

Brooks, D.W.: **Web-Teaching**. - Plenum Press, New York - London 1997. ISBN 0-306-45552-8. 214 pp., USD 25.00 (soft cover), (USD 30.00 outside US and Canada).

No doubt, the immense quantity of information concentrated in the Web may be used for teaching in schools of various level. It is difficult to guess how the Web and the respective hardware and software will develop in the next, say, ten years. But it is certain that the use of this possibility of encyclopaedic information with all possible forms of presentation including virtual reality will rapidly increase. And it is clear that the new software opens fantastic ways of teaching in closed circuits of students.

The reviewed book gives in 14 chapters an up-to-date overview of the present situation in use of this communication medium. No solid research on this form of teaching has been made yet and we miss valid facts on the roles of teacher as a program designer, student as a client, and on their electronic conversation. Should teachers be replaced by machines? Is distance learning good? For answers read chapter 2.

Chapter 3 overviews the substantial recent changes in multimedia, student access to them, interactivity, use of reading texts and hypertexts (with interactive glossaries), images, animations, three-dimensional models, movies, sound, and in the future also virtual reality, touch, smell, and taste... Next four chapters deal with the Web-ready materials, preparation of images, movies, and other media, and with desktop television editing. Their goal is to instruct the teacher "how things are accomplished on the WWW so as to be able to design good materials". Principles and uses of systems such as MIME, HTML, ASCII, *etc.* are explained here, as well as image tags, scanners, photoCDs, and ways to produce simple animations, transform one image into the other, produce and edit videos and movies, record sounds and include them in pages, *etc.* Chapter 8 shows how to encourage Web-based discussion, co-operative learning using e-mail, listservers, *etc.* The art of videoconferencing is also discussed here. In chapter 9 interactive strategies and their forms are explained, such as hypertext links, maps, various elements and inputs, and so on. Chapter 10 shows how to promote self-regulated learning ("a fusion of *skill* and *will*"), chapter 11 how to create and manage Web sites, and chapter 12 how to make and use weblets (closed systems of files using Web software) and CD-ROMs. Chapter 13 deals with security and copyright issues, important, *e.g.*, when students take Web-based exams or when the access to the server and desktop computer has to be limited. The last chapter is on modern lecturing and multimedia classes (bringing also information on display devices, computers, videos, and seating arrangements).

There are some very useful supplements in this book: a fairly large list of references; a perfect glossary explaining precisely all used terms; a software list (bringing information on software available for both the Macintosh and PC hardware); a list of uniform resource locators; and a subject index.

Even if I do not teach courses for such large audience as David Brooks does, his book showed me clearly how teaching may look now and in the future. His text is simple, understandable even to myself, and I was often pleased by witty examples, such as "Nebraska is a state where people live in relative harmony and prosperity. Perhaps the reason for this is a shared dislike for the weather". I am sure you will also read this book with much pleasure.

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