

Module 1.3: Definition of EdTech Paper

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Abstract

The world of educational technology has become a very popular topic of discussion among educators and students alike. However, defining educational technology in its entirety can be rather difficult. In this paper, I will discuss the current definition of educational technology, as written by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT), the meaning of various concepts addressed in the AECT definition, and my views of their definition in correlation with my own personal experiences.

Keywords: educational technology, definition, concepts, AECT, educators

Definition of EdTech Paper

Educational technology is defined by the Association for Educational Communications and Technology **as the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and managing appropriate technological processes and resources** (AECT, 2004). Key terms associated with this definition include study, ethical practice, facilitating, learning, improving, performance, creating, using, managing, appropriate, technological, processes, and resources. The AECT extensively outlines how each of these terms applies to and helps to build their working definition of educational technology. Their research clearly emphasizes the fact that defining educational technology is a moving target since technology is constantly evolving and changing at a rate that makes it nearly impossible to permanently define.

Upon reading their research, I find that I am in agreement with the AECT's definition of educational technology, particularly due to their realization that there is no enduring definition of the conception of this field. The effectiveness and usefulness of educational technology in an educational setting is contingent upon many varying factors such as setting, intended purpose, and consistency of use. Since the implementation of educational technology is dependent on some form of human interaction, the way it is used and the effect it has on students and educators is completely subjective.

For example, the AECT states that educational technology should be used ethically to facilitate learning. While we as educators are aware that there are certain ethical ramifications associated with the edtech programs we use in our classrooms, there is still so much that is unknown when it comes to defining ethical use of educational technology. In fact, the [Alliance for Childhood](#) discusses how advancement in technology is progressing faster than adults can understand the ethical ramifications of its use (Mattison, 2018). This proves that more research and training is needed to provide educators with guidelines that clearly define the ethical use of educational technology. Constantly updating this research as new findings become available ensures that educators have the most relevant information to help them better facilitate learning in their classrooms.

In addition, the AECT also states that educational technology should improve performance by helping users to create, use, and manage appropriate technological processes and resources. The terms “improving” and “appropriate” are explicitly included in the definition in order to recognize the centrality of such values to the core meaning of educational technology (AECT, 2004). As previously mentioned, achieving this goal is dependent on how the educational technology is used and will therefore vary depending on the user. When used appropriately, educational technology is designed to improve and enhance performance. The term “appropriate” is meant to apply to both processes and resources, denoting suitability for and compatibility with their intended purposes (AECT, 2004). If not used appropriately, educational technology loses its overall effectiveness.

While it is nearly impossible to permanently define educational technology, the AECT has done a satisfactory job of defining the concept of educational technology and its intended use at this particular moment in time. It is a working definition that must be continually updated as new technologies are developed and new studies are conducted. Edtech is not an innovation. For thousands of years, educators have been devising ways to get their learners to understand ideas through other means than just words. Only the name “edtech” is new (Lynch, 2020). Since this is the case, future educators will continue to make contributions to this field of study. This will call for more research and new studies to be conducted, yielding newer and more relevant information. As a result, the definition of educational technology will always need to be updated to reflect the latest developments and other information pertinent to defining this abstract field.

In conclusion, based on the research from the AECT, other online studies, and my own personal experiences using educational technology, I conclude that **educational technology can be defined as the use of technological tools to enhance and transform educational practices and learning experiences in order to build technology skills and improve student performance.** Equipped with this understanding of educational technology, the educational apps and tools I have access to, and the current research available, I try my best everyday to use educational technology in an ethical, appropriate, and meaningful way that improves my students' learning experiences and performance, while enhancing my teaching practices.

References

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