



**JOURNAL OF THE ASSOCIATION OF  
NIGERIAN MUSICOLOGISTS**

**SPECIAL EDITION (2008)**

**Association of Nigerian Musicologists**

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ISSN: 1597-0590

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All Enquiries and orders of this edition should be sent to:

The Editor,  
Journal of the Association of Nigerian Musicologists  
(Special Edition)  
C/o Department of Music,  
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# CD ROMS AND MULTIMEDIA PROJECTOR AS COMPLIMENTARY EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING MUSIC IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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*Kayode M. Samuel*

## **INTRODUCTION**

There is no gain saying that within the last ten to fifteen years, various learning technologies have been introduced into educational institutions in developing countries. As commonly found with many innovative strides, Nigeria is still found crawling behind in the usage of these technologies. Fortunately, there has been a great awakening brought about via the Internet, the National Open University of Nigeria, (NOUN) and most especially the recently introduced Nigeria University Commission Virtual Institute for Higher Education Pedagogy (NUCVIHEP), which is currently being run in modules free of charge. These have rekindled the hope of the possibility of catching up with the rest of the world.

As rightly noted by Nwaboku (1997), the essence of an educational system is efficient communication through the instructional sub-systems. This according to him involves the transmission of information, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes from a source to a recipient. New technologies especially the computer provides viable means of exchanging information among professionals.

Simiyu (1999) traced the history of educational technology back to the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century when various industrial products such as the camera and later the motion picture were invented. The term according to him, has its origin in Latin. It encompasses two concepts, that is, techniques, which means tools and materials, and logic, which covers the different approaches in solving a problem. The invention according to him may not have had anything to do with the educational process initially, but educators soon realized the benefits and the products were consequently put to use. When the term technology is applied to the process of education, it includes ways of organizing events and activities to achieve educational objectives as well as the materials and equipment involved in the process.

## **PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS**

The traditional face-to-face method of teaching has been the mostly used in most if not all higher institutions in Nigeria up till now. This might not be unconnected with lack of awareness on the part of many lecturers on the benefits of new media and technologies to ensure a more effective delivery system. It is heartwarming to note that some management authorities have been establishing cyber cafes in their higher institutions to help both staff and students meet up with the global challenges brought about by these new technologies especially the Internet. Preliminary results from an ongoing survey carried out among some colleges of education in Nigeria which have Internet facilities reveal that not many lecturers take advantage of the facilities put in place to enrich their teaching profession. None of the institutions had an organized pattern of the usage of new learning technologies in their training programmes. There is also very little level of accessing music educational resources on the Internet for both training and research.

Some of the benefits that new technologies can bring to higher education as highlighted by Simiyu (1999) include:

- Increased access to instructional resources through the Internet,
- Shared experiences through technologies such as the virtual university,
- Increased access to higher education through distance teaching and learning
- Increased flexibility in what to learn, how to learn, and when to learn, and
- Motivated potential to engage in higher education.

It is noted that the Department of Music is one of the few departments that have been employing the use of educational technology such as the audio and visual gadgets like the cassette/record players and video tapes (VCRs) to facilitate teaching and this is even done occasionally.

The CD Rom and the Multimedia Projector both belong to that class of new technology often referred to as Learning Technology. The former was chosen in this paper because it is interactive in nature. Countless music software and programme packages designed to provide computer-based learning and multimedia materials and the use of the networks and communications systems to support learning are available on CD Roms. They are not too expensive to procure and storage is not too much of a problem.

The multimedia projector on the other hand, is an effective choice in teaching a large music class such as that of the choral studies, which involves all music students regardless of the level of class. The multimedia projector has also been identified as an effectual visual aid, which not only provides diverse content to all students in the classroom at once, but also allows students to have a visual and

colourful learning experience during a given lesson.

### **CD-ROMS**

CD-Rom is an acronym for Compact Disk Read Only Memory, and characterizes a plastic disk, which can store up to 650 Megabytes of data in the form of a data spiral burnt into its bottom surface by a computer-controlled laser of a CD-R writing apparatus. The CD-Rom belongs to the realm of the Stand-Alone applications, which are programs that run on the computer without telephone, television, satellite, wave or other electronic transmissions. It provides a good flow of data, which could be in form of audio or video.

The transfer rate of data of modern CD-ROM drives is more than 150 kilobytes per second. As a result, a high quality CD-ROM drive is often required to guarantee good graphics. A 24-speed CD-ROM is traditionally agreed as the minimum speed required for smooth operation. It is customary to find CD-ROM attached to computer set as an internal drive. It could however be attached through a Small Computer Systems Interface (SCSI) or externally connected to one of the ports of the computer through a cable. A video blaster card and a sound blaster card are part of the required accessories in the computer to make the multimedia to function. Music programme/software is readily available on floppy disks, CD-Roms and laser disks. All these can be used as computer workstation.

### **USAGE OF CD-ROMS IN TEACHING MUSIC COURSES**

The CD-ROM is quite useful in teaching music courses such as the Fundamentals of Orchestration and Aural training. This is because images, audio and visual aspects of the orchestra playing in concert halls could be shown; different instruments of the orchestra based on their families, their playing positions as well as their roles in the ensemble would become evident. There are numerous music softwares such as the Aurelia, as well as Musition. Both software are interactive music programme drill lessons on Aural training. Aurelia is designed to aid an individual to develop his/her skills in pitch recognition, rhythms and intervals in music, melodic dictations, chord recognition etc, and it covers users of different levels, who could select drills from beginners and work gradually at learners pace through to the advanced stages.

### **PRACTICAL STEPS**

The CD-Rom is slotted into the D drive of the computer. Teacher selects Aurelia 2.1 sampler from the programs menu list. From the options available, he/she decides on subject depending on what the lesson plan for the day is. Each candidate's progress could be monitored on the Aurelia 2.1 sampler through evaluation graphs since each candidate would be required to register his/her name

at the beginning of the lesson.

One major advantage of this form of software is that, it creates room for tutorial lessons where each candidate could repeat lessons for reinforcement or administer fresh questions based on the selected level. Secondly, there is the opportunity of immediate response (feedback) since correct answers are immediately displayed after each level taken by the students. A disadvantage however is that students could fully explore all available questions in order to note correct answers, which could be supplied during tests/examinations; this would no doubt encourage cheating.

Sibelius 2 music score writer and Cakewalk Home Studio are just two examples of music software, which contain virtual piano, thus encouraging a teach yourself approach. These two CD ROMs are quite effective in teaching applied music as well as Studies on Composition up to a certain level. They have also provided a way out of the woods for Art music composers and reduced the drudgery of manual scoring of their musical pieces, thereby getting them neater and print ready. Not only music, but also other disciplines have found uses in this area; Tisa (1991) reported the application of computer graphics software in nutrition education posters and counseling cards in the developing world.

### **MULTIMEDIA PROJECTOR**

The Multimedia projector (MMP) is similar to the Overhead projector (OHP) in so many ways since it came as an improvement on the latter. The same effective use derivable from the OHP is quite applicable to the MMP. A notable example of multimedia projector is the Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) Projector. It has been noted that teachers could conveniently deliver lectures to large classes without students necessarily having to crowd around the computer set (VIHEP, 2003).

#### **Steps to setting up the LCD for classroom learning**

The following are the steps to take in setting up the gadgets for use (VIHEP, 2003). The teacher prepares what is to be projected using a laptop (notebook pc) with the appropriate software, for example the Microsoft PowerPoint. The multimedia projector is placed on a firm surface such as a table top and made ready. The next step is for the teacher to ensure that the link cable supplied is well connected first to the LCD and the other to either the desktop PC or the laptop. The projector is thereafter switched on and focused manually or with a remote control.

#### **Usage of Multimedia Projector to teach music course**

Numerous aspects in music could be effectively taught with the aid of the multimedia projector. These include: Music education, Music Technology, and History and Literature of Western Music amongst others. Great opportunities abound for the music teacher to reinforce points earlier made in the course of delivering his/her lecture; relationships, figures or graphs could also be well illustrated and

presented. Teacher could summarize key points helping the students to follow passages or quotations which were once read aloud. For example, a music lecturer could teach such an abstract concept in music such as the growth and development of Western music from the Renaissance through Baroque to Classical and up to the Romantic as well as the 20th Century periods through well-summarized historical charts with the PowerPoint presentation displayed on the LCD projector. It is expected that students are likely to be able to follow better if they can see the key points being made by the lecturer.

Despite the copious advantages provided by the multimedia projector to effective music learning in Nigeria's higher institutions, it is imperative to note that there are some limitations and faults. One of these is that it rightly does not allow for animation and it is less interactive when compared with the CD-Rom discussed earlier on. The two equipments would remain useless especially if the country continues to experience epileptic power supply as well as incessant power failure due to NEPA. These have been identified as major reasons why electronic equipments get damaged within the shortest time possible. However, since both are intended as complementary educational technologies, it is necessary to stress that immense benefits could be derived from their usage/employment especially in classroom situations.

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

Various Departments of Music should as a matter of utmost urgency procure CD-ROMs with music software packages on different subject matters to facilitate and complement the face-to-face method, which would continue to be in vogue until more lecturers become better aware of newer and more effective means of delivering the lessons. Funds could be drawn from the Special Course levy (presently being imposed on the students in some institutions) or introduced in others. Available free versions of music software could also be downloaded on the Internet to further assist lecturers achieve their teaching objectives with less stress.

Resource persons should be invited to run-in-house practical workshop sessions, which could be organized for all members of staff. Alternatively, enlightened members of staff should also be prepared to share their experience in the usage of these new technologies. The management bodies of various institutions on their part should provide incentives in form of sponsorship of workshops and make available materials in form of sets of computers and their accessories for the department as well as special arrangements to issue interest free loan to lecturers to procure personal ones especially laptops, which are more conveniently mobile compared to the Desktop versions.

Greater awareness need to be created by enlightened members of staff



and the institution authorities on the opportunities that abound through the VIHEP and the Internet as available avenues to lecturers to deepen and widen their horizon as well as keep them abreast with these relatively and increasingly new information and communication technology. Management authorities in our higher institutions would also do well to provide the Overhead and Multimedia Projectors for the use of Departments of Music to compliment the efforts of the music students association bodies who have been encouraged to make modest contributions towards procuring not too expensive instructional materials such as recorded tapes, TV and video sets, record (LP) players as instructional materials, all of which have assisted their department to build veritable sound archives. One cannot but also suggest that each of the Departments should be provided with standby generator set, voltage regulators to forestall incessant power supply breakdown and failure when these technologies are been put to use.

To the government, we would like to echo Nwaboko's (1997) submission that financial constraints as an excuse for not improving our school systems has reached a dead end. It is high time the country realized that there is no substitute for qualitative education if the issue of national development is to be pursued with any form of seriousness. Technologies in Nigerian institutional systems require huge investment of various sorts. Considering the issues at stake, the need arises for the Nigerian government and all the educational institutions to take accelerated actions to close up the ever-widening gap created by the breath taking pace at which technological advancement is occurring in developed countries.

## **CONCLUSION**

Computer-assisted instruction (CAI) takes advantage of learning theories, which involve reinforcement of learning experiences, self-paced learning and repetition of difficult material. Multimedia programs for music teachers and students in the same vein are promoted as means of increasing learning and retention in a shortened learning time. It is interesting to note that strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of new educational technologies especially the multimedia computer instruction, beyond comparison to traditional classroom instruction are already emerging in the developed countries. There are also increased calls for more of such evaluations from various quarters in fact with hot debates now on whether computer-based instruction will maximize learning for the money spent (Reeves, 1992; Reeves, Harman and Jones, 1993); Nigeria may soon wake up to find out that we are living centuries behind because there has been a great paradigm shift from where we presently stand.

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