Technology Together as Learning Journey: A Metaphor

Metaphors can play an important role in telling our stories. They can challenge our understandings and learning approaches and can transform our beliefs, values and assumptions.

One valuable metaphor is that of **technology learning as "journey"**. This metaphor can assists teachers and students alike in seeing technology learning as an ongoing, lifelong process and an adventure, with ups and downs along the way.

- Our *Luggage* can be seen as the feelings, attitudes, beliefs and assumptions which influence how we view our ICT learning experiences. If this luggage is heavy and inflexible it can slow the traveller down. If the traveller packs wisely and casts off inappropriate 'possessions' along the way, they can make room for new possessions, and so enhance their journey.

- Travellers need to know the broad *direction* in which they are heading and why they are going there (their goals). That said, some of the most exciting travelling adventures start from only a broad sense of direction, with the main goal as adventure itself. However, without conviction that their journey is worthwhile they are unlikely to go far.

- Traveller needs some means of *navigation*: a map to guide their travels (metacognition). They may start with a large-scale map to provide broad direction, but as they progress they need more detailed maps to facilitate their journey.

- *Transport*, the method they choose to progress through their adventure, needs planning, acting, and evaluating, and if travelers find one form of transport ineffective or one route inaccessible, they should choose another. Through reflection on our experiences we learn which approaches are better than others in certain circumstances. So, too, in the technology domain, we need to develop understandings of which learning strategies are best employed in each context.

- Along the way the traveller will experience many **cultural encounters**; experiences that teach them something about themselves and others whom they meet. Such encounters influence the luggage they carry, the direction they take, the navigation that they use, and ultimately their journey's destination.

We gain from our journeys the photos and memories of our experiences, which combine, through reflection, to teach us about our present situation. These memories and reflections also provide the impetus and excitement to continue our traveling adventures in the future, becoming lifelong, capable computer learners.