

Editorial for the Special ECEL Issue of EJEL

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The papers in this special issue have been selected from those presented at the 12th European Conference on E-learning, held in October 2013 at Skema Business School in Nice, France.

The idea behind this collection is to present current trends in e-learning from the wide range of research topics presented at the conference. The main emphasis is on social and mobile digital learning and the growing role of MOOCs in online Education.

The first paper by Barber et al. explores the use of “digital moment” produced by students to create a genuine online community of learners and carry out authentic assessment. This article highlights how the use of narrative, a method of educational qualitative inquiry, fits the 21st century learner, focusing on the human element while remaining embedded in the technology .

The second paper by Blom et al. looks at knowledge sharing from a different angle : ePortfolios in Art. The study focuses on the impact of e-Portfolios on both the institutional policy-makers who control curricula and the academics who teach. Blom’s paper discusses four e-portfolio experiences in different universities.

Katzlinger’s paper deals with online collaborative learning using wikis ; it looks specifically at collaboration between inter country teams – a vital skill for future managers in a globalized world., Katzlinger presents the virtual learning scenario that is based on a shared case study ; the author then discusses the benefits of this type of course design in terms of learning impact, social skills and teaching efforts.

King et al have tackled the issue of MOOCs in the public health sector. Their paper describes the initial design process, as well as the MOOC learning style: the aim being to encourage participants to assume the role of reflective practitioners.

The paper by Kostolányová and Šarmanová presents a model for automatic adaptive learning where students can adapt their activities to their preferences and learning style. They ask the question « What kind of study material can fit

such personalised learning ? » and examines answers such as building blocks for adaptive learning.

Makri et al. present an interesting paper that explores 'learning through design. They look at an interesting project to blend a community of learners in face to face sessions based on a webquest which the students themselves are to construct.

Another view of Moocs is presented in Nkuyubwatsi's paper. This time it is not from a course design perspective, but rather from the learner's viewpoint. Relating his own story, the author shows how MOOCs open up access to education, favour cross-cultural educational development and allow learners to obtain education in underprivileged settings (like in Africa).

The paper by Nortvig looks at how to develop the « embodied » human-technology relationship in diverse course settings, particularly in hybrid synchronous classrooms (eg. live videoconference teaching and recorded videoconference teaching). The paper explores the effects of the non-presence of the teacher in the hybrid synchronous classroom : how does this impact student interaction, their perception of what makes a classroom and the variety of learning locations (home and/or school).

The final paper in this issue by Lærke Weitze and Ørngreen offers a very different perspective on simultaneous videoconferencing. It provides an insight into the transition towards the « *Global Classroom Model* » implemented in Denmark for adult learning, where students learn both from home and school, on a « *hybrid campus* ».

This collection thus offers a panorama of some of the important issues in eLearning today. Papers on social learning, Moocs, hybrid campuses, videoconferencing, authentic assessment, adaptive learning and communities of learners have been selected in order to help practitioners, teachers and researchers. I hope they will prove helpful both for practical use and to inspire further discussion.

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