

Foreword

The increasing need for technology integration in education reveals a focus on associated tools and strategies applied to various educational settings, while less emphasis is placed on the appropriate use of pedagogy. That is due, in part, to the fact that reaching a balance between instructional technology and pedagogy is a difficult endeavor. Across the world, new solutions or initiatives, such as One Tablet per Child, blended learning, formative assessment and instant feedback systems are pursued to help both researchers and practitioners understand better how to improve instruction mediated by emerging technologies. While these solutions or initiatives have been proven to facilitate instruction as well as associated management processes, further investigation is needed with regard to student learning outcomes. As most recent models are technology-centered rather than user-centered, further questions remain about how to customize learning according to varied student needs. To that effect, the principles of Universal Design of Learning state that content should be presented in multiple formats to enhance accessibility for students, given their wide range of learning styles and preferences. The aforementioned solutions or initiatives seem to facilitate learning by providing students maximum visual representation, while not keeping kinesthetic and auditory delivery modes in balance. Moreover, due to the lack of hands-on activities, learners who may have less of a preference for visual instruction may find content more difficult to comprehend.

Under these circumstances, this handbook provides insights into how to balance emerging instructional technologies with pedagogical tools and strategies designed to support their effective applications into practice. I found the theoretical considerations and practical examples included in the handbook to be both interesting and valuable. Therefore, it is my hope that your professional endeavors may be informed by any of the chapters you are about to read.

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