Children Collaborating in Making Movies Using Computer Based Multimedia—Multimedia Summer Camp Revisited

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In the summer of 1996, we studied children who were learning how to make movies using multimedia authoring tools. We conducted a within subjects experiment, observing 8 groups of seventh grade students working for one week under the supervision of high school age counselors. The students used two different software packages to make two different movies.

This experiment demonstrated that students, given adequate support, can quickly learn to use the technology and can make their first movie in as little as 5 hours. When we focused on the quality of their movies and on the moviemaking process, we discovered great variability in these areas. Learning effect was great, the second movies were significantly better than the first. More time spent in the idea development led to movies of higher quality. Counselors' interaction and constructive criticism had significant effect on the movie quality.

In the summer of 1997, we returned to the Multimedia Camp and attempted to improve the process using our experience. We decide to use one software package, Movie Authoring and Design (MAD) software, which has strong support for scripting and multiple views of media documents. MAD enables students to proceed from brainstorming, to script writing, to compiling their movies, and editing the digitized video, using one integrated package. We chose to have the students focus on making one movie of high quality during their week at the camp. In the first year, we wanted to see what students would create with very little guidance; they were given the freedom to choose topics, guide the moviemaking process, and determine the desired quality of their movies. The resulting movies were extremely varied and included many violent plots. This year, we decided to provide more guidance including a list of movie topics, and feedback during the moviemaking concerning the process and product quality.

This poster will present the early results of our second experience with children learning to create movies using multimedia software. We will focus particularly on observations about the role of collaborative work and learning in the filmmaking process. We will discuss the effects of a more structured pedagogically focused approach. We will compare the quality of the movies and the overall experience of the students during these multimedia summer camps. We will provide advice about replicating such projects and for application of this technology into school curriculum.

This poster will be accompanied by a demonstration of the MAD software. Attendees will be able to try the software using sample movies, including those created by the students at the summer camp.

References:

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