MMII Interview Transcription

Interviewer: Which educational program do you study and what year are you in?

Interviewee: Yes, the master program in computer and systems science, this is my first year, well I am expected to be finished next year, so yes…

Interviewer: Do you do drawings (or mind maps) using digital tools?   
Interviewee: Ehm…well not so much but, I think it is most when I have modelling courses, where I guess we have to do models and so, but well in other courses we are not required to do models so I don’t do it actually. I am only used to do them as models, when we are required to do it.

Interviewer: How do you concretely do it, can you describe the procedure?   
Interviewee: Ehm…well I try to read the text before I do the model and well I try to… yes I try to analyse, to think, I actually take much time when I analyse things. And then I basically do the model. But it is pretty much analysing and then do it.  
Interviewer: Why do you do drawings (or mind maps) using those digital tools?   
Interviewee: Ehm…why do I do the drawings? I guess to understand better the things I’m reading to, because when you do drawings or models it gives you better framework, or what is the name? ehm.. it like a better overview of how you understand the text that you are reading, yes something like that.

Interviewer: How does that help your learning?   
Interviewee: It helps me to understand better what I am learning.

Interviewer: Which digital tools do you use?

Interviewee: Yes, well.. it is pretty much different software to do models in, well I also do them by hand, and by other software like Asta and well in other modelling software on other occasions and also in Google Drive. I don’t remember the name, but yes, software in which you can do models. It differs a bit from doing it by hand.

Interviewer: Do you take notes using digital tools during seminars or lectures?  
Interviewee: Yes I do, most in lectures because… I also do in seminars sometimes. Yes, because if there is something important that the teacher has said, and that is not maybe specified in the documents, the pdf-documents, or in the presentation, and yes I do it because there is maybe is something important I will need to know. But I actually don’t, I don’t take notes very often because sometimes I need to listen to the teacher. For me it is sometimes hard for me to do the taking notes and at the same time listen to the teacher because maybe I while taking notes I miss something important the teacher has said. So for me it is just a little difficult to the two things simultaneously sometimes, so I do not very often use to take notes but I do it, but not so often.

Interviewer: When you do it, how do you concretely do it, can you describe the procedure?   
Interviewee: Well, I attend to the lecture or the seminar, and I often or I also do it by hand. I write digitally, I use Microsoft Word to take notes and also I do pdf and use the notation function in the pdf-reader-program. So with the notation tool I can also do it, and I also do it my hand.   
Interviewer: Why do you do take notes that way? How does that help your learning?   
Interviewee: Ehm…yes it helps me to remember things that has been said in the lecture and there may be something important that the teacher has said that may be is not in the lecture slides. So it is actually good. Well, sometimes when people do take notes very often so it may be enough to for someone like me, maybe they don’t need to read the book later or so. I actually also take notes when I’m looking at the recorded materials because then it is better because then you can pause the video and then take notes and yes, that is also good actually. I think it is better actually, taking notes when you are looking at recorded lectures instead of being at the lecture – taking notes when you are at the lecture.   
Interviewer: Which digital tools do you use?

Interviewee: I use Microsoft Word and Chrome Reader for the pdf-documents. And I also do it by hand.

Interviewer: Do you write text using digital tools in your studies?

Interviewee: Yes, I do. Yes, we are very used to write texts when we do our assignments. Yes when we do our assignments.   
Interviewer: Do you use it for perhaps to summarize literature/lecture material, you also mentioned assignments, or for other purposes?  
Interviewee: I also use it to summarize what has been said, maybe on the lecture, to summarize lecture material. It is good to think about it and summarize it. And yes also for the assignments, I use it.

Interviewer: How do you concretely do it, can you describe the procedure?  
Interviewee: Yes, I you want to summarize lecture material, or lectures, you look at the recorded video, the recorded lecture. You pause the video and you write text to write down what you understood from the lecture and other things that was not on the document or slide.   
Interviewer: Why do you do write texts that way?  
Interviewee: Ehm…yes because it is easier, you don’t…ehm… if you look at the videos you can pause the video and you write, you get an understanding of what you understand. So it is easier. And then well, if I look at books, actually, I’m not used to do it, when I read books. But is also a good idea, actually. I should think about it actually. I think that there are many friends that do it.

Interviewer: How does that help your learning?   
Interviewee: Ehm, well if… when there is something that you don’t…that already the teacher has said and it is not specified in the presentation slides so it is good to write it down. When you also summarize the text from a book or from whatever text, you only get basic ideas. And if you summarize and reading to get the basic ideas, so you don’t need to read the same text again. Because you can take the summary instead of reading the long text, again and again.

Interviewer: Which digital tools do you use?  
Interviewee: Microsoft Word and I also use Google Docs. I think I mostly use Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint and yes, Google Docs, like Google Documents and Google Presentations.

Interviewer: Do you audio record yourself or others for learning purposes?  
Interviewee: No, I never do it.  
Interviewer: Alright then we skip the other small questions regarding audio recording.

Interviewer: Do you video record yourself or others for learning purposes?

Interviewee: Eh, no I, no not even other people. No, not actually. I never do it.

Interviewer: Alright, do you take pictures for learning purposes? Perhaps of your own notes, or lecture slides, etc.

Interviewee: Yes, very seldom actually, I don’t remember the last time I did it but…well if we say that maybe the lecture is not going to be recorded or that the document that the teacher is using when he is presenting the lecture, he doesn’t maybe send it to us so it is actually better to take a picture for example. And, yes, also when we work in groups and we are like ehh…when we are doing drawings on the whiteboard. When we are doing drawings on the whiteboard it is good to take a picture to remember it, how we did and so that we can also do the drawing in a computer.   
Interviewer: How do you concretely do it, can you describe the procedure?  
Interviewee: I think it is not so much to say…I take a picture.   
Interviewer: How do images/pictures help your learning?  
Interviewee: Well if I have… I actually when there is something that I don’t know what it is for example if there is a difficult or it is not a very clear term used in the course and when I look at text I try to look at the meaning of that term but I still don’t understand it so I try to look at Google Images instead. And then maybe I can get a little better understanding of what that term means. For example, when the meaning of that term is not clear for me I look at images instead. And yes, I think terms or words and other things, if it is not enough for me to look at the meaning, the text meaning, written in text, I look at images.   
Interviewer: Which digital tools do you use?

Interviewee: For taking pictures I use my phone and sometimes I use my computer to create screen shots.

Interviewer: In general, what digital learning practices do you do, except of the already mentioned, in order to learn and increase your understanding of course material? How do you use digital tools when you prepare for exams (both ordinary and written home exams)?

Interviewee: I don’t use any other practice than those specified before. When preparing for an ordinary exam, I first source I use the lecture slides, and the second should be the recordings, the recorded lectures from the course and I might also read the literature book. And well, depending on how hard the exam is I try to take the required amount of days for me to study. And I also, actually, look at the quizzes, if there are some, online for the course I also do the quizzes. It is also practicing. If it is a home exam, I actually don’t prepare so much. Well I also, because sometimes when you have assignments you have already studied. I actually, don’t study so much before a home exam but if it is an ordinary exam I will have to prepare myself. And depending on how hard the course is I take more or less days to prepare.

Interviewer: How does that help your learning?  
Interviewee: Yes, it helps me to prepare for the exam. The sources works in different levels, first I look at one, then I try to look at the second one and the third one. And I actually, sometimes my second source is not the recorded lectures but also the book.  
Interviewer: Which digital tools do you use?  
Interviewee: The sites on which the recorded lectures and slides are. Play I guess. And yes, I also use Microsoft Word and I use pdf as well. I think it is basically those.

Interviewer: In general, could you describe how you go about when you have to learn before an exam with a particular focus on the use of digital tools/technology?  
Interviewee: The important thing is that you have to have enough time to study depending on the difficulty of the course. Actually, I try to not only study to get a minimal grade, I don’t want an E, I want to a higher grade of course and so the average I think is five days before the exam and then I only focus on that and nothing else and yes I read the lectures, and I also use all the exam examples, it is also another primary resource…all the exams. I look at them and I try to answer the questions from the exams and look through the slides and the book. So I do that I try to use maybe four or three old exams and try to do them all, sometimes it can even be five old exams, depending on how many they provide. I read the given answers of all the old exams and I try to remember them and then finally of there is something that, we can say a question that is not on the old exam, I mean if there is something that is in the course material but the question doesn’t relate to that part of the course so I also try to study that part that has not been specified in the questions. That is actually all, so first look at the book and slides, then answer the old exams, read my answers and then finally read all the complimenting texts of all the other terms that have been specified, but have not been mentioned in the old exams.

Interviewer: Do you use pre-existing video recordings when you attempt to learn something?

Interviewee: Yes I do. I use the recorded lecture videos.

Interviewer: How do you concretely use videos in your learning, can you describe the procedure? such as repetition, fast-forwarding, selective viewing, etc.

Interviewee: Yes I try to look at them when I am home or as well as I am in school also, but I want to be alone in silence so I can concentrate better and also take notes of what I understood from the recorded lectures. I look at the videos more before an exam, sometimes to prepare before my exam and when there is a lecture that I didn’t attend I also look at it, the recorded videos of it. I watch it a lot for repetition, not repeating the whole video but if there is something that I missed or simple did not understand maybe the teacher speaks to fast so I go backwards, like one minute or two minutes or maybe seconds, to hear what he said. So I do repetitions, but small repetitions. Fast-forwarding, depends on the relevance. I think the teacher sometimes talks, there has happened that the teacher sometimes talks about thing that are not realted to the course during the recordings so I skip that part. So I forward and skip that part. Selected viewing? Yes if there is only something that I didn’t understand, maybe from when I was on the lecture, I only go to that part to reflect and think better because when you are alone and there is quiet and peaceful you have more time you can think better. And get better reflections.   
Interviewer: What kind of videos do you use (YouTube, recorded lectures, etc.)?   
Interviewee: Very seldom I use YouTube videos, but if the teacher decides to not record the lecture it could be useful to look at YouTube videos. I think when I have programing courses I look at YouTube videos. To have more overview and to understand better what other people, how other people describe…looking for other perspectives. It could be useful seeing how other people do things. But in recent months I have not watched YouTube videos, I think it depends on the difficulty on the course. If you think maybe the teacher is not good at describing things or if the lecture is not recorded I take the YouTube option. And of course, I use the recorded lectures also.  
Interviewer: Why do you look at videos in your studies and how does it help your learning?

Interviewee: It helps me to understand better, the lecture material than slides and pdf when the teacher talks about many things that are maybe not mentioned. Because sometimes when you have lecture slides it is not so easy to grasp, to understand, if there is too little text, too short descriptions so you might want to have a better overview. So yes, it helps me to learn, to understand better…the course lectures…it helps me to understand better. I gain more knowledge actually.

Interviewer: Do you use pre-existing images when you attempt to learn something (for instance Google pictures)?

Interviewee: Yes sometimes, but not often. If I don’t understand some term or other words or important terms I look at images to see if I can grasp them, and understand this term.  
Interviewer: How do you concretely use images in your learning, can you describe the procedure?

Interviewee: The procedure is just to go to Google and search for images, it is not that hard it is just that. I search for them I Google and I try to see the parts that describe the concept and try to see what it describes and I try to understand it. But I only use pictures to better understand a term. If the text is not enough, if the meaning is not enough.  
Interviewer: What kind of images do you use?

Interviewee: Descriptive images, also images that are not simple but are not either too complex. Models I also use models, but sometimes models could be very big so that it is difficult to get and over view. Then it is easier to look at other pictures that are simpler.   
Interviewer: Why do you look at images when you attempt to learn something?  
To get a better understanding, text descriptions could sometimes be difficult to understand and to grasp the whole picture, then a picture or images may be better to get better understanding. When you get an understanding from the images it will be easier to understand the text descriptions.   
Interviewer: How does that help your learning?  
Interviewee: It helps me understand a term better.

Interviewer: Do you use pre-existing audio recordings in your studies?   
Interviewee: Not audio recording, but video recordings. Sometimes if we don’t have video recording from the lectures, then I look for the audio recordings. But it is not my first priority I think it is better to look at video recordings because then you can also have the slides, showing the slides that the teacher is explaining. But in general I don’t use audio recordings, only as a last shot if there are no video recordings available and only audio recordings are available.   
Interviewer: How do you concretely use audios in your studies, can you describe the procedure? What kind of videos do you use (YouTube, recorded lectures, etc.)?

Interviewee: I use YouTube and recorded lectures from Play, and I think only them actually.   
Interviewer: Why do you listen to audio recordings, when you do, when you attempt to learn something and how does that help your learning??

Interviewee: I think the purpose is the same as with the video recordings, if there is something that I didn’t understand, something that I can understand by reading the text I listen through the recordings to see what the teacher said, how he explained, and then you get a better overview of things.

Interviewer: Do you use digital text and information in your studies?

Interviewee: Yes of course I do. Most people do.   
Interviewer: How do you concretely use digital texts in your studies, can you describe the procedure?

Interviewee: Yes, I look at…actually I use the digital books, I prefer the digital books to paper books. I like digital books better because you can have it on your computer so you don’t need to have too carry it with you if you go to school, not having to bring the physical thing with you, and also because most of the digital books they come in pdf-format and have an index and you can also go to… they are indexed into chapters and sub-chapters so when you want to look something up depending on what chapter it is you only have to click at that in the index. It is very good with indexing. It is easier to find things, the pages you are looking for. So I use digital books but I also use other digital texts. I look at articles and other educative material that I can use for my assignments. Sometimes I use Wikipedia, most people use Wikipedia, even if it is considered to be not very reliable source but it still helps but I don’t look at Wikipedia so much but it comes up as the first result when you search in Google. Because when you have a term, first comes Wikipedia that define that term but I also look at articles, research articles, they can also have their way of explaining.   
Interviewer: What kind of digital texts do you use?

So research articles, digital books, and the lecture slides and also other digital texts are what I use.   
Interviewer: Why do you use digital texts when you attempt to learn something?

Interviewee: Yes because I think I don’t prefer to look at videos because you have to look at the whole video, it takes time to watch it and find the things that you didn’t understand. But if you have texts it is actually faster. Digital books are actually the first resources for any student to learn something. It is easier. Many would prefer to look at text first and then the video, the recorded lecture for example.

Interviewer: How does that help your learning?  
Interviewee: It helps me a lot, it is my primary resource and I use it the most. It is like if you have a written description of what you want to learn and if you also want to look at some word maybe you can use search when you use ctrl-f when you want to look for some word. And you can find that word in the text. So it is useful in the way that you can search for words and you can also find their meaning.