Extending the learning potential of the LMS

Key Words

Technology Enhanced Learning, gamification, CHAT, feedback, feedforward, assessment

Abstract

This presentation describes a recent Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) grant and discusses how the resulting project was designed to foster ALL participation more broadly within the curriculum. The TEL project was funded to "extend the capabilities of the university's LMS as an assessment-for-learning tool by delivering developmentally targeted feedback to students in response to their individual assessment results." The project uses gamification principles to release ALL resources as 'assessment feedback' once a trigger point is activated. Trigger points are linked to students' assessment results, such as rubric scores on select criteria or quiz results (Griffen, 2014). This allows for different sets of resources to be delivered in to the unit spaces of each student. The TEL project drew on serious game theory (Gee, 2003) and the ALL literature (Briguglio & Watson, 2014; Hallett, 2012; Wingate, 2007) in its development. Attention was paid to contextualising within course content, creating resources that are relevant to students, and avoiding any stigmatising of development as deficiency. The resources took a transition-focused, whole of curriculum approach (Kift, 2009) and included 'feed-forward' activities (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick,2006) to assist students in their next assignment, exemplars drawn from unit readings and student work, contacts to library and academic support, and importantly acknowledging the work of higher achieving students by promoting development opportunities, such as the university's student peer mentor programs. The utilisation of LMS capabilities to deliver personalised learning pathways within the online unit space was explored as one way for ALL lecturers to work with large cohort groups in the highly embedded and contextualised way that our work unit has traditionally engaged with smaller groups and individuals. The TEL project developed from the experiences of team-teaching and from Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) research into teacher-learning . The TEL project's development and evaluation draws on CHAT (Engestrom, 1987) as a way to navigate and understand 'literacy work' by examining its positioning within curriculum activity. Consequently, an aim of the project has been to explore opportunity for teacher professional development around ALL that is meaningfully situated within existing activity. The TEL project was designed to facilitate cross-disciplinary dialogue, and the sharing of content and pedagogies, between ALL and discipline lecturers (Edwards, 2007). Thus, the curriculum items that contained embedded trigger points, such as rubrics and assessment tasks, were co-drafted with the ALL lecturer, and developmental resources were highly embedded within the unit context. An important evaluation of the TEL project has been to consider the impact of embedding ALL resources on discipline and ALL teachers' understandings of ALL development.

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