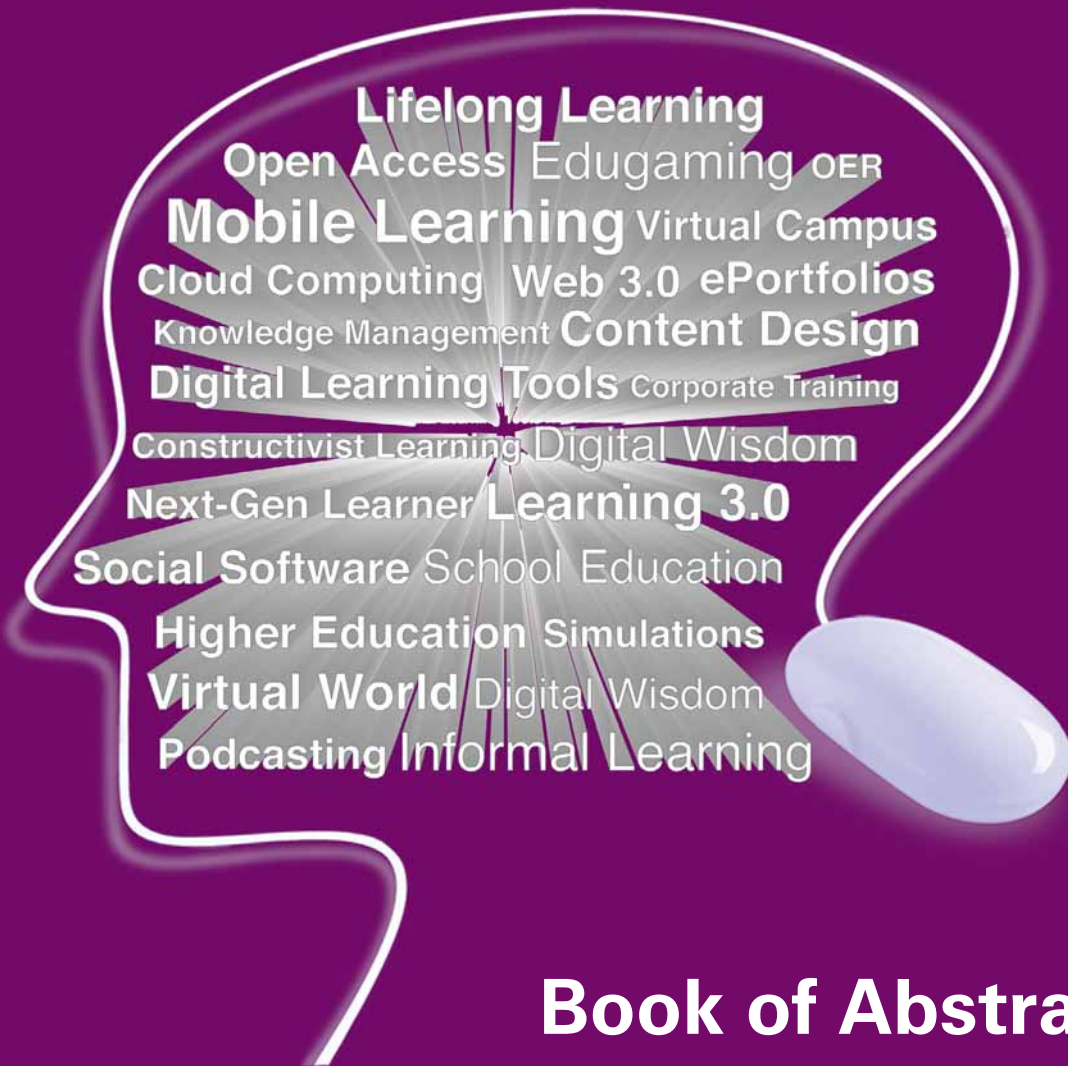


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Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Steering Committee..... | XIX |
| Advisory Committee..... | XX |
| Grußwort..... | XXII |
| Message of Greeting | XXIII |

Plenary Sessions

| | |
|--|----------|
| Practice Makes Perfect! Bringing Experiential Learning to Life..... | 1 |
| <i>David James Clarke IV, Toolwire, Inc., USA & Charles Jennings, Duntroon Associates Ltd., UK</i> | |
| 21st Century Learning for All: Innovative Tools and Methods in Practice-Based Education for People of All Ages and Abilities..... | 6 |
| <i>Lizbeth Goodman, Director of Research, Futurelab Education, UK</i> | |
| Creating Better Learning Environments with Client Virtualization and Cloud Computing..... | 7 |
| <i>Tarkan Maner, President & CEO, Wyse Technology Inc., USA</i> | |
| Learning: Living It Forwards, Understanding It Backwards..... | 8 |
| <i>Gilly Salmon, University of Leicester with Aaron Porter, Vice-President of the National Union of Students, UK</i> | |

Next Generation Learning Strategies

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Portuguese as a Foreign Language Teaching: A Blended-Learning Practical Case..... | 11 |
| <i>Carla Sofia dos Santos Amado, Universität des Saarlandes, Germany</i> | |
| From Pedagogical Objectives to Video Game Design..... | 14 |
| <i>Valérie Boudier, KTM Advance, France</i> | |
| What Makes a Good Learning Game?..... | 18 |
| <i>Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen, IT-University of Copenhagen, Denmark</i> | |
| User Experience on a Cross Media Format combining CALL and TV..... | 21 |
| <i>Hasse Eriksson, Annika Wiklund-Engblom, Anette Bengs, Simon Staffans & Susanne Sperring, MediaCity, Vasa, Finland</i> | |
| Virtual Learning Worlds, 3D Learning Simulations and Serious Games – Sense or Nonsense?..... | 23 |
| <i>Norbert Fritz, ECS GmbH & Co KG, Germany</i> | |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Learning in Virtual Teams and the Role of (A)Synchronous Communication..... | 24 |
| <i>Bas Giesbers & Bart Rienties, Maastricht University, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Digital Identity..... | 26 |
| <i>Stylianos Hatzipanagos, King's Learning Institute, King's College London; Steven Warburton, King's College London; Shirley Williams, University of Reading; Graham Attwell, Pontydysgu, UK & Margarita Perez Garcia, MENON Network EEIG, Belgium</i> | |
| Learner-Generated Local Content in a Global Teaching Environment – Global Language Training 2.0..... | 26 |
| <i>Sonja Hild, digital publishing AG, Germany</i> | |
| How Can E-Learning Assist with Acculturation Processes of Foreign Students?..... | 28 |
| <i>Ria Jacobi, Leiden University / ICLON & Bart Rienties, Maastricht University, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Inspiring Children to Learn Science with Web 2.0 and Multimedia..... | 30 |
| <i>Magdalena Jasińska & Andrzej Wodecki, Maria Curie Skłodowska University, Poland</i> | |
| Using LMS and Blogs in Second Language Teaching..... | 33 |
| <i>Esben Lydixsen, Studienskolen i København, Denmark</i> | |
| 'Talk with Me' – Creating Supportive Peer-Learning Environments by Using Social Motivations..... | 35 |
| <i>Gerhilde Meissl-Egghart, talkademy.org, Austria</i> | |
| Reflective Narratives Using Digital Storytelling..... | 39 |
| <i>Christopher Murray, University of Leeds, School of Medicine, UK</i> | |
| Exploring Architectures for Fast and Easy Development of Immersive Learning Scenarios..... | 41 |
| <i>Rob Nadolski, Aad Sloomaker & Hans G.K. Hummel, Open University of the Netherlands – CELSTEC, The Netherlands</i> | |
| e-VITA, Electronic Life Experiences Based on Storytelling and Serious Games..... | 44 |
| <i>Lucia Pannese, imaginary srl, Italy, Sónia Hetzner, ILI University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany & Ian Dunwell, Serious Games Institute, UK</i> | |
| Experimental E-Learning – Insights from the European Project PeTEX..... | 47 |
| <i>Christian Pleul, Claudius Terkowsky, Isa Jahnke, Uwe Dirksen, Matthias Heiner, Johannes Wildt & A. Erman Tekkaya, Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany</i> | |
| New Concepts for Efficient E-Learning / Training..... | 50 |
| <i>Tinko Stoyanov, Infoart, Bulgaria</i> | |

Using Ontologies to Support Learning in a Web 2.0 Environment.....53
Davide Taibi, Italian National Research Council, Italy

**Master-Level Intercultural Virtuality –
Starter Communities for Cross-Cultural Virtual Teamwork.....56**
Michael Tighe, U.S. English Services, Germany

Virtual Worlds – A Challenge of the Pedagogy in University.....59
*Hannele Virtanen-Vaaranmaa, Helsinki Metropolia University of
Applied Sciences, Finland*

The Potential of Brain Science and Its Impact on Learning

**Context-Awareness Tools for Knowledge Emergence,
Convergence and Capitalisation in Computer-Supported
Collaborative Learning (CSCL).....62**
*Margarida Romero, Ouak.net; Niki Lambropoulos, Fintan Culwin,
Claudette Mariné, Montserrat Castelló, Carles Monereo,
Euro-CAT-CSCL FP7 Marie Curie IAPP Research Project, France*

E-Learning in a Time of Global Financial Restructuring

**E-Learning as a Competitive Advantage – ZSEM Productivity
Increase Strategies in Time of Global Financial Changes.....67**
*Mirna Coric & Karmela Aleksic-Maslac, Zagreb School of Economics and
Management, Croatia*

**Transformation and Change – Why Strategy for Skills Delivery
Can't Afford to Stand Still.....69**
Kirstie Donnelly, learndirect, UK

Banking on Success: Informal Learning in Action at 'La Caixa'.....72
Francesc Fàbregas, GEC & Gerard Vélez, 'La Caixa', Spain

Cloud Learning – Get Up to Speed with Sky.....73
Kenny Henderson, Sky, UK

**Vocational Guidance and Professional Re-Training:
A Good Strategy to Tackle the Global Financial Crisis.....78**
Arturo Lavallo, Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi – Telematica, Italy

**Benchmarking E-Learning: Now What Can We Do When We
Have No Money?.....81**
Stephen Marshall, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

**Strategic Challenges for Open and Distance Learning Institutions
in the Post-2010 Decade.....84**
Kees-Jan van Dorp, EADTU, The Netherlands

Innovative Technological Solutions to Support Learning

Patient Simulations – A New Approach to Improve Performance of Clinical Decision Making and Reducing Diagnosis Errors.....88

Matthias Felsenstein, Regional Chamber of Physicians Baden-Württemberg, Germany

Social Spaces for Research and Innovation to Create E-Learning Solutions for eHealth and Independent Living.....89

Javier García Guzmán, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Spain

An ePortfolio for All Health Professions? – Lessons from a Scottish Medical Pilot.....93

Alex Haig & Karen Beggs, NHS Education for Scotland, UK

Semantic Services for Personalised Learning and Formative Feedback.....95

Marco Kalz, Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies, Open University of the Netherlands, The Netherlands

Suffering from Information Overload? Try Teachable Media Agents.....97

Harri Ketamo, Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, Finland

ePortfolios in Higher Education – Organisational and Didactical Approaches.....101

Birgitta Kinscher, HTW Berlin - University of Applied Sciences, Germany

LEARNOVATION Session – The LEARNOVATION Policy Benchmarking Tool.....101

Fabio Nascimbeni & Walter Kugemann, MENON Network, Annemie Boonen, EuroPACE ivzw, Lieve Van den Brande, European Commission, Belgium; Claudio Dondi, SCIENTER, Italy; Roberto Carneiro & Gonçalo Silva, Universidade Católica Portuguesa CEPCEP, Judite Nozes, Ministry of Education, Portugal

P2CeL – Collaborative Knowledge Construction and E-Learning: An Approach Based on Semantic Wikis.....104

Samuel Nowakowski, Nancy Université – TICE; Anne Boyer, Armelle Brun, Hala Skaf, LORIA – INRIA; Jérôme Dinet, Renaud Gicquel, Centre Energétique et Procédés – Ecole des Mines de Paris & Alain Antoine, IAE – CEREFIGE Nancy Université, France

Teaching Tutoring – Intelligent Agents to Customise Lifelong Learning Pathways in the Microfinance Sector.....105

Jenny Petrucci & Ilaria Mascitti, Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi – Telematica, Italy

Why Single-Sourcing Is of Vital Importance to Education.....107

Martin Smith, CAPDM Ltd., UK

The Construction Site on Your Desktop – Amazing Learning Success in Transferring Theory into Practice.....110

Robert Stein, S & P Consult GmbH, Germany

Learning Futures of a Different Kind

- Training Online Teachers: Transitioning Traditional Classroom Strategies and Techniques into the Virtual Online Learning Environment.....115**
Bob Barrett, American Public University, USA
- The TRIO Project: Innovative E-Learning Services for the Citizen.....117**
Gianni Biagi, Training Policies Area, Tuscany Region & Fabrizio Cardinali, Giunti Labs, Italy
- LANGblog. Audioblog for Practising Oral Skills Online.....118**
Federico Borges & David Trelles, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain
- T-Learning and Inclusive Society. The Beacon Experience.....122**
Valentina Castello, Vittorio Dell’Aiuto & Chiara Sancin, Dida, Italy & Helena Bijmens, EuroPACE ivwz, Belgium
- From the Slide Show to the Serious Games Approach. Quick Development for Complex Learning Objects.....124**
Francesco Cavallotti, Docebo Consulting Srl, Italy
- Breaking Through to Next Generation Learning: Strategic Barriers to System-Wide Transformation.....127**
Ian Chowcat, Sero Consulting Ltd, UK
- Creating the Skills for Digital Britain – Where Will Technology Take Us?.....130**
Genny Dixon, e-skills UK, UK
- Podcasting ‘Hot Knowledge’ to Support Students’ Transition from School to University.....131**
Palitha Edirisingha, Chris Cane, Robert Cane & Samuel K. Nikoi, University of Leicester, UK
- EduCoRe: Educational Counselling During Rehabilitation: E-Learning as an Education Opportunity for Patients.....134**
Elisabeth Frankus, die Berater, Austria
- Reinforcing Standards in E-Learning for Medicine and Health Through Partnership Between Higher Education and Healthcare.....136**
Gareth Frith, Leeds Institute of Medical Education, University of Leeds, UK
- Large Variations in the Use of ICT in Higher Education in Norway.....138**
Eva Gjerdrum, Norway Opening Universities, Norway
- Let’s Play – Educational Online-Rallies.....138**
Sabine Hemsing, Virtual Campus of Rhineland Palatinate, Germany
- Self-Organised Learning 2.0: Collaborative Content Creation and Self-Organised Learning Arrangements.....142**
Anna Hoberg, Institute for Human Factors and Technology Management (IAT) of the University of Stuttgart & Joachim Gross, Stuttgart Electro Technology Centre (etz), Germany

| | |
|---|------------|
| How Personal Is Your Computer: Does It Answer You Back?..... | 145 |
| <i>Abigail Mann & Chris Tilley, University of Hertfordshire, UK</i> | |
| Avatars Help Develop Education..... | 149 |
| <i>Irma Mänty, Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Finland</i> | |
| The Australian E-Learning Experience: Remote, Distant, Harsh and Quick, How This Benefits the World..... | 151 |
| <i>Marc Niemes, eLearning Industry Association of Victoria, Australia</i> | |
| A Virtual Working Space: Practical Model Building..... | 151 |
| <i>Anastasia Ozhgikhina, Moscow University of Industry and Finance, Russia</i> | |
| Strategies to Sensibilise Teacher Trainers for the Use of Modern Media.... | 154 |
| <i>Inge Peeters, School of Education & Jeroen Thys, GROUP T – International University College Leuven, Belgium</i> | |
| Online and in the Game!: Serious Gaming & Geomatics..... | 156 |
| <i>Michael Power, Laval University, Canada</i> | |
| How to Engineer a Community of Language Learners: A 300 Year Old Approach Revisited..... | 156 |
| <i>Martine Rey, Institut Polytechnique Lasalle Beauvais, France</i> | |
| How Can Educators Keep Pace with the Changing Needs of Business..... | 157 |
| <i>Karyn Romeis, Learning Anorak Ltd., UK</i> | |
| Virtual Guidance Environments in Higher Education..... | 158 |
| <i>Sakari Saukkonen & Jaana Kettunen, University of Jyväskylä / Finnish Institute for Education Research, Finland</i> | |
| Changing Students – Changing Communities: A South African Perspective of Integrating Technology in Community Service Learning..... | 160 |
| <i>Tiana van der Merwe, University of the Free State, South Africa</i> | |

Business Models and the Impact of Open Source Solutions

| | |
|---|------------|
| Pedagogic, Cost and Social Advantages of Linux Terminal Server Systems in Education..... | 162 |
| <i>Elias Aarnio, Innopark Oy / EduCOSS, Finland</i> | |
| Open Source: Getting Failure for Free (and Why That Is a Good Thing)..... | 163 |
| <i>Hans de Zwart, Educational Technologist, The Netherlands</i> | |
| E-Collaboration: Web 2.0 Tools Integration for Distance Cooperation Projects..... | 163 |
| <i>Matteo Uggeri & Susanna Sancassani, METID Centre - Politecnico di Milano, Italy</i> | |
| On the Sustainability of Open Source Projects: Lessons Learnt from Cyberdam..... | 165 |
| <i>Pieter van der Hijden, Stichting RechtenOnline (Foundation LawOnline) / Sofos Consultancy, The Netherlands</i> | |

Mixed Media in Online Learning

- E-Learning 2.0 Mash-Up: How to Combine Social Media, Online Communities and Resources in One Learning Application.....170**
Inge de Waard, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Belgium
- E-Learning for the Generation 60+ Finding the Right Measure Between Usability, Accessibility, Skills, Design and Content.....172**
Andrea Dobida & Arndt Bubenzer, common sense – eLearning & training consultants GmbH, Austria
- Student-Generated Video Cases as a Learning Tool for Higher Education.....176**
Päivi Hakkarainen, University of Lapland, Finland
- Cost-Effective Options for Using Mixed Media in University Online Courses.....178**
John Hill, University of Denver, USA
- “Teach Local – Teach Global”:
Integrating the Physical and Virtual Learning Environments.....180**
Ilkka Tapio Kukkonen, University of Joensuu, Finland
- ASSET: Moving Forward Through Video Feedback.....182**
Karsten Øster Lundqvist, University of Reading, UK
- Harnessing the Future of Learning Today.....183**
Marci Powell, Polycom, USA
- New Ways of Learning with Social Computing.....183**
Christine Redecker, European Commission, Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS), Spain
- Experiences with Mobile Computing Solutions and Mixed Media in Higher Education and Vocational Training.....186**
John B. Stav, Sør-Trøndelag University College, Norway
- A ‘Digital Sandbox’ for Early Learning Experiences.....188**
Mathy Vanbuel, KHLIM c-md, Belgium

Measuring and Understanding the Impact

- Rich Media: Innovative Technology for Efficient Learning and Knowledge Sharing.....191**
Jérôme Beauguitte, Momindum, France
- Web 2.0 Technologies and Social Constructivism.....191**
Ciarán Dawson, University College Cork, Ireland
- Forget About Web 2.0 Techniques – Let’s Talk About Learners, Creativity and the Impact of Learning.....194**
Ursula Hesselmann, Management Consultancy Hesselmann, Germany

| | |
|--|------------|
| Automatic Diagnostic Tests and Assignments for Engineering Students..... | 195 |
| <i>Kari Lehtonen, Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland</i> | |
| Teacher Training and Competences: | |
| A Longitudinal Analysis and Some Evidence..... | 199 |
| <i>Elena Mosa & Giusy Cannella, National Agency for the Support of the School Autonomy, Italy</i> | |
| Making Learning at Work Relevant: Scenarios and Blended Learning..... | 205 |
| <i>Timothy Phillips, SKYLIGHT GmbH & Winfried Albrink, Henkel AG & Co KGaA, Germany</i> | |
| Evalformation: A Standard Psychometric System to Enhance Quality and Efficiency of the 3000 Training Sessions at the University Group of PSA PEUGEOT-CITROËN..... | 207 |
| <i>Hervé Potelle, PSA PEUGEOT- CITROËN, France</i> | |
| Project Compartim: Knowledge Management Communities of Practice – Social Learning in the Autonomous Government of Catalonia..... | 209 |
| <i>Dolors Reig Hernández, Generalitat de Catalunya, elcaparazon.net Consulting, Spain</i> | |
| Competence-Based B-Learning at the Dutch Tax and Customs Organisation: Active and Innovative Learning of Vocational Competences..... | 212 |
| <i>Inge Reubzaet & Sasja Sporken-deVries, CINOP, The Netherlands</i> | |
| E-Learning: Moving Up the Corporate Value Chain..... | 216 |
| <i>Swarna Srinivas, KESDEE, USA</i> | |

Pedagogical Strategies for Online Learning

| | |
|--|------------|
| Reflecting the Future: Case Studies in IT-Based Strategies and Learning Contexts..... | 225 |
| <i>Karen Borgnakke, University of Copenhagen, Denmark</i> | |
| Boundary-Crossing with Web 2.0-Based Learning Communities..... | 227 |
| <i>Ilona Buchem, Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin, Germany</i> | |
| A Personal Bildungs-Environment?..... | 231 |
| <i>Per Skafté Hansen, NeoConsult A/S, Denmark</i> | |
| School Networking and Innovation: | |
| Knowledge Sharing and Competence Building..... | 235 |
| <i>Nikitas Kastis, Eleni Cheliot & Nikos Zygouritsas, MENON Network & Lambrakis Research Foundation & Sevasti-Sofia Anthopoulou, Network for School Innovation, Education Initiative, Greece</i> | |
| Think about it! Encouraging Reflection Through New Media..... | 238 |
| <i>Jan Marković & Agnieszka Chrzyszcz, Centre of e-Learning, AGH University of Science and Technology, Poland</i> | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| What Shape Will Learning Take in the Future? Listening to Student Voices – What Do They Say About Learning with Technologies?..... | 240 |
| <i>Kathryn Moyle, University of Canberra, Australia & Guus Wijngaards, INHolland University, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Beyond the Nuremberg Funnel: Minimalist Design for E-Learning..... | 243 |
| <i>Sean Nugent, LINE Communications, UK</i> | |
| eLEN2 – 2nd Generation E-Learning Exchange Networks..... | 245 |
| <i>Rachel Panckhurst, Praxiling UMR 5267 CNRS – Université Paul-Valéry – Montpellier 3 & Debra Marsh, iConnect, France</i> | |
| Preparing Nurses for Web-Based Learning: The Role of Emotional Support and Blended Learning on Self-Efficacy..... | 248 |
| <i>Cherry Poussa, Shaaron Ainsworth & Heather Wharrad, University of Nottingham, UK</i> | |
| From Virtual Learning Environment to Strategic Learning Environment..... | 248 |
| <i>Susannah Quinsee & Simon Ward, City University London, UK</i> | |
| Collaborative Learning in Higher Education – The Use of Wikis in Foreign Language Classes..... | 249 |
| <i>Pedro Reis, Universidade Fernando Pessoa, Portugal</i> | |
| Towards a New Era of Virtual Campus Education..... | 254 |
| <i>Bieke Schreurs & Helena Bijnens, EuroPACE ivz, Ilse Op de Beeck, AVNet – K.U.Leuven & Sally Reynolds, ATiT, Belgium, Paul Bacsich, Matic Media Ltd., UK & Theo Bastiaens, FernUniversität in Hagen, Germany and Open University of the Netherlands, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Implementation of Mandatory Internet-Based Learning in a Multi-Professional Hospital Environment..... | 256 |
| <i>Jette Led Sørensen, Ann Louise Vestergaard, Anne Cathrine Christensen, Pernille Lottrup & Bent Ottesen, Copenhagen University Hospital, Rigshospitalet, Berit Cecilie Brix & Lars Kayser, Centre for Web based Learning (CWBL), Copenhagen University, Denmark</i> | |
| Impact of Technology as a Novelty for Teachers and Students..... | 257 |
| <i>Betina von Staa, Positivo Informática, Brazil</i> | |
| You Can Take a Horse to Water But You Can't Make Him Drink! – Lessons for E-Learning..... | 261 |
| <i>Andrew Watt, Independent Consultant, Edinburgh, UK</i> | |

Learning on the Move

| | |
|---|------------|
| Mobile Flashcard Learning with iPhone and Co. | 263 |
| <i>Patrick Blum, inside Unternehmensgruppe, Germany</i> | |
| Use of Mobile Phones for Spoken Language Learning..... | 266 |
| <i>Gavin Cooney, Learnosity, Ireland</i> | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Anyplace & Anytime Learning Using Mobile Technologies: The Use of E-Book Readers in Undergraduate Medical Education..... | 267 |
| <i>Peter de Jong, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Production and Distribution to Multiple Platform and Videoformats for Mobile Usage..... | 268 |
| <i>Andreas Groß, Hasso-Plattner-Institut, Germany</i> | |
| Web Standards for Mobile Learning..... | 271 |
| <i>Scott Hennessy, Leeds Institute of Medical Education, University of Leeds, UK</i> | |
| Going Mobile: A Practical Guide for Faculty..... | 272 |
| <i>Martin Rodriguez & Mathew Constantine, IE Business School, Spain</i> | |
| Anyplace & Anytime Learning Using Mobile Technologies: 4 Examples..... | 274 |
| <i>Kirsten Veelo, SURFnet, The Netherlands</i> | |
| A Framework for Designing Mobile Learning Experiences..... | 275 |
| <i>Niall Winters, London Knowledge Lab, UK</i> | |

Creating, Reusing and Managing Content

| | |
|--|------------|
| The BERLiN Experience: Exploring Institutional Attitudes to Open Learning..... | 277 |
| <i>Andy Beggan & John Horton, The University of Nottingham, UK</i> | |
| Cross Cultural Learning and Teaching in Vocational Education and Training..... | 281 |
| <i>Rupert Beinhauer & Thomas Schmalzer, FH Joanneum, Austria</i> | |
| Developing Open Access Institutional Repositories in the Developing World – The Nigerian Experience..... | 285 |
| <i>Gideon Emcee Christian, International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada</i> | |
| Transverse Empowerment in the PanAfrican Research Agenda on the Pedagogical Integration of ICTs..... | 286 |
| <i>Toby Harper-Merrett, Université de Montréal, Canada</i> | |
| Open Educational Resources: The Leicester Approach..... | 287 |
| <i>Simon Kear, Alejandro Armellini, Sahn Nikoi, Tania Rowlett & Gabi Witthaus, University of Leicester, UK</i> | |
| Quality-Managed Peer Production in E-Learning by Teachers..... | 290 |
| <i>Petri Lounaskorpi, University of Tampere, Finland</i> | |
| Bridging the Content Divide – Multi-Stakeholder Network Model the Key to Accessing E-Learning Content?..... | 293 |
| <i>Jens Schneider & Maggy Beukes-Amiss, eLearning Centre, Namibia</i> | |
| Tearing Down the Walled Garden of Online Content in a Business School..... | 294 |
| <i>Uwe Spangler, IE Business School, Spain</i> | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Learner-Centred Design of Socially-Networked Cross-Cultural Language Programmes..... | 298 |
| <i>Libor Stepanek, Masaryk University Brno, Czech Republic</i> | |
| Fiducia: Student’s Lifejacket in Google-Overload..... | 301 |
| <i>JaapJan Vroom, Deltion College, The Netherlands</i> | |

Learning as a Social Activity

| | |
|--|------------|
| A Study into Teaching and Learning in a Virtual World..... | 303 |
| <i>Trevor Barker, University of Hertfordshire, UK</i> | |
| Professional Social Networked Learning Systems..... | 307 |
| <i>Anthony Basiel & Mike Howarth, Work Based Learning Research Centre, UK</i> | |
| The New Learning Strategy of the Vehicle Inspection Organisation in the Netherlands..... | 311 |
| <i>Pieter de Vries, TU Delft & Johan Schellingerhout, RDW – Vehicle Technology Division, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Public Learning Portals for Sectors and Professions – One Size Fits All?..... | 313 |
| <i>Lutz Goertz, MMB-Institute for Media and Competence Research, Germany</i> | |
| Game Based Learning: How to avoid Common Mistakes..... | 314 |
| <i>Sebastian Kelle, Open University of the Netherlands – CELSTEC, The Netherlands</i> | |

Company Presentations

| | |
|--|------------|
| Custom E-Learning & Knowledge Management Solutions..... | 316 |
| <i>Robert Becker, KTM Advance, France</i> | |
| Creating E-Learning Modules for 5 Continents: Issues, Constraints and Best Practices..... | 317 |
| <i>Estefania Belleudi & Morgan Riou, WhP International SAS, France</i> | |
| Platform for Research and Education: The Humanoid Robot Nao Academics..... | 319 |
| <i>Anne-Marie Bourcier, Aldebaran Robotics, France</i> | |
| The \$70 PC – Empowering Growth..... | 322 |
| <i>Frank Coggrave, NComputing, UK</i> | |
| Online Tutoring Made Easy..... | 323 |
| <i>Kemal El Moujahid, Teacheo.com, France</i> | |
| Elk Test in Austria. Evolutions of a Large-Scale LMS Change and Its Consequences. A Critical Outline..... | 324 |
| <i>Annabell Lorenz, University of Vienna, Austria</i> | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| How the Northernmost University Uses Elluminate for Blended and Online Learning..... | 326 |
| <i>Mariann Solberg, University of Tromsø, Norway</i> | |
| Handwriting – An Old Concept? Benefits of Electronic Pen Input Devices in E-Learning Sessions..... | 328 |
| <i>Peter Sommer, Wacom Europe GmbH, Germany</i> | |
| Cambridge ESOL’s Blended Learning Approach..... | 329 |
| <i>Reinhard Tenberg, University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, UK</i> | |
| Look at a Smart and Profitable Business Model for Continuing Education Around the World..... | 330 |
| <i>Mehdi Tounsi & Gillian Duncan, Gatlin International LLC, UK</i> | |
| Student Engagement: On-The-Go Communication Enhances the Experience..... | 331 |
| <i>Aaron Wasserman, Blackboard Mobile, USA</i> | |
| BILD Personal Learning Environments – The UK’s Vision of the Future..... | 331 |
| <i>Jack Wills & Karen Velasco, The British Institute for Learning and Development (BILD); Linda Steedman, eCom Scotland; Brian Bishop, Caspian Learning & Will Murray, nLearning/Plagiarismadvice.org, UK</i> | |

Learning Café

| | |
|--|------------|
| How Can Examination Practices Reflect the Use of Collaborative Web 2.0 Tools in Courses?..... | 334 |
| <i>Inger-Marie Falgren Christensen, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark</i> | |
| Open and Flexible Global Education for All: What Role for Social Media and E-Learning 2.0?..... | 337 |
| <i>Jüri Lõssenko, Estonian Information Technology Foundation, Estonia</i> | |
| A Cross-Country Comparison of 120 Effective Online Courses: What Works?..... | 338 |
| <i>Bart Rienties, Dirk Tempelaar, Maastricht University; Wolter Kaper, Leendert van Gastel, Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Katrien Struyven, K.U.Leuven, Belgium; Magdalena Jasińska, Maria Curie Skłodowska University, Poland & Egle Virgailaite, Šiauliai University, Lithuania</i> | |
| Research to Practice, Pilot to Mainstream: The Media Zoo Approach..... | 341 |
| <i>Gilly Salmon, Sandra Romenska, Gabi Witthaus, Ming Nie, Paul Rudman & Terese Bird, University of Leicester, UK</i> | |
| A Web 2.0 Approach to Personal Learning Environments: Helping Students Take Control of Their Learning..... | 343 |
| <i>Ricardo Torres Kompen, i2Cat / Citilab, Spain</i> | |

Various Themes and Special Formats

| | |
|--|------------|
| E-Learning in Tunisia: The Achievements..... | 345 |
| <i>Béehir Allouch, Virtual University of Tunis, Tunisia</i> | |
| Benchmarking New-Generation Issues in University E-Learning..... | 345 |
| <i>Paul Bacsich, Matic Media Ltd, UK</i> | |
| Higher Education and E-Learning in North Africa: From Constraints to Prospects..... | 349 |
| <i>Karim Ben Kahla, Institut Supérieur de Comptabilité et d'Administration des Entreprises, Tunisia</i> | |
| Developing Design Principles for Physical Learning Spaces with a Virtual Component..... | 350 |
| <i>Petra Fisser & Ellen van den Berg, University of Twente, Wim de Boer, Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) & Edmée Suasso, Teacher Education College, The Netherlands</i> | |
| Transition from School to Work: A Cooperative Programme for Vocational Orientation in Sport Stadiums..... | 352 |
| <i>Markus Kamann, gpdm & Michael Härtel, BIBB: Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany</i> | |
| E-Learning Here We Come – NCEL’s Efforts and Achievements..... | 355 |
| <i>Shatha Makki, Maha Alsofyani & Manal Aldahash, The National Center for e-Learning and Distance Learning, Ministry of Higher Education, Saudi Arabia</i> | |
| The Jordan Education Initiative – Impact Assessment..... | 357 |
| <i>Mustafa Nasereddin, Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Organization (TAGorg), Jordan</i> | |
| Playing for Success: Education Centres at Sports Venues – E-Learning Extending Opportunity?..... | 360 |
| <i>Jo Robson, Rex Hall Associates/Playing for Success, UK</i> | |
| Open Source Tools for Innovative Learning..... | 362 |
| <i>Russell Stannard, University of Westminster, UK</i> | |
| Arsenal Double Club Languages Presentation..... | 364 |
| <i>Julie Stoker, Arsenal FC Double Club, UK</i> | |
| The Challenges of Implementing E-Learning into Schools at the Ministry of Education – Sultanate of Oman..... | 365 |
| <i>Khalid Sulaiman Al-Siyabi & Maimoona Humeid Al-Abri, Ministry of Education, Oman</i> | |
| Video Annotation 2.0: Fostering Reflective Learning in Sports Coach Education..... | 366 |
| <i>Frank Vohle, University of Augsburg, Institute of Media and Educational Technology, Germany</i> | |

Security and Defence Learning

Defenceless Defence Against Corporate Breaches.....370

Jay Bavisi, EC-Council, USA

**A Virtual Course for a Real Police Force: Key Issues
to Be Followed for Success in a Distance Education Experience.....370**

Bernadete Moreira Pessanha Cordeiro, Ministry of Justice, Brazil

Scenario-Based Training: Storyline Investment Pays Off.....373

Arthur Rabjohn, International Association of Emergency Managers, UK

Tropical Disease Management with E-Learning.....373

Angelika Schäfer, INMEDEA GmbH, Germany

POLIZEI-ONLINE – Virtual Police Force Training (Serious Games).....375

Uwe Seidel, Ministry of the Interior Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany

INTERPOL – Training and Innovative Technology.....376

Dale Sheehan, INTERPOL, France

Plenary Sessions

Practice Makes Perfect! Bringing Experiential Learning to Life

David James Clarke IV, Toolwire, Inc., USA & Charles Jennings, Duntroon Associates Ltd.,
UK

Introduction

The profound changes created by the Internet over the past 20 years have affected 21st Century knowledge workers more than any other group. The ability of individuals to access massive amounts of information on seemingly every subject presents both benefits and challenges to the learner. Simply put, it means that knowledge is no longer power. *Access* to knowledge – and turning that knowledge into action and decisions – has become the new power.

In order to succeed in this “brave new world” of information, today’s students and leaning institutions, be they universities or corporate training departments, must broaden their traditional learning methods to embrace new performance-centric skills. Today’s workforce requires agile minds that can locate and master skill sets or the knowledge they need, not simply memorize learning content. We call it “MindFind” – the development of skills to find data, not the development of skills to store information.

Today’s “new frontier” requires fresh approaches to develop these *agile minds*. Among these approaches is “experiential learning,” hands-on personalized practice with live Internet-based systems and scenario-based virtual worlds. These remote laboratory-based learning solutions can bridge the gap between education and experience in such fast-growing fields as IT, health-care technology and business consulting.

State-of-the-art experiential learning solutions enable students in classrooms and eLearning programs to gain the valuable real world experience they need, while providing institutions of higher learning and corporate training departments with an arsenal of valuable tools that extend their campuses and engage their students.

The New Frontier: Richness versus Reach

The rise of technology and the development of the Internet have changed everything. It has changed the way we communicate and interact, the way we transact our business, and the way we learn and develop to enhance our personal and professional lives. The constraints of time and distance and the trade-off between *richness* and *reach* have all been broken.

Philip Evans and Thomas Wurster described a pre-telecommunications world where there was always a trade-off between the ability to provide rich experiences and to reach large numbers at lower cost. Equally in education, the rise of the Internet as a rich connectivity conduit has broken the traditional Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge) model: where students needed to attend top-flight bricks-and-mortar universities to have the richest experiences and learn from the top academics.

Technology has played a vital part in this change. The diagram below illustrates the changes that have occurred. The barrier to rich learning experiences has been broken, taking with it the unique selling point of classroom or face-to-face education. Now, students can achieve all the richness of a world famous professor without having to travel to London or Boston.

Learning: Living It Forwards, Understanding It Backwards

Gilly Salmon, University of Leicester with Aaron Porter, Vice-President of the National Union of Students, UK

Let's set a vision during Educa 2009- a marker on the horizon and our pathways towards it – as we enter the 2nd decade of the 21st Century already.

In the complex and messy knowledge world of the early 21st Century, we have opportunities that no other educators have had before us. . Learning has become research and research is learning. Formal and informal learning are in a tangled web.

Despite the huge and rapid changes in education, learners are seldom active in shaping the future for learning and remain largely non-influential in changing the educational process. There are voids in our understanding of the way learners may wish to engage with new technologies for learning and this gap leaves room for stereotypical views, or those based on past experience rather than fresh insights. Examples include that the 'net generation' already knows how to learn through digital media, or that experienced teaching staff cannot embrace teaching with technologies. These are both generalisations and are just NOT TRUE!

The precise nature(s) of learning, teaching, assessment and knowledge construction through and with new technologies cannot be 'predicted', but each of us has a role in the construction of what futures do become available through designing and delivering learning, and in sharing experiences of successes *and* failures. We need to contemplate many possible futures, engage in dialogue and undertake evaluation with different stakeholders about choices available to us.

Some futurists make a distinction between trends and emerging issues; within the exploration, it is important to be aware of issues that emerge that could *not* have been easily predicated. Trends have their limitations since there are so many different forces acting on our society, including its technology and the varying ability of our policy makers and practitioners to respond. In 2009, the UK policy and funding arenas are dominated by attention to the learners' experiences in UK higher education, and to the changing nature of learners as they arrive at university more technologically savvy, more linked in. The power of individual choice has never been greater. There is a feeling that if we look back too much that we risk inventing the future based on outdated modes of teaching and learning. So the role of creativity, imagination and viable innovation in engaging with the technologies and pedagogies of the future has become very important.

How challenging it is to get a usable picture of our present...and even harder to get a vision of our future! From my perspective, there has been a huge amount of diagnosis so far, but not a lot of treatment! Some industries looked very very safe – perhaps the UK motorcycle industry in the 20th Century or the financial services industry in the first decade of the 21st Century! Could education and training in Europe go the same way by the end of 21st Century? My parents' generation stopped polio and TB and brought in new health and life goals as a consequence – educators now need to usher in a new world of learning

We need more ways of creating strategies and plans for growth and development that meet the challenges that social, economic and technological changes in society bring to education. We need to explore technologies that engage young learners but are currently peripheral in education. (We know a fair bit about student needs- but rather less about their future expectations and likely deployment for learning)

What will it be like to live with constant pervasive and ambient online networking, mobile devices embedded in everything and a massive summer garden of digital abundance?. What is the future

Next Generation Learning Strategies

Portuguese as a Foreign Language Teaching: A Blended-Learning Practical Case

Carla Sofia dos Santos Amado, Universität des Saarlandes, Germany

Abstract

The use one can make of the educational technologies within the frame of the teaching of Portuguese as a foreign language at a university level is still an area to explore and, therefore, broaches the issue of this PhD Project in progress at the University of Saarbrücken – Germany. The Portuguese courses range from Breakthrough (A1) to Waystage (A2) levels, thus representing a genuine case study to enrich the Portuguese Studies' Curriculum abroad by means of the Digital, i. e., contribute to better Portuguese linguistic competence and, hereby, develop materials and methods that can be more effective for the language acquisition process. It aims at verifying if all those tools used in a *blended-learning* context enforce and facilitate the learning in an inspiring way, and as such helps to measure the German students' most common difficulties while learning Portuguese.

Keywords: PLE, Portuguese as a Foreign Language in Germany, *blended-learning*, foreign languages didactics, errors and mistakes in the process of language learning strategies

Introduction

In the light of the arguments put forward in favor of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2001) and of the theme open to question within the scope of this Conference, the teaching process of a foreign language can and should be enriched by learning environments that stir it up using the active production of knowledge. In the instructions of the above-mentioned European Framework one can read:

“They [the teachers] are expected to monitor the progress of pupils/students and find ways of recognizing, analyzing and overcoming their learning problems...”
(2001: 141)

and this is the approach of this current PhD Project about *blended-learning* and teaching Portuguese as a Foreign Language at university level (under mentioned as PLE) – with the aim to identify, analyze, organize and interpret the most common errors and mistakes of German students using pedagogic and didactic materials created online. The intention is to prove that all Web 2.0 tools, used in a *blended-learning* context intensify and make the learning process easier.

However, the use one can make of the didactic technologies on a PLE teaching level is still an area with many issues to explore. It was from that lacuna that grew the idea of this Project being developed at the University of Saarbrücken – Germany, for the Portuguese Language courses from Breakthrough (A1) to Waystage (A2), thus setting up a case study to enrich the Curriculum of the Portuguese Studies abroad by means of the Digital. The main objectives are the contribution to better Portuguese linguistic competence of the German, based on the development of materials and methods that prove to be effective on the language acquisition process.

From Pedagogical Objectives to Video Game Design

Valérie Boudier, KTM Advance, France

Key Words

Serious Game , Business Game, Scenario, Game Play, Knowledge Management, Knowledge Base, Game Design, Cognitive Model

Introduction

“Serious Games” are training programs that require for their developments very contrasted professional protagonists : when the professionals of education express their needs in terms of “pedagogical objectives” “cognitive abilities” and “storyboards”, the game designers think in terms of “pitches”, “huds” “game play loops” and “triggers”...

This paper focuses on this cultural “gap” : filling it up requires a knowledge management approach as an intermediary stage. This approach conducts to the elaboration of a cognitive model that will provide the essential clues for the game designer to build up his game project.

The knowledge management approach is presented on the basis of a world wild program developed for BNP Paribas bank, and on which we could test the reliability of it.

Knowledge Management Approach

The Starbank project is an induction program which objective is to hand down to new hired a corporate understanding of the bank, including :

- The discovery of its various activities and services, and its organization’s guideline,
- The understanding of the mechanisms underlying banking activity development
- The understanding of the bank’s role as a financial go-between

The first task that KTM-advance undertook, before any attempt of Serious Game consideration, was to perform a knowledge management approach in order to identify, analyze and characterize the “available knowledge content” according to the “pedagogical objective” of the training project.

Knowledge Identification

The knowledge management approach is the first stage of the analysis: it identifies, analyzes and characterizes the available knowledge content according to the pedagogical objective of the training project.

It then clarifies these objectives and organizes the nature of the content to be displayed, on a cognitive point of view

Concept based knowledge

Concept based knowledge is a conscious recollection of factual information and general knowledge thought to be independent of context and personal relevance.

On specific project, declarative knowledge can also be considered as “concept based knowledge” since they are codified and accepted statements : information like “the strategic position of BNP Paribas” or its “Core Values” (Commitment, Creativity, Responsiveness, Ambition) are considered as concept based knowledge.

Procedural knowledge

Procedural knowledge is the expression of competencies that take part of a process : as an example, mechanics related to financial activities such as balances between investments, loans, cred-

Anyplace & Anytime Learning Using Mobile Technologies: The Use of E-Book Readers in Undergraduate Medical Education

Peter de Jong, Leiden University Medical Center, The Netherlands

Reading text from a computer screen for a longer period of time is not very pleasant. The technology behind a CRT tube or a TFT screen emits lights and generates a flickering image, which causes effects like exhausted eyes and headache. To solve these problems an innovative screen technology called E-ink has been developed. With this technique, the displayed text does not flicker anymore and the screen looks very much like real paper. Modern devices like E-book readers use these new types of screens. With these mobile devices, the user can display and read digital documents in PDF format. Initially E-book readers were only available as test devices and quite expensive. However, two years ago E-book readers became widely available in the consumer electronics segment. As a result, student and teachers can now easily access these new devices and we expect them to do so more and more, based on the immense increase of use of personal mobile devices in education.



In a pilot study, we investigated the usefulness of this new technique for medical education, as a replacement of books and syllabi.¹ From October until December 2008, we provided 15 medical students at Leiden Medical School with an E-book reader of the latest iRex model DR1000-S. For this study, we delivered all necessary text files on the reader, ranging from syllabi to selected chapters from commercial study books used in our curriculum. For obtaining the latter documents, we collaborated with several publishing companies. We invited the students to use the device during all kind of different learning scenarios such as lectures, small group meetings, collaboration with other students on assignments and independent study at home. At the end of the study, we asked the students by questionnaire to report their experiences. We did include questions about the technical performance of the device but also questions about the usefulness of the device in the educational process. We also invited them for a focus group meeting to evaluate the pilot.

We found that students encountered several small technical issues in using the E-book reader, but in general they managed quite well to work with the device. They were very positive about

Creating, Reusing and Managing Content

The BERLiN Experience: Exploring Institutional Attitudes to Open Learning

Andy Beggan & John Horton, The University of Nottingham, UK

BERLiN (Building Exchanges for Research and Learning in Nottingham), is a 12-month JISC-funded project to enhance and expand Nottingham's existing Open Educational Repository (OER), u-Now¹, one of the first OERs in the UK and a member of the international Open Courseware Consortium. The aim of the project is to progress the vision of sustainable OERs by making 360 credits of existing learning resources freely available online. The Management Board at the University has a longstanding commitment to open access and we aim to build significantly on both this and on the specific outcomes and experiences from BERLiN. The development of an OER and the wide distribution of open learning resources is a key strategic driver for University, in particular supporting the University's international strategy ('knowledge without borders') and fostering interaction with prospective and existing students in order to complement their studies, as well as building connections with other HEIs nationally and internationally.



Cross Cultural Learning and Teaching in Vocational Education and Training

Rupert Beinhauer & Thomas Schmalzer, FH Joanneum, Austria

Abstract:

Education and training have always been two of the most important factors in personal and societal development. Today and in the future it will be the international dimension of such activities that contributes added value in the building of European communities that span borders and will be instrumental in solving the global problems of tomorrow.

Due to the increasing work- and learning related mobility expected within the next years in the EU countries a rising need for improved qualifications which fulfil the requirements of a fast moving economy exists. VET institution and universities in the EU and worldwide are facing diverse types of learners with equally diverse ways of perceiving, processing and presenting information (learning styles). The learning behaviour of people with different cultural background seems to differ between countries and the process of how to deliver necessary qualifications must therefore take into account cultural diversity and through that adapt teaching behaviour accordingly. The Leonardo da Vinci project CCLVET aims at generating insights into these learning styles.

Main activities include profound surveys and focus interviews as well as the creation of teaching material including its testing in train the trainer workshops. The results will be summarized in an e-manual for teachers supporting their skills in teaching trainees coming from various countries. Successful approaches to teaching will be investigated and put into the existing cross-cultural learning styles context. Hands-on material will be produced to advice teachers on how to teach in culturally diverse classroom(s).

Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected. The quantitative part focussing on VET trainees and students includes surveys whose items based on accepted survey instruments such as the Approaches to Study Skills inventories for Students (ASSIST). Within a qualitative part “focus groups” deepen the information gained from the qualitative part via semi-structured, oral group interviews of VET trainers. These sources of information are evaluated by the consortium and recommendations as well as training materials and methods are developed to suit the actual approaches to learning of persons with different cultural backgrounds.

The current paper will provide an overview of the research methods used for gathering basic information on cross cultural differences in teaching and learning styles in Vocational Educational training gathered in nine European countries.

The project is funded with support from the European Commission. This paper reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

The multicultural classroom and approaches to learning and studying.

VET institution and universities in the EU and worldwide are facing more and more diverse groups of learners with equally diverse ways of perceiving, processing and presenting information. The learning behaviour of people with different cultural background seems to differ and the process of how to deliver necessary qualifications should therefore take into account cultural diversity and adapt teaching behaviour accordingly. The Leonardo da Vinci project CCLVET aims at generating insights into these differences.

For the last 40-50 years different researchers have studied the learning styles of individuals, leading to an enormous amount of material available. There is a strong appeal in the idea that teachers and curriculum designers should pay closer attention to students learning styles and

Learning as a Social Activity

A Study into Teaching and Learning in a Virtual World

Trevor Barker, University of Hertfordshire, UK

Abstract

There has been much interest at our university in working and learning in virtual worlds such as Second Life. The department of Computer Science has established a virtual campus within this system where a fairly broad range of learning and teaching activities take place. These include presenting textual, audio and video learning and teaching materials, delivering synchronous and asynchronous virtual lectures, providing simulations and group working areas (Barker et al., 2008). Recently there has been a great deal of controversy over such initiatives, for example at my own university lecturers are divided as to the efficacy of such an approach. Some see the initiative as an interesting addition to the range of teaching and learning strategies available, likely to motivate learners. Others see it as a trivial attempt to jump on the latest band wagon, with little pedagogical benefit or justification. At recent conferences a great deal of the focus of current research in this area has been on the social rather than the pedagogical benefits of such spaces (Ramondt, 2008).

In order to understand how best to make use of such virtual learning spaces, a series of empirical studies were undertaken. To this end, a group of 80 final year B.Sc. Computer Science students used the Second Life virtual environment in order to support their practical project group work. Groups of four learners used the university Second Life campus to hold meetings and to manage their software development projects. Students produced reflective video reports on their experiences of using the virtual learning environment. In this presentation I will report on how the group working areas were established and used by the learners, the types of activities that took place and the effectiveness of the approach in this context. Also discussed are the potential dangers inherent in this initiative related to individual differences and the cognitive burden imposed on learners.

Keywords:

Second Life, Virtual Learning Environments, Group Working

Introduction

In recent years, advances in technology and lower hardware prices have made it possible for three-dimensional (3D) virtual environments (VEs) and particularly computer desktop VEs to become popular (Li & Ting 2000, Mills & Noyes 1999), and be used for commercial, social and educational applications. These technologies and their applications are used in a variety of areas such as entertainment, engineering, architecture, medicine and science. A fairly recent development has been the use of the Second Life virtual environment (<http://secondlife.com/>) in education and training. Since its establishment in 2003, many hundreds of organisations have become involved in setting up educational and training applications using this system. For example, the University of Hertfordshire has recently established an online campus within the department of Computer Science which is currently being used in order to support the learning of campus based students. In consideration of the investment necessary in terms of development cost and staff

The New Learning Strategy of the Vehicle Inspection Organisation in the Netherlands

Pieter de Vries, TU Delft & Johan Schellingerhout, RDW – Vehicle Technology Division, The Netherlands

Introduction

The RDW is the home of the vehicle inspection organization in the Netherlands. This operational business unit has been confronted with external and internal developments that put a lot of pressure on the existing training organization. External developments include the increased motor vehicle usage, the changes and greater uniformity in regulations on a European and an international scale, fast technological changes and improved service quality demands from clients. Together with the rising average age of the employees and the related loss of knowledge and experience it became inevitable to acquire more inspection personnel and to train the employees better and faster. It was evident that a profound change in the learning strategy was needed to cope with these fast changing learning demands.

The present training situation

At the heart of the new strategy was the need to make training and learning more efficient, effective and attractive to be able to cope with the challenges, while assuring a high quality standard. The current training situation was mainly classroom oriented with retraining and examinations and additional working practices that demanded a large teacher capacity. This training was very much place and time restricted and dominated by the use of traditional learning activities, that did not fit the needed workplace related learning crucial for the changing working practices. In fact the readiness for new employees to start working was very much delayed by this traditional training approach

The new learning strategy

The new learning strategy focused on a blended learning solution with a combination of e-learning, practical assignments, coaching and training. At the heart of the innovation is a Learning Content Management System for the storage of content, monitoring of activities, progress and results, a course planning system, exams, user definition, allocation of coaches and module maintenance. The employees have access to the system via an electronic learning environment for user identification, communication, progress and results, exams and other organizational issues. This includes the development of a personal training plan for which the participant decides about the time, place and pace of the learning activities. A coach guides the employees and monitors how the practical assignments are carried out.

Essential for the newly developed content are the image based and the practical and visual orientation of the e-learning materials. Theory and practice are combined in such a way that the student can choose either way to acquire the needed knowledge. There is video, visual instruction material, visualizations, simulations, different types of coursework and the practical assignments linked to the e-learning content. Exams are done in clusters, via e-learning and in practice under the supervision of a coach and an external examiner. In this way the employees can do initial training, retraining and examinations as well as additional training and exams at the time of need and at a higher pace than possible in the traditional training system.

The focus in the first phase of the project is on compliance courses like an introductory course to RDW, a course about the Speed Limiter and one about Identification. Also an attempt is being made for a course on Integrity to use e-learning in a blended mode to develop social skills. The focus is though on the development of task related courses that includes the theory, skills and practical assignments to acquire the needed certificates for car inspection.

Creating E-Learning Modules for 5 Continents: Issues, Constraints and Best Practices

Estefania Belleudi & Morgan Riou, WhP International SAS, France

Introduction

In light of current world market trends (globalization, purchasing-merging-acquisition, delocalization...) major international groups have to deal with increasing numbers of staff based in different continents.

Therefore, training managers have more and more challenges to contend with: Adhering to tight deadlines for the development of new training courses which are tailored to the needs of each subsidiary and which are deployed globally and efficiently, whilst taking into consideration budget restrictions and local characteristics.

Thanks to the application of new information and communication technologies, distance learning knows no boundaries and is quick, efficient, flexible and economic. Today, companies are opting for eLearning, a solution which is complementing and gradually substituting traditional classroom courses.

These training courses, designed to be deployed to different subsidiaries of a company, are characteristic of the following: the image of the company depends mainly on the quality of the pedagogical content and technical methods used.

The stakes involved are therefore huge and the recognition of all aspects of deploying training materials abroad should be mastered in order to guarantee all learners can obtain a training course to suit their needs and boost the reputation of the company abroad.

How can we increase the value of this investment in international training from the outset? What are the obstacles which can hinder the creation of new pedagogical material? Can we easily "localize" an eLearning module which contains animations, quizzes, voice recordings and video sequences? How can we define the adaptation level which is appropriate for each country? What is the role of multilingual terminology management in the context of eLearning deployment? Which mistakes should be avoided in order to maintain the forecasted budget and deadlines?

Issues, Constraints and Best Practices

During her presentation, Estefania Belleudi, Operations Manager at WHP International will put forward good practices to facilitate the localization of training programs.

Emphasis will be focused on the importance of taking into account, at the earliest stage possible, the constraints of a training course to be deployed to five continents. The more participants are aware of localization issues, the more specific constraints are detected at an early stage in the workflow (from the beginning of the creation of the teaching material and program development), making it easier to deploy eLearning training materials internationally.

The main obstacles will be discussed in depth whether they be technological (use of Flash, XML, MP3, HTML files...), cultural (people's names, places...) or linguistic (terminology to be applied, definition of written and oral registers) in order to meet quality, linguistic, technical and cultural expectations. Here are a couple of examples which illustrate obstacles which are frequently encountered and which could be avoided:

eLearning and new technologies: New technologies play a major role in eLearning programs: LCMS platform, audio sequences, Flash files, interactive quizzes, graphic environment similar to that of video games, video dubbing etc. These different technologies can be rather complex to localize. It is therefore important to identify, during the design process the positive as well negative aspects of all the technologies used. In order to limit localization costs, it is necessary to avoid using multiple voice talents for dialogs and the voice-over method is recommended rather than audio dubbing.