

Instructional program for the Tactical Personnel System

By

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Abstract

Traditional instructional methodology using PowerPoint presentations and lectures are used in the delivery of Tactical Personnel System training in the military but do not orient TPS personnel to succeed in the application of knowledge in the field. The potential of HyperStudio to more suit the instructional delivery needs of the TPS program was investigated. 20 TPS training personnel underwent a 10 day interactive training in HyperStudio incorporated into the TPS training. Job aid checklists, journal documentation sheets, rubric measurement evaluation program survey sheets, instructor observations and survey sheets were used to assess the impact of training on TPS training personnel use and attitude towards the multimedia program. There was a 100% success rate for HyperStudio in impacting TPS personnel use of technology, creating an interactive instructional presentation and in achieving the instructional objectives of TPS. Learners indicated that typographical errors were one of the deficiencies of HyperStudio. HyperStudio can be successfully incorporated into the TPS training program to affect improved instructional outcomes.

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Introduction

The Tactical Personnel System (TPS) is the military's automated tactical strength management system. This system plays an important role in the management of the military's human resources by task force organizations. This application serves as a deployment-manifesting platform for all military personnel, civilians Department of Defence (DOD) Federal, non-DOD Federal, Contractors, and Foreign Nationals. The TPS supports commanders' tactical decision-making process by creating a deployable "go to war" personnel strength automated file. The TPS also creates manifests, reports, and provides updates on the duty status of deployed personnel. The TPS is designed to track the mobilization of reserve or National Guard soldiers and deployment of active duty personnel during contingency operations. The function of these monitoring personnel is considered one of the most critical in the modern battlefield. Additionally the capabilities of TPS support war-fighters by providing monitoring personnel with the ability to effectively account for personnel. This system is ideally suited for operations in a range of environments particularly where there may be problems with communicating between base and deployed personnel.

Currently training is provided for personnel working with the TPS system. Training typically involves the use of slideshow presentations and similar media as the primary learning mediums. This type of training only encourages the user to memorize information utilized in the training fields, as supplied by trainers, but does not provide any real benefits to personnel performance on the field because there are no provisions for trainees to be actively involved with the learning material.

This project was developed to address the weaknesses in the existing method of delivery of the TPS module. This project was undertaken based on the hypothesis that the preexisting

Tactical Personnel System training was not effective, and that personnel who underwent interactive training would learn and absorb more information than those given comparable amounts of passive TPS training experience. The researcher felt that a more intensive and practical training method, with an improved instructional system would result in an increased level of proficiency and full utilization of the TPS capabilities. To realize the improvements to the existing TPS training the researcher developed and organized a new set of TPS training sequences which aimed to encourage a more active method of training in the TPS system. This project therefore addressed the problem of passive and inactive instruction in the Tactical Personnel System through the development of an interactive TPS instruction package as an improvement over the existing TPS training.

Tactical Personnel System (TPS) instruction connotes counter intelligence strategies. It includes mapping, speed and precision in deliberation. Decision through interactive communication and accuracy of judgment is critical. An interactive instructional tool like HyperStudio is therefore necessary, in order to realize improvements in the delivery of this training.

This research aimed to analyze the effectiveness and usefulness of HyperStudio as a delivery mechanism for the TPS training. HyperStudio is based on non-technical application for an open-line communication (Wagner, 1978). It is lesson content centered learning experience (Wagner). The use of this interactive media is an option to passive educational techniques. HyperStudio is a multimedia software instructional program centered on content, sequence, and learners' pace. As an instructional unit assisting instructors, it may enhance performance and effectiveness. Its usefulness in enhancing instruction has been validated and has been well recommended.

Twenty military and civilian DOD instructors were involved in training sessions in the integration of HyperStudio technology into training programs. These individuals had no previous experience with HyperStudio technology but had adequate experience in training TPS. The researcher sought to improve the delivery of this training to military personnel by impacting the trainers, giving them the integrative technological skills and tools to incorporate into their instructions.

I have a particular interest in this project because of the potential it offers to improve tactical training within the military using tools that are effective. Having gone through the Master of Education in Learning Technology program at Western Governors University, I have come to realize that it is essential to utilize new and improving technologies in the various educational settings, not just within the contemporary classroom. Research is showing that some of these technologies have the potential to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of instruction, to make them more relevant, to more appropriately and successfully involve the learner in the learning process and generally to ensure more meaningful learning.

This research has been very instrumental in helping to solidify and exemplify the concepts I have been exposed to throughout my Masters program. By analyzing the comparative effects of traditional versus technologically integrative instruction with HyperStudio as opposed to the traditional mode of delivering the TPS, I have come to appreciate the need to make instruction more suitable and relevant to the needs of the learners by adapting modern tools to the classroom.

This research has highlighted also the importance of proper and appropriate evaluation of instructional programs in order to ensure that they are meeting their stated objectives. There are risks associated with the integration of technology into instruction and this research helped me to

understand the importance of a system of evaluation that will weigh the pros and cons of a new instructional delivery system to ensure that technology is not being integrated into instruction simply because they exist but because they are effective in realizing statistically significant results. This project has therefore been relevant in integrating all the concepts on learning and the role that technological solutions play in that area.

Problem Statement

Overview

Tactical Personnel are an important and essential component of the military and they perform an essential job function. Tactical Personnel are entrusted with the task of monitoring the deployment of military personnel and are therefore accountable for them throughout the various military operations. This job is one of the most critical elements of any successful military operation. While civilian politicians drive the nation's priority of interest, the responsibility of accounting for the troops during every phase of an operation falls on the military commanders.

The Tactical Personnel System is the tool used by the military to facilitate the mobilization of reserve or National Guard soldiers and the deployment of active duty personnel during contingency operations. This function is considered one of the most critical in today's modern battlefield. The system is designed to monitor these personnel throughout the entire battle operations. However, soldiers and Department of Defense (DOD) Civilians only utilize the TPS during manifest operation...

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