

# ADULT LEARNING

January 1991  
Volume 14  
\$5.00



## Instructional Technology

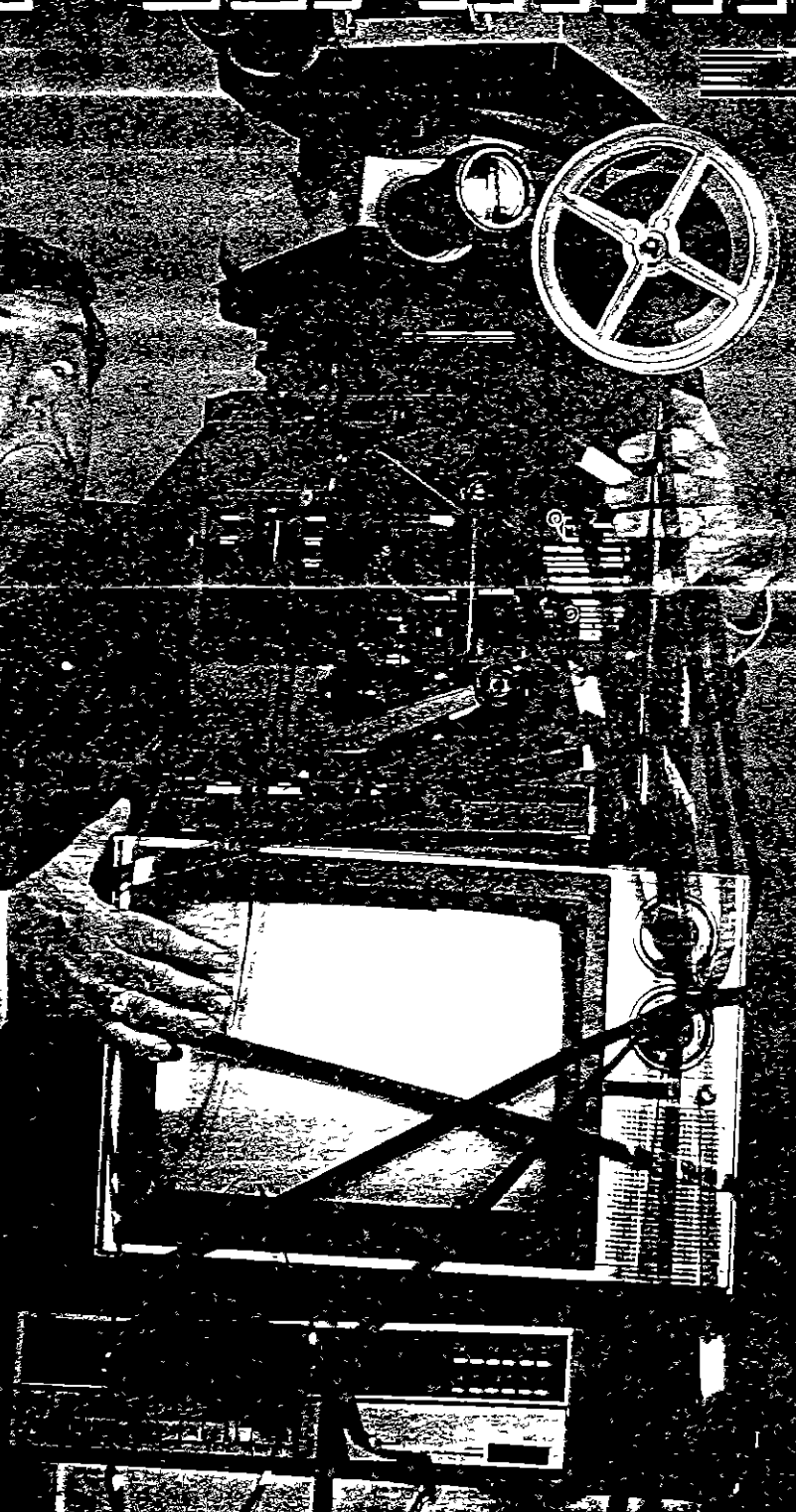
See, Hear, and Touch Your Way Through the Latest Computer Learning System

Interactive Teleconferences

Buying the Right Computer System

Designing a Video Classroom

Innovative Programming to Empower Adult Learners



8420 9111 PR 5 001  
Dr. John Henschke  
Associate Professor  
University of Missouri-St. Louis  
School of Education Room #207  
8001 Natural Bridge Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63121

# ADULT LEARNING

January 1991

Volume 2 Number 4

## FEATURES

5

### Up Front Hitting the High Tech Frontier

Frank Spikes

7

### Information on Demand

Jack Brickley and Wayne Smith

Interactive Learning Systems help learners better manage and process information through technological innovations that combine video, audio, and text on a touch screen, computer monitor,

9

### Innovating with Telecommunications

John A. Henschke

The University of Missouri—St. Louis found participants were more engaged in the learning process when I conducted a nationwide teleconference that called for participants to interact with the media

11

### Going High Tech: Computerized Literacy Instruction

Mariya Futchs Fine

How to choose a computer system

that will fit your budget and your client's needs



15

### Designing Video Classrooms

Victoria A. Price

How to plan and design a physical environment to enhance video instruction through proper audio systems, lighting, seating, and decor



20

### Empowering Adult Learners: NIF Literacy Program Helps ABE Accomplish Human Development Mission

Mary E. Huxley

Using study circles, a pilot project in Minnesota shows promise of empowering learners by increasing their ability to learn

24

### Stopping Out Is In!

Elmor M. Greenberg and Lois J. Zachary

How adult learners and institutions can plan for and benefit from the reality of periodic non-enrollment

## DEPARTMENTS

President's Podium  
*The Vision Is for Days Yet to Come* 4

Directions for Research  
*Educators and High Tech—Love It, Hate It* 6

Marketing Clinic  
*How to Make the FAX Work for Your Registration Process, How Many Cancellations Are Too Many?* 27

Practice Notes  
*PALS: A Computerized Adult Literacy Program* 28

Resources  
*Writing Articles: A Guide to Publishing in Your Own Profession* 29

*Training in America: The Organization and Strategic Role of Training* 29

Time Out  
*Continuing Education—Does Anyone Care About Community Commitment Anymore?* 30

American Association for Adult & Continuing Education  
Editor: Jeanette E. Smith

Editorial Board: Liz Anderson, Bart Beaudin, Joanne Chafe, Roberta Cneatham, Sam Dauzat, Lloyd David, LuAnne Dowling, James Figueroa, Elizabeth Hayes, Patty Keeton, Chesler Klevins, Burt Krellow, Wayne Lambie, Heikki Leskinen, Linda Lewis, William McCaughan, Mary Beth Muskin, Jim Parker, Marc Potvin, Torilee Sandmann, Ron Sherron, Frank Spikes, Jane Tedder, John Tibbets, Wojtek Winnick, Joan Wright

Theme Editors: Rupert Brockert, William Draves, Rebecca Moak Richardson, Frank in Spikes, John Tibbets, Nancy Van Valkenburg, Wojtek Winnick, Joan Wright  
Contributing Editors: Jerold W. Apps, Burton W. Krellow

Publications Standing Service Unit Chair—Phyllis Cunningham, Anne Arsenault, Acee Chene, Michael Collins, Sean Courtney, Ron Froman, Aimee Horton, Rita Hughson, Jean Lowe, Dian Marino, Jerry Martin, Ron Neal, Len Oliver, Elizabeth Peterson, Maria Reyes, Tom Sork, Acee Scales, Burton Sisco, J. D. Smith, Clive Ven  
AAACE Officers

President: William S. Craftin  
President-Elect: W. Franklin Spikes  
Secretary: Beverly Crissom  
Treasurer: Thomas Kinney  
Past-President: Jane Evanson  
Editorial and Business Office: AAACE, 1112 16th Street, N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-463-6333  
Executive Director: Judith A. Koloski

*Adult Learning* (ISSN 0945-1545) is published eight times annually—September, October, November, January, February, April, May, and June. Subscriptions are \$57 annually (\$25 foreign).

*Adult Learning* is published by the American Association for Adult & Continuing Education (AAACE), 1112 16th Street, N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036. Application for mail at second class postage rate is pending at Washington, D.C.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Adult Learning*, 1112 16th Street, N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Copyright © 1991 by the American Association for Adult & Continuing Education. Back copies are available on microfilm. For information and rates contact: University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Individual copies of *Adult Learning* are \$5.00. *Adult Learning* manuscripts should be sent to Jeanette E. Smith, Editor, *Adult Learning*, American Association for Adult & Continuing Education, 1112 16th Street, N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-463-6333.



# Innovating with Telecommunications

John A. Henschke

**A**lthough educators and trainers continue to find new ways to use telecommunications in distance education, one of the ongoing challenges is to provide programming that transcends the typical style of one-way communication from instructor to student. However, a telecourse offered last year by the University of Missouri-St. Louis combining video satellite transmission and live, participant and instructor teleconferences provides an interactive model that can assist other adult educators in overcoming this communications barrier.

The program Foundations of Adult Basic Education included nationwide satellite transmission (a special grant made it possible to defray the high costs of uplinking the video by the Educational Satellite Network (ESN)) of thirty, pre-taped, video lessons and four, hour-long audio teleconferences. During the teleconferences, participants were able to share processes they had used in their own programs and to discuss whether or not they agreed with the ideas presented in the videos and in the three, required, course textbooks.

The course focused on methods and techniques for teaching adult basic education (ABE) including basic reading, word recognition, writing, listening, job skills, and goal accomplishment. It also addressed learner characteristics, diagnosing needs and interests, identifying community

resources, and evaluation. Course participants included ABE teachers and program administrators from eight states, including Missouri—teachers who completed the course were able to earn three hours of undergraduate or graduate credit, with Missouri teachers also receiving credit for certification.

## Interaction with Technology Was Key

As our planning for the course evolved, various options were considered. From the beginning, we were aware that two components helped to ensure success when using media in education: integration of human and non-human resources and collaboration between educators and technologies. In addition, we wanted to give top priority to interaction, task-centeredness, individualization, and self-directed learning contracts. For this reason, we rejected an initial plan that called only for videotapes, printed reading materials, and assignments, in favor of one that added teleconferences to the above because of the advantage in the latter of live interaction.

## Saturday Morning Telecasts and Pre-Taped Videos Produced Savings

The University of Missouri-St. Louis's Video Instructional Program (VIP) aired the telecourse via satellite throughout the US for two hours on eight consecutive Saturday mornings, beginning

*John A. Henschke is associate professor of adult education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He was the national instructor for the telecourse, "Foundations of Adult Basic Education."*

on January 13, 1990. To save expenses, we chose Saturday mornings (at \$140 an hour, this was the lowest-cost time period) and videotapes, which were one-tenth the cost of live lessons. The video tapes—vignettes of ABE teaching practices—totaled fifteen hours. The first teleconference was held after the first day's programs; the other three were held on January 27 and February 10 and February 24. The teleconferences were recorded for later analysis; students could also purchase the tapes (\$6.00 each).

Over half of the thirty-nine participants registered via telephone during the last two registration days. They paid the normal university tuition fees and additionally paid the long-distance charges, averaging \$40, for the telecon-

ference. As they registered, they were assigned to one of three groups and given a time to call a telephone "bridge" number for the teleconference switchboard in Columbia, Missouri.

VIP assisted students in locating receive sites—sometimes suggesting the local satellite dish dealer or a restaurant when educational facilities were not available. All but one facility donated the time. Most facilities taped the feed for students who could then watch the tapes later at a convenient time.

### Analysis Suggests Adding More Praise and Using Participant Ideas

At the conclusion of the course, the teleconference tapes were transcribed, coded, and analyzed according to such factors as group size, structure provided by the instructor, and group interaction. The interaction analysis was divided into four categories: instructor talk/indirect influence, instructor talk/direct influence, student talk, and miscellaneous, or factors related to the media.

Participants talked 41 percent of the time, and of that, shared their experiences 24 percent of the time. The instructor talked 22 percent of the time, spending 5 percent of that time asking for shared experiences. This 5 percent accounted for the time (24%) that students interacted. (For purposes of analysis, we considered interaction to have occurred when one person's behavior influenced another person's behavior, so that the communication roles of sender and receiver were interchangeable with each message.) The amount of interaction according to group size was as follows:

Group	Number of People in Group	Total Number of Interactions During Audio Teleconferences
A	19	40
B	14	35
C	6	19

Interestingly, although Group C was the smallest group, it generated the longest periods of interactions. The participants agreed with conventional wisdom that the interactive arrangements helped to overcome telecommunications barriers, saying that the audio interaction made the course more productive for them.

BASED ON OUR EXPERIENCE, we would suggest adding more "instructor talk" for (1) praising or encouraging participant ideas in evaluating them as right, good, and appropriate, (2) accepting or using ideas of participants in the areas of diagnosing learning needs, designing learning experiences, evaluating results, and summarizing needs, and (3) motivational lecturing. We would also suggest having the audio conferences later in the course to allow participants more lead time to digest and apply the material in their own contexts before discussing it. We also encountered production problems—large amounts of unproductive time because of equipment peculiarities—that need to be surmounted for future courses. We would advise users of older audio bridges to consider the feasibility of obtaining state-of-the-art equipment. The bridge system we used was voice-activated, which required participants to speak in clear, strong voices or the sound would "clip"—cut in and out. This was bothersome to the users and impeded communications. However, as the participants grew accustomed to using the equipment, the percentage of clipping decreased, although it didn't stop entirely.

The question could legitimately be posed whether an equal amount of learning could be accomplished if only audio interaction were used with printed materials. The cost would certainly be less without the use of the satellite component. However, our experience suggests—in spite of the production problems encountered—that participants greatly enjoyed interacting with media and were more engaged in the learning process as a result. ▲

## Get the Best!

### • *Materials and Methods in Adult and Continuing Education*

by  
Chester Klevins,  
446 pp., \$21.45

To order send check (orders under \$25 must be accompanied by payment), to AAACE, 1112 16th St., N.W., Ste. 420, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202-463-6333.