teacher writes: "New media will help students have productive lives. With so much new media around, students need to be guided to use them so that they can become marketable employers/employees in our current globe/local markets." A teacher states: "We should teach our students the knowledge and skills associated with new media because new media is integrated into so many aspects of life (phones, iPads, computers, etc.). Students need to learn the boundaries of social media so it doesn't hinder their search for a job such as in posting things on Facebook that a prospective employer might find inappropriate."

THE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTEGRATING NEW MEDIA INTO INSTRUCTION

Effective integration of new media into instruction as a tool of learning depends to a large degree on ELA teachers' knowledge and skills to use the technology to meet the learning needs of students. Hence, ELA teachers' views of how they integrate new media into pedagogical practices are crucially important. Table 6 shows that the participants expressed mostly low frequency of agreement with statements about their perceptions of using new media for instruction, with scores ranging from (M = .90; SD = .39) to (M = 2.56; SD = 1.00) on a five point Likert-type scale .

The data analysis showed that the teachers indicated a medium rate of frequency with the statement that they provided information to students about topics through a variety of sources such as the Internet, websites, and video clips, with a mean of 2.56 and teach their students to use search engines to research information on topics, with a mean of 2.50. However, the participants showed a low rate of frequency with statements such as: they transferred texts to their students' iPods and iPhones to make reading materials easily accessible to students, with a mean of .90 and encouraged students to podcast their literary work, with a mean of 1.03. The participants further expressed a low rate of frequency with the statements that they fostered negotiation skills by asking students to participate in online discussions, with a mean of 1.20 and encouraged students to share their work in social networking sites, with a mean of 1.22 (For the detailed summary of the data analysis, see Appendix E).

In the information box, the teachers listed other ways they used new media for instruction but not suggested in the questionnaire. For example, 38% stated they used video clips for instruction, 31% noted they searched for up-dated information for lessons, and 17% wrote that they used TeacherTube[3], 14% wrote they used educational websites, and 1% stated they used podcasts for instruction in their classrooms.

A teacher wrote: "My class listens to stories online. I use the ELMO projector/document camera to deliver most lessons." A teacher stated: "I use PowerPoint, videos, animoto[4], writing program (internet), Accelerated Readers[5], CDs, and DVDs to enhance and capture my students' attention and evaluate their reading progress." Another participant wrote: "I rarely use new media. I don't have the tools that work in my class." A teacher wrote: "I use PowerPoint to introduce new materials with graphics and [video] clips from YouTube to illustrate a concept." Another teacher wrote: "I use video clips for all stories and also use flocabulary[6] every week."

DISCUSSION

AVAILABILITY OF NEW MEDIA FOR INSTRUCTION

The quantitative data analysis indicates that a large majority of the ELA teachers perceive that they have access to the Internet, educational Web sites, and computer

[3] TeacherTube is a site for students & teachers to share content such as educational videos, audios, photos & docs.

[4] Animoto is a web application that analyzes photos, video clips, and music to generate a video similar to a trailer

[5] The Accelerated Reader (AR) is a learning information system that enables computer-assisted assessment of student comprehension of "real" books and provides a summary and analysis of results for teachers

[6] **Flocabulary** integrates content into hip hop music and accompanying books for use in the classroom.

multimedia for instruction. However, a large majority of the participants equally state that they do not have the new media such as iPhones, iPads, digital video recording equipment, networked computers, and social network sites during instruction. The data analysis suggests while the ELA teachers in this study may have access to the Internet, they still face serious barriers in using the technologies because of filtering problems and lack of access by students. This finding suggests that teachers may not be able to tap into Internet transformative potential for ELA instruction (Hutchison & Reinking, 2011). Lack of new media infrastructure poses a serious challenge to ELA teachers' ability to design methods of capturing and sharing new knowledge based on multimedia and seamless integration of students' outside school social interests and in-school literacy learning experiences. IRA (2001) suggests that new media such as "the Internet includes the most powerful capabilities for information and communication we have ever seen, permitting access to people and information in ways and at speeds never before possible" (n.d.).

Equally important, new media technologies offer access to "wider and more flexible set of learning resources than is available in classrooms and connections to a wider and more flexible set of "educators" " (Dede, 2011, p. 5). ELA teachers can tap into the subculture of micro-media such as blogs, social network sites, Web sites, costumes, and music lyrics as part of the multimodal ensembles to interpret literature texts. New media offer youths resources for multimodal literacies, including remixing cultural artifacts, integrating artifacts into new ideas, engaging in creative experimentation with themes, characters, and settings (Lapp, et al. 2009).

SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOL

The data analysis shows that a majority of the participants perceive that their schools provide limited support for integrating new media into instruction. The teachers perceive that their schools do not provide release time to learn new media, provide workstation or cybercafé, media specialists, and sponsored trainings and workshops. The findings suggest that many schools in the the county may not have integrated new media into instruction to meet the demand of preparing students for the opportunities and challenges of an emerging global, knowledge-based economy (Dede, 2011). For students to be able to acquire the 21st century literacy knowledge, schools need to support ELA teachers and build their capacity to transform instruction into a model of connected teaching/learning. The U.S. Department of Education (2010) provides a vision of the support that schools need to provide, "Classroom educators are fully connected to learning data and tools for using the data; to content, resources, and systems that empower them to create, manage, and assess engaging and relevant learning experiences; and directly to their students in support of learning both inside and outside school" (p. 6).

It is critically important that schools ensure that teachers use new media to positively transform instruction by making online texts, chatrooms, websites, network sites, and blogs integral parts of ELA teaching/learning activities. Schools have a responsibility to create learning environments where ELA teachers conceptualize new media literacies as social skills and help their students understand "how meaning emerges collectively and collaboratively in the new media environment and how creativity operates differently in an open-source culture based on sampling, appropriation, transformation, and repurposing" (Jenkins, 2006a, p. 20).

THE TEACHERS' VIEWS OF THE USEFULNESS OF NEW MEDIA

The quantitative and qualitative data show that the majority of the teachers perceive new media as important to ELA instruction and the ways their students communicate and

interact in today's world. In this 21st century, Internet resources will increase the role of ELA teachers in designing learning experiences for students as new media converge with literacy instruction (Jenkins, 2006a). The emerging situations in this century will increasingly demand that ELA teachers guide their students through richer and more complex learning opportunities brought by availability of new media (Dede, 2011). Equally important, ELA teachers need to rethink the notion of teaching, from traditional view of knowledge transmission to a new model of teaching as connected, teamwork. With this new model, ELA teachers can leverage new media technologies to improve their instruction and enhance learning for students.

In this learning environment, ELA teachers will understand the notion of "collective intelligence" (Jenkins, 2006a, p. 4) which is central to new media literacies. The teachers' practices are based on the assumption that "none of us can know everything; each of us knows something; and we can put the pieces together if we pool our resources and combine our skills" (Jenkins, 2006b, p. 4). Hence, ELA teachers will recognize the expertise of students and their social interests as central to literacy pedagogy and shift from teaching as an individual, solitary activity to teaching as a participatory, community-based practice. Such teacher will develop the skills to teach students new cultural competencies and social skills involving collaboration, knowledge-sharing, teamwork, networking, and collective problem-solving (Jenkins, 2006a, b).

THE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTEGRATING NEW MEDIA INTO INSTRUCTION

The quantitative data show that the ELA teachers perceive that they integrate new media into instruction at a minimal level as their responses indicate a low rate of frequency with using equipment such as iPods and iPhones, video conferencing technology, podcasting, and weblog to enhance instruction for their students. The results confirm the findings that the ELA teachers use new media for instruction at "low levels of curricular integration" (Hutchinson & Reinking, 2011, p. 312). The findings suggest that many of the teachers' ELA instruction may be incompatible with out-of-school literacy practices of students. The findings show that while adolescents embed new media in their social lives, literacy instruction may not be building on their outside school literacies in ways that are affirming and supportive.

ELA teachers have to develop new methods that allow students' cultural capital to be central to curricula and instruction. For example, ELA teachers can incorporate digital storytelling into essay writing lessons. Digital storytelling allows students to write a story and add elements of sound, color, audio and visual video, drawings, and photos to create a multi-dimensional story that draws on students' backgrounds. More importantly, rather than the vertical, hierarchical top-down approaches associated with the traditional instruction, ELA teachers must learn to develop horizontal, more open, participatory pedagogical models that allow them to draw upon literacy resources that students bring into classrooms, including the knowledge of blogging, search engines, and uploading audio/videos. Leu et al (2004) argue that "teachers will be challenged to thoughtfully guide students' learning within information environments that are richer and more complex than traditional print media, presenting richer and more complex learning opportunities for both themselves and their students" (p. 1606).

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The research objective of this study is to examine the participants' perceptions of and use of new media for instruction. The findings suggest that the majority of the ELA teachers

perceive that while they have access to the Internet, new media are not available for instruction. The findings further indicate that schools in the county provide limited support for integrating new media into instruction. Furthermore, while the teachers view new media as important to ELA instruction and students' lives, they minimally integrate the technologies into instruction.

The findings have important implications for ELA instruction. First, there is a need for coordinated and concerted efforts from the stakeholders, including school districts, communities, and state/federal departments of education to build infrastructure in new media to enhance ELA teachers' practice. Costs associated with new media are usually prohibitive for many schools. Hence, the U.S. Department of Education should come up with specific guidelines and policies to manage costs of new media equipment.

Second, schools need to provide adequate supports for ELA teachers to integrate new media into instruction, including release time to learn new media, access to cybercafé, opportunities for collaboration, laptops to take home, and enough time for teachers to learn and implement technology-mediated instruction. Third, schools need to provide ELA teachers high quality new media-based professional development and ongoing training that empower them to integrate new media into instruction so that they can teach literacy skills offered by new media, including social networking, digital storytelling, multimedia/ multimodal communication, podcasting, and blogging.

Professional development should take the form of distributed learning communities "in which everyone is involved in a collective effort of understanding" (Dede, 2004. p. 3). Hence, professional development should be designed to change the nature of teaching from transferring specific, discrete knowledge to teaching students teamwork, knowledge-sharing, experimenting, and collective problem solving. Each ELA teacher should be considered a valued member of the community and contributes his/her expertise to teamwork as they collectively work to solve the challenges of integrating new media into instruction. In this way, ELA teachers work in teams, draw on different sets of expertise, and work collaboratively to solve a problem. Hence, learning in professional development, as conceived here, aligns with knowledge and culture of new media in which learning is highly situated, social, collaborative, distributed, and dispersed.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1: Profile of Participants (N = 62)

Demographics & Professional Experience	#	% of Respondents
School		
Junior high schools	33	53.22%
High schools	29	46.78%
Grade level taught		
6	4	6.45%
7	18	29.03%
8	18	29.03%
9	13	20.97%
10	9	14.52%
11	8	12.90%
12	9	14.52%
Age		
20–25	0	0.0%
26–30	5	8.06%
31–35	12	19.35%
36–40	14	22.58%
41–45	10	16.13%
46–50	9	14.52%
51–55	7	11.29%
56–60	2	3.23%
61 & above	3	4.84%
Gender		
Male	14	22.58%
Female	48	77.42%
Ethnicity		
Mexican-American	35	56.45%
Other Latino	2	3.23%
White/Caucasian	22	35.48%
Mixed race	2	3.23%
Teaching Experience (years)		
0–5	6	9.68%

6–10	20	32.26%
11–15	24	38.71%
16–20	6	9.68%
21–25	4	6.45%
26–30	0	0.0%
31 & above	2	3.23%
Personal Technology Use		
Not at all	0	0.0%
Small Extent	11	17.74%
Moderate Extent	29	46.77%
Large Extent	21	33.87%
Not Applicable	0	0.0%
In-Class Technology Use		
Not at all	2	3.23%
Small Extent	13	20.97%
Moderate Extent	28	45.16%
Large Extent	18	29.03%
Not Application	0	0.0%

APPENDIX B

Table 2: The Teachers' Views of New Media Availability for Instruction (N = 62)

Items	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
10. I have access to Internet in my classroom.	3.93	4.00	.31
11. Students have access to computer during lessons.	2.08	2.00	1.02
12. Students have access to networked computers.	1.09	1.00	1.19
13. Students have laptop computers in class.	1.03	1.00	.51
14. I have an iPad for ELA instruction.	1.44	1.00	1.27
15. iPhone is available for ELA instruction.	.95	1.00	.69
16. Digital video recording equipment is available.	1.32	1.00	1.04
17. Students have access to online games.	1.20	1.00	.77
18. I have computer multimedia for instruction.	3.09	4.00	1.15
19. CD-ROMs are available in my classroom	2.48	3.00	1.43
20. I have DVDs in for instruction.	2.03	2.00	1.19
21. There are DVDs in computer lab for students' use.	1.43	1.00	1.27
22. I have access to websites during instruction.	3.54	4.00	.69
23. Students have access to websites during lessons.	1.90	1.00	1.09

24. Students have access to network sites in class	1.36	1.00	.86

APPENDIX C

Table 3: The Participants' Views of Support They Receive from Their Schools

Items	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
25. My school provides regular workshops.	2.46	2.00	.69
26. My school has a media specialist.	2.67	3.00	1.24
27. My school district provides regular workshops.	2.19	2.00	.80
28. My school partners with a university to provide training.	1.08	1.00	.71
29. My school provides release time to learn new media	.92	1.00	1.09
30. My school provides cybercafé.	.95	1.00	.86

APPENDIX D

Table 4: Teachers' Personal Views of the Usefulness of New Media in ELA Instruction

Items	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
31. New media offer students skills for interacting/communicating.	2.80	3.00	1.34
32. New media have changed the ways students interact.	3.04	4.00	1.44
33. My conceptions of youth's literacies have changed.	3.13	3.00	1.01
34. New media are important to acquisition of knowledge.	3.50	4.00	.84
35. It is essential to teach students to use new media.	3.40	4.00	.93
36. New media afford new literacies for students.	3.00	3.00	1.27
37. New media facilitate collaboration, knowledge-sharing.	3.29	3.00	.84
38. New media contributes to critical, analytic skills.	3.29	3.00	.93
39. Knowledge economy requires me to teach students new media.	3.11	3.00	1.18
40. ELA instruction should prepare students to synthesize information.	3.72	4.00	.44
41. ELA instruction should link with students' outside school literacies.	3.68	4.00	.84
42. ELA should prepare students to have more satisfying personal lives.	3.43	4.00	.86
43. ELA should prepare students to have productive professional lives.	3.83	4.00	.37
44. Using new media promotes students' active engagement with learning.	3.56	4.00	.53
45. New media allow students to have fun, engaged and hard-working.	3.54	4.00	.66

APPENDIX E

Table 5: The Teachers' Perceptions of Integration New Media into Instruction

Items	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
46. I allow students to choose which new media they like to use.	1.86	2.00	1.18
47. I ask students to blog during lessons.	1.09	1.00	.69
48. I direct students to relevant links on the Internet.	2.22	2.00	1.01
49. I transfer materials we read to my students' iPods, iPhones.	.90	1.00	.39
50. I incorporate online games into lessons.	1.52	1.00	1.01
51. I use video clips to present information to students.	2.75	3.00	1.03
52. I teach students to use an internet-based publishing tool.	1.87	2.00	1.13
53. I teach students to use video conferencing.	.98	1.00	.61
54. My students use Excel spreadsheets.	1.00	1.00	.51
55. I create websites for students to interact.	1.27	1.00	.81
56. I ask students to retell stories across different media.	1.06	1.00	.97
57. I ask students to re-create characters in video games.	1.46	1.00	.95
58. I teach students to script dialogue.	1.00	1.00	.40
59. I ask students to create storyboard.	1.87	2.00	.91
60. I ask students to record story using video camera	1.40	1.00	1.47
61. I teach my students to critique websites' content.	1.86	2.00	.97
62. I use social networking sites to connect students with others.	1.20	1.00	.81
63. I ask students to share their work in social networking sites.	1.22	1.00	.75
64. I encourage students to podcast their works.	1.03	1.00	.40
65. I ask students to participate in online discussions.	1.20	1.00	.72
66. I always assign students to do media search.	1.78	2.00	.95
67. I use video clips to stimulate discussions in class.	2.48	3.00	1.06
68. I teach students to use search engines to research information.	2.50	3.00	1.o2
69. I provide students ideas via: Internet, websites.	2.56	3.00	1.00
70. I encourage students to create multimedia presentations.	2.12	2.00	1.06
71. I ask students to use new media to make presentations.	1.83	2.00	1.04