Technology integration in a cultural diversity classroom

I thought and thought about several disciplines in the Social Studies area that would be interesting to use. I looked at Geography and GPS. Then, I looked at historical people that might be interesting to integrate technology about. I finally decided on a concrete decision integrating technology into the classroom learning about Cultural Diversity. This is one of my favorite areas of discussion and I want to share my passion for learning about diversity with others.

Cultural diversity is the variety of human societies or cultures in a specific region, or in the world as a whole (Wikipedia, 2010). Cultural diversity is a driving force of development, not only in respect of economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual life (UNESCO). It is important for students to be made aware of the differences between all individuals. These cultural differences are what make each human being special and there are no identical people on earth because of these differences. Cultural Diversity takes on many aspects from socio-economic status, education, to disabilities and ones accent. As you can see from the picture below, cultural diversity is key for tolerance.

http://nortonbooks. typepad. com/everydaysociology/WindowsLiveWriter/diversity7. jpg

Cultural diversity is increasing in the classrooms of school today. Within another 10 to 20 years schools are going to see at least half of classrooms being populated with a diversity of non-Caucasian students. This " vibrant mixture of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and experiential plurality (will have) profound implications for developing instructional programs at all levels of

education that respond positively and constructively to cultural diversity" (Gay, p. 30). It is going to be necessary for teachers to learn how to integrate technology into the classroom for modifying the curriculum.

At http://freelanguage. org/ I found this website that helps individuals learn languages free online. It starts by teaching simple vocabulary. Then it progresses to teach further tools like going to a website of another language and it will allow you click on the language of choice and it will translate words in articles. This site could be very beneficial to integrate into a classroom of students that have difficulty understanding words in a particular language. Another wonderful translator that I have used several times to communicate with individuals of another cultural background of non-English speaking decent is Google Translate, www. translate. google. com/. These sites are wonderful for assisting with language barriers in the classroom. Integrating a language tool is essential when teaching a classroom of culturally diverse students.

A great place to communicate and collaborate in the classroom or online is using Google Wave, http://www. go2web20. net/site/? a= Google_Wave. This website gives students and teachers the ability to communicate with one another in a shared space by logging in to one site. This site could easily be integrated into the classroom by assigning work where students are required to collaborate. Google Wave integrates all communication into one space without sending messages by e-mail, Instant Messaging, or texting. All information is collected in one area for everyone to see and respond. Easy!

Another, new tool was announced by Microsoft on April 30, 2010. This is a free tool that is an addition to PowerPoint which allows all students to participate during class. The new tool, called Mouse Mischief, allows teachers to add multiple choice, yes/no, and drawing questions to their presentations. Students then use any computer mice (any device from the school will work) to answer these questions. The tool also allows for whole-class or individual student responses (eSchoolNews). The Mouse Mischief tool enables cultural diverse students to participate in the activities of the lesson engaging the students in further participation with the integration of technology.

Some of the challenges that are faced when integrating any of these tools into the classroom are that some teachers may need to be trained on the technology before integrating it. Also, if there is a class with students that have learning disabilities; not all students will excel at the same rate. Many teachers when utilizing technology with students they prefer equipment that is easily integrated and understood so there is little down time in class for teaching how to use the technology. If technology is simple to use then more learning time is established with all students.

However, if issues arise from a lack of understanding technology because of cultural diversity; teachers and schools districts are resourceful and eager to create ways that each student has an equal opportunity to learn the same material presented to them in the classroom. Even students with an IEP have the opportunities to be in a classroom interacting with students and subjects that require technology usage on their level of understanding. This is important for all schools with the â€Å" No Child Left Behindâ€▤ Act. This

establishes another factor of cultural diversity and how technology affects students and teachers.

Throughout, the creation of this paper on Technology Integration across the Curriculum of Cultural Diversity many levels of diversity became of value when searching for the proper technology to use with students and for teachers to learn. All the Dimensions of Diversity affect the utilization of the integration of communication and collaboration tools.

http://www. robindiangelo.

com/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/employees_diversity_wheel1. gif