
Editorial

Lorna Uden

Faculty of Computing Engineering and Sciences,
School of Computing,
Staffordshire University,
College Road, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire ST4 2DE, UK
Email: L.uden@staffs.ac.uk

Welcome to V12N2 of *IJLT*. There are four papers in this issue. They cover different aspects of learning technology. The first paper is, ‘Assisting activity analysis in professional learning environments. Case study: activity analysis of trainees on nuclear power plant full-scale simulators’ by Karim Sehaba, Olivier Champalle and Alain Mille. In this paper, the authors address the issue of assisting observation and analysis of learners’ behaviour in a context of vocational and professional learning. The authors of this paper have proposed models and tools to facilitate these tasks for the trainer based on the exploitation of interaction traces. The trace represents learners’ practices within vocational and professional learning environments. The principle is to transform traces of low abstraction level, resulting from a collecting system, to build higher-level information that reflects the learner’s behaviour.

The authors have developed a platform called define, discover and disseminate knowledge from observation to develop expertise (D3KODE) that implements their models. D3KODE allows storage, processing and interactive visualisation of traces, and has been experimented with EDF group experts, trainers and trainees. According to these authors, the results demonstrated that the visual synthesis and the higher-level information provided by D3KODE helped the trainers to confirm/validate more easily realisations and no-realizations of educational objectives trainees and facilitated the exchanges between tutors and trainees. Further validations are required to verify the results.

The second paper is ‘Towards extending traditional informal learning tools in the workplace with social functionalities’ by Carine Touré, Christine Michel and Jean-Charles Marty. The authors of this paper discuss the principles and features of social media and present to what extent they promote informal learning in the workplace. They have implemented, in a real context, a user-centred design methodology to:

- 1 extend a traditional knowledge-sharing tool with social features
- 2 show how these social features can be adapted to match the needs of workers and give them a more propitious and sustainable learning environment.

According to these authors, outcomes of the implementation in a real context show that:

- 1 added social functionalities promote workers’ participation, visibility, reputation and group awareness

- 2 applying a user-centred approach to the design of the tool showed a specific distribution in the management of the different features, according to role distribution in the community of practice: it was perceived by workers as a guarantee of better use of the social features
- 3 adding reflexive indicators gives great potential to the tool to trigger positive intrinsic benefits, positive attitude and continuous use of the learning tool.

A first qualitative assessment shows positive results from their design choices in terms of feature usefulness, user satisfaction and benefits in the given context. Further evaluations to consolidate and generalise the findings on the value of comments, ratings and reflexive indicators to socialise traditional knowledge-sharing tools and sustain their use for informal learning in the workplace are needed.

The third paper 'Internet addiction, academic performance and personality traits: a correlational study among female university students' by Spiridoula Kakaraki, Nikolaos Tselios and Christos Katsanos. This paper reports a correlational study investigating the interplay among internet addiction, personality, academic performance and internet self-efficacy (ISE) of female students in higher education. It also investigates the relationship between two questionnaires that measure internet addiction: the internet addiction test (IAT) and the online cognition scale (OCS). The study sample was 110 Greek female students at their second year of studies in educational sciences. Participants completed the following questionnaires: ISE, big five personality test (Big Five), IAT and OCS. Questions on participants' demographics and internet usage experience were also used. A moderate negative significant correlation was found between personality and internet addiction. The highest magnitude of this negative correlation was observed for the Big Five emotional stability trait. Internet addiction did not significantly correlate with academic performance, nor did it significantly correlate with ISE. Moreover, no significant correlation was found between academic performance and ISE. Finally, a strong positive significant correlation was found between IAT and OCS.

Further studies are needed to verify and extend the presented results. It is important to examine if the observed relationships can be replicated in both similar and different settings. It would also be interesting to investigate the same research questions for male students and compare findings.

The last paper is 'An integrative approach based on using annotations and computer-mediated feedback to support learners' proficiency in the English language', by Ali AbuSeileek. This study investigated the effect of using annotations and computer-mediated feedback to enhance learners' proficiency in English. It is based on the assumption that annotations and computer-mediated feedback can be used in hypermedia environment to teach and learn different language skills (reading and writing) and components (vocabulary and grammar) interactively and integratively. There were 57 participants who were assigned randomly into two treatment conditions: in line (annotations and track changes), and marginal (annotations and comments) versus the control condition. Students in the treatment conditions had access to annotated vocabulary items while reading texts, and provided/received peer feedback about writing and grammar errors using track changes or marginal comments. However, students in the control group neither had access to meanings of vocabulary items while reading texts, nor received/provided written feedback. According to the author, the results show that students in the treatment conditions significantly outperformed those in the control group

on the post-tests on measures of the overall mean scores in reading comprehension, vocabulary learning, writing performance, and grammar accuracy. There was a higher significant effect for the in line location of the reading text than the marginal location on learners proficiency in reading comprehension and vocabulary learning, and providing/receiving peer feedback using track changes than marginal comments on their writing performance and grammar accuracy. However, the findings of this study should be interpreted cautiously. Firstly, the study was conducted on a limited number of students over a limited time, so the results may be generalised only to similar samples. Secondly, oral skills such as listening and speaking were not included in the study. More research is needed.