

eLEARNING IN FINLAND

03 | 2014

SeoPPI

The Association of Finnish eLearning Centre
Promoter and Network-Builder in the Finnish eLearning Branch

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SeOPPI

The SeOppi Magazine is the only Finnish magazine in the field of e-learning. It is a membership bulletin for the members of, and published by, the Association of Finnish eLearning Centre.

The SeOppi Magazine offers up-to-date information about the latest e-learning phenomena, products, solutions, and their uses. The magazine promotes the use, research and development of e-learning and digital education solutions in companies, educational establishments and other organisations with the help of the best experts.

The SeOppi Magazine gathers professionals, companies, communities and practitioners in the field together and leads them to sources of information about e-learning.

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Dear readers

I wish to thank Leena Vainio for her long term as our chairman. **Leena Vainio** steered the Association of Finnish eLearning Centre meritoriously for its first eleven years. During this time, the association grew into a well-known, network-building and significant party in its field. I also wish to thank the Board for the trust they show in me by appointing me to this new position. A special thanks is due the managing director from the very first, **Titi Tamminen**, and the rest of the active, competent staff.

Changing the chairman easily raises hopes of new directions and renovations. The previous chairman and the association's staff members have all indicated that change is their wish. However, change is not a value in itself. It is important to see what already works. We have much good in our operation that we must foster and strengthen while we work towards changes. I believe that an important aspect of the operation of a modern organisation, particularly an association, is the community-based building of its vision. I hope to have all members involved in determining our spearhead development areas. Cooperating in specifying our spearhead areas could become a shared learning experience for our members and in the best case, we could find new ways to promote networked and web-based learning.

When our association was first established, we taught web-based learning and utilisation of technology. We tried to transfer knowledge rather than to support others along their path to independent learning. That was the spirit of the times, not so much a feature of any specific organisation – that was how we all worked then. Even in those times, the name of this magazine portended change. In my mind, the name represents the sturdy core that does not wear out with time. Se Oppi. Learning. That is the key.

More clearly than before, learning has become a key success factor for individuals as well as for communities. The focus is now on methodological and instrumental skills that support the learning of individuals and communities. Learning is not the concept that everyone speaks of: some only talk of challenges and problems that need to be solved, some talk of successes and mock-ups, some talk of ideas waiting to be found or simply things that need to be done. All the same – an increasing proportion of us spend a great deal of our day doing things we never did before.

In addition, a decreasing proportion of learning relates to individual action or constitutes a feature of individual action. Learning new things is often easier and more efficient working together; working together may even be the requisite of success. Technology plays a central role in this as it supports working and learning together. The skills needed to make good use of technology vary greatly in our country. At best, improving our skills of learning together may bring significant competitive edge for Finland in the future.

The relationship between man and technology will deepen. Technology is no longer used for communication and collaborative work only, but it plays a role that increasingly deepens our understanding and supports wiser action.

This is already clearly seen in the emergence of applications that allow us to monitor our own health status. I challenge every one of us to think and jointly find solutions for how technology can promote our learning in the future, both individually and together, deepening our understanding of the surrounding world and even promoting our wellbeing. ●



Picture: Jere Lauha

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Jill Jameson: Leadership of web-based learning is everyone's business

More information and communication technologies are now available for education than ever before, but a part of the supply stays out of sight and is not made use of. What is the problem? This situation has been brought about by a lack of leadership, states professor *Jill Jameson* of the University of Greenwich.



Jameson was the keynote speaker at the EdMedia Conference on educational technology in Tampere last summer, where her topic was e-leadership and ways to develop it. She has done extensive research into this theme and is of the opinion that it should still be kept apart from general leadership studies. She also considers that research should focus on e-leadership, because during the 40 years of development of educational technology, leadership has been more or less on a sidetrack.

Jameson holds that leadership in our digital age works best when it is shared, participatory, based on trust and capable of changing when times change. This is precisely what we are sorely missing today. She has come to these conclusions on the basis of her real-life experiences during her long career as well as on the basis of her research.

“When I led projects to create new models and ways of working in 2004–2009, I learned that in order to inspire teachers to accomplish actual, sustainable and extensive changes using information and communication technologies, we must change our leadership styles”, Jameson says.

She believes that our leadership culture should be updated to meet the needs that arise because of our times and current phenomena. The issue is not one of taking care of technology-related business but rather one of leading people, networks and communities so that they may reach their common goals.

Jameson says we are all responsible for the emergence of this new way. “We all deal with education and that makes us stakeholders in e-leadership”. She stresses that leadership cannot be assigned to any individual party any longer – leadership is now shared and built on common values. “A good leader, in the best case, is invisible. This kind of a leader makes people feel they did the job themselves. The leader cannot wall himself or herself in anywhere in order to sit and steer, but instead, the leader must walk the same path others walk.

ME – AN E-LEADER?

In knowledge-intensive work, methods and tools are based on information and communication technologies. That is why you

Nothing works without trust.

might already be involved in e-leading even if you had not quite understood that to be the case. “When I listened to EdMedia presentations last summer, I was convinced that many projects in Finland involve e-leadership and you have networks in which this leadership is prominent. As examples, I can point out the peer-learning model in AKTIIVI and open teachers’ networks”.

Many educational ventures and volunteer networks display e-leadership features. They communicate, share experiences, publish, steer, guide, decide jointly about directions on which to proceed, inspire, obtain resources, budget – in other words, they lead people and manage matters. They do not involve dire toiling and there is room for humour and fun.

Success stories of the use of educational technologies are spread through interaction and communication. “All educators who see the possibilities offered by educational technologies should join informal networks, tell others about what they’ve done, write articles, be active in social media, influence peer groups and do their best in every way to highlight these matters. We must enhance things, progressing and conducting tiny revolutions continuously”.

It is a pity that these new ways of working that originate in projects and networks do not often reach educational institutions.

POWER STRUCTURES AND OLD ATTITUDES FORM OBSTACLES

When we speak of lost opportunities, Jameson reminds us that we know a great deal of the causes but are still only searching for solutions. “We are prevented from reaching good results because we face leadership issues, outdated institutional strategies and policies, cultural resistance to change and unsuitable models of financing innovation”. Changing these matters is on the agenda of e-leadership development.

As a corrective measure, Jameson presents a model for working with strategy, vision and actions so that they all are treated simultaneously, allowing them to influence one another.

Global environmental factors relating to education are, in Jameson’s words, super-complicated, and still more requirements are being placed on the already over-loaded educational system, but nobody seems to be leading the development. Therefore, we must act both locally and globally.

“First of all, we aim for people in the field, political decision-makers and the government to share a vision of the direction we want to take and how new technologies should be applied. Secondly, international

cooperation in technological research is necessary. It would be good to be able to bring about international research into what actually works in education. Thirdly, we naturally need selectivity, observation, careful planning and questioning mindsets about what “the best” means. We also need prioritisation of needs”.

Minor enhancements to policies and strategies even combined with grassroots level action are not enough. It is necessary for educators themselves to cooperate more closely, for in that way, new modes of working come about and that influences decision-making at the highest levels. In addition, a democratic aspect is added to the development of the field because decisions can be made together.

TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION

“Because web-based work is decentralised and changes constantly, the parties must have mutual trust in order to commit to the work and the reaching of the goals. Nothing works without trust”, Jameson summarises. She considers the building and maintenance of trust as an important job that either helps matters to progress, or, if it is lacking, causes them to fail.

The creation of an atmosphere of mutual confidence and a corresponding way of working requires the adoption of shared values and ethical rules. Because such values and rules are not concrete, they must be systematically adhered to in all decisions and policy making in order for trust to be built in everyday work. •



Link | gre.academia.edu/JillJameson

JILL JAMESON IN BRIEF

Jill Jameson is the professor of education and the director of the Centre for Leadership and Enterprise at the University of Greenwich, London. She has 36 years of experience in education. She has treated the theme of e-leadership in many projects and publications, for example eLIDA CAMEL, JISC infoNet CAMEL and British Journal of Educational Technology (BJET). Jill Jameson is a multi-faceted writer, international lecturer and respected activist in many educational associations. In summer 2014 she was the keynote speaker at EdMedia World Conference on Educational Media and Technology organised in Tampere.

From open to learning space – steps to open pedagogy

CHALLENGE: FROM OPEN SPACE TO LEARNING SPACE

Open space is in a continual state of emergence, an ephemeral composition of overlap and intricacy permeated by human presence and non-presence (experienced absences). Open space is composed of simultaneous states of spatial, temporal and social presence. Open is space without predefined form, space outside a course, resource, or learning structure. Open can refer to urban, rural, suburban, or natural spaces; or physical, digital, or hybrid spaces. It can refer to a walk down the street, a daily commute, a quiet meditation in the corner of a cafe or a lake shore. A learner in this space must contend with the lack of a predefined learning objective, the lack of a predefined cache of learning materials, or even a full awareness of the learning potential in the space itself. Learners in this open context often respond to the “rhythms of the everyday” to create “everyday practices”, or methods of making meaning in open contexts. It is these methods that we look to pedagogically activate to transform open space to learning space.

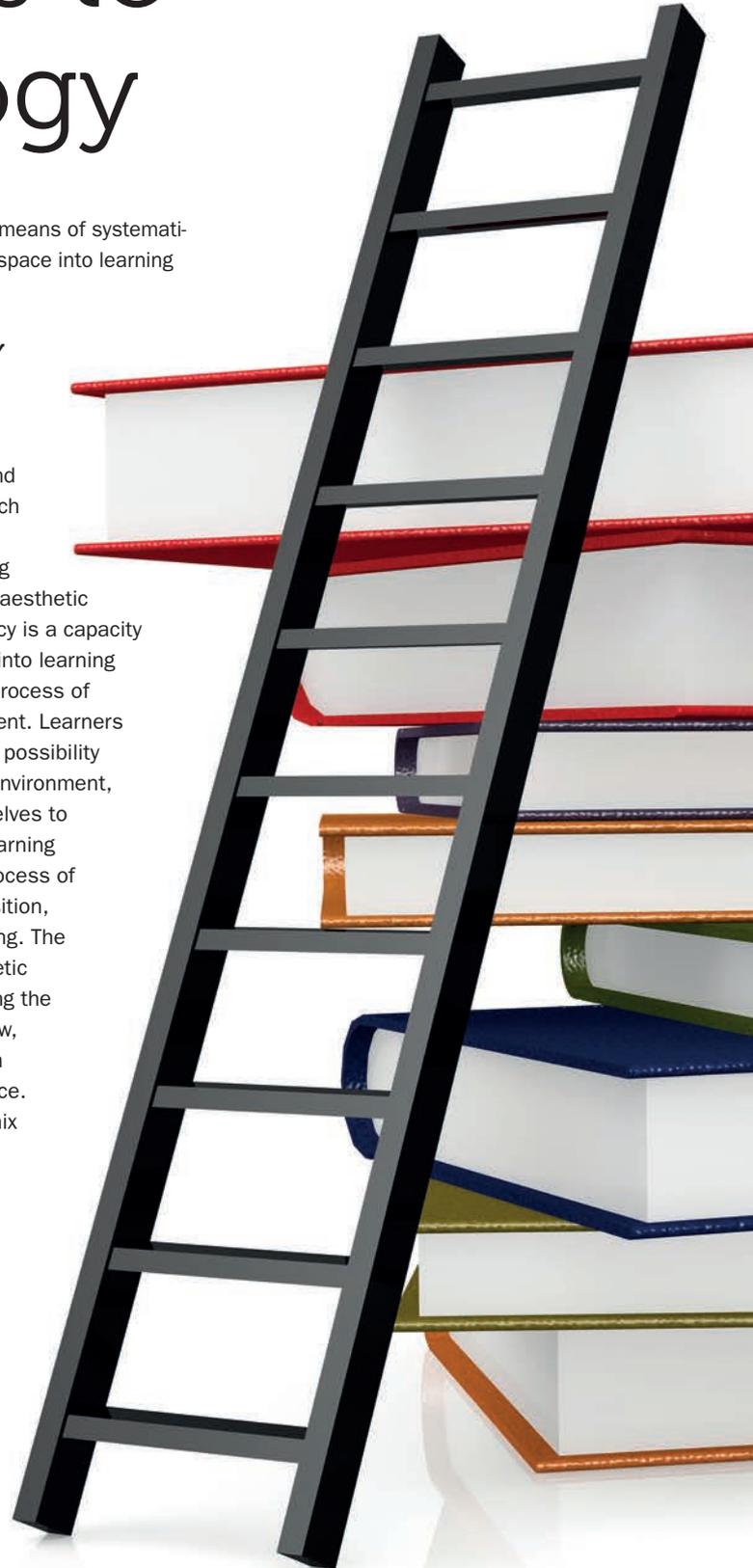
TRUST, DISCUSSION AND COLLAGE

A pedagogical basis for moving from open to learning space is in trust, discussion and collage as a set of temporal, spatial and social abilities. Trust is both an attitude to create an approachable atmosphere for learning and an act of listening to confirm meeting and social presence in open space. Discussion is both a physical and virtual arrangement of empowerment and responsive interaction on materials and topics in situ. Collage is both the rich materials of the open environment, and the artefacts pulled from and composed from them. These three abilities, repeated continually and reflexively in

open spaces, present a means of systematically transforming open space into learning space.

AESTHETIC LITERACY – ALIGNMENT AND ATTUNEMENT AS EVERYDAY SKILLS

The trust, discussion and collage activities by which the learner transforms open space into learning space are a process of aesthetic literacy. Aesthetic literacy is a capacity for transforming space into learning space as a result of a process of alignment and attunement. Learners align themselves to the possibility of learning in an open environment, and then attune themselves to their environment for learning before engaging in a process of data collection, composition, and reflection-or collaging. The learner develops aesthetic literacy by acknowledging the open environment is new, and begins to transform space into learning space. Aesthetic literacy is a mix of perception, intellect, and emotion, an understanding, or trust, that all environments are pregnant with the possibility of learning if one adjusts oneself towards receiving it. It is this process of aesthetic literacy that is often overlooked in pedagogies



exploring open learning; it is through aesthetic literacy, though, that the potential of learning in open spaces is unlocked and made systematic.

OPEN PEDAGOGY

Complexity in open space is best activated for learning through an appropriate pedagogy, one that can make this “messy system” an approachable and useful learning space. Aesthetic literacy satisfies this condition. We believe that aesthetic literacy can be taught and iterated upon through reflective practice. Pedagogically, learning is visible to the learner, which allows them to

consciously reflect on these “everyday practices” of alignment and attunement, refine their capacity for aesthetic literacy, and replicate the process in all open environments. It is lifelong learning with or without predefined objectives, with or without a predefined process in place or a clear understanding of the ultimate knowledge outputs.

Once transformed, learning spaces made from acts of aesthetic literacy are built on through deliberate and consistent activity. Open learning becomes an act balancing trust (in the learner to learn and in the environment to provide learning opportunity), learning activity (data collection, composi-

tion, socialized activity) and self-reflection. Learning in this open space is generated, reflected, and iterated on in cycles, examples of which are provided below:

- **Data Collection:** the learner consistently generates learning material through documentation of open spaces through mobile technology. Data collection is more than documentation, however. It is the identification of material of possible relevance for later composition. Learners take pictures, video, audio recordings, or compose text at consistent intervals or in the presence of new open spaces.
- **Composition:** any aggregation, or ‘writing’, of material to present meaning. Its practices are numerous as are its possible structures or containers. If we are dealing with the materials of data collection, primarily if not exclusively digital, then this involves the composing of video, audio, imagery, text, and other modes of meaning into larger aggregates.
- **Reflection:** the goal of these reflective practices are to train the learner to consider aesthetic literacy on a consistent basis through the presentation of and prompting of visible phenomena. These reflections should be composed at consistent intervals to maintain an expected state of learning amidst the everyday and to maintain a constant process of iteration on these practices.
- **Dissemination:** compositions, discussions, or artifacts of learning should be distributed socially and openly, providing feedback to the learner which is then cycled through this iterative process.

This process, foregrounded through aesthetic literacy and pedagogically backgrounded through the core acts of trust, discussion, and collage, is a robust method for transforming open space to learning space. •

*All environments
are pregnant with the
possibility of learning if one
adjusts oneself towards
receiving it.*



Digital methods form a natural part of everyday activities

"I started in our project four years ago, enthusing to my colleagues about how handy my mobile phone is for sharing contents. But today, mobile devices are commonplace in our daily studies. Learners have their own mobiles and they produce contents that relate to their learning. We've progressed in leaps and bounds", rejoices the project manager of the MobiLearn project, **Johanna Salmia**. The experiences gained and the models produced in this project have been documented as well as possible in order to enable other people to learn from them. Expertise has been shared with many interested parties during Mobile Summer and other events.

"Networks are simply teeming with action. Teachers have found their networks, or if suitable networks have not been available, they have set up new ones so that they may learn together with their peers. When they learned to use open learning environments, they became active", says **Anne Rongas**, the development manager in the AVO2 project, describing her experiences of the project. "It may seem like a tiny step to become active in Facebook groups, but on the other hand, new ways of working constitute micro-revolutions". Teachers' peer help links have been compiled in a file, and there are more than a hundred of them. Peer learning is a natural method for many of us today.

The development project The Active Citizen of the Open Learning Environment has aimed to structure networks and to learn about new, energising ways of working, expanding our learning environments. Hearing about the outcomes of these projects and reading about them, it is



Wise project managers let as many people as possible come and try, make mistakes and learn together.

obvious that the goals have been reached excellently. Experts and enthusiasm abound even after projects end.

We always worry about the survival of our project outcomes after the projects are closed. Good practices should remain to benefit people even afterwards. **Arnkil** (2007) brought up the fact that good practices in projects like these are not objects or tools that are found, stored and passed along. The creation of good practices involves a great deal of fumbling, searching, adjustments, trials and errors, and all of these are also involved when good practices are introduced in new situations. Wise project managers let as many people as possible come



and try, make mistakes and learn together. Johanna Salmia tells us that the mobile project involved as large a group as possible in their school: teachers, students, IT support, administration and developers – the involvement of all these parties ensures that outcomes and experiences will gather force and prosper in the school environment. Organisations should prepare in advance for the fact that new learning and changes to ways of working take their time and require support; change resistance is largely overcome by allowing as many people as possible to join trials and

testing. It seems that the more varied is the group that project managers involve in their development projects, the better are the chances that good practices gain ground and remain in daily use after the projects.

The above remarks show us small sample of all that was developed during the ESF period 2007–2013 in the development program The Active Citizen of the Open Learning Environment. The development program funded 27 separate projects; each one of them studied how learning takes place in networks and how people

are made active in different types of open learning environments. •



Empowering Civil Society

Citizens' Forum is one of the twelve Study Centres in Finland. We have been participating in the AVO project and its subproject "The Netfolks – Web-age civil society network", coordinated by the eLearning Centre. This theme is very close to the focus of our own work. We feel that the type of organised civil activity we represent forms an essential part of Finnish civil society.

More than a hundred years ago, Finnish civil society was thriving. Popular movements such as the youth society movement, the labour movement and the women's movement were established and grew in Finland, representing dynamic, transformative societal powers. For their part, popular movements influenced the developments that finally led to Finland gaining independence in 1917. During the first years of independence, these movements also influenced Finland's development into a democratic country with abundant economic, social and cultural capital. In the 1970s Finland seemed fully developed and many popular movements lost their societal mission.

Today we are facing huge challenges that touch upon everyone in our global world. These challenges are connected to sustainable development, global equality among people, and our ability to integrate different cultural beliefs about the concept of good life.

We have been lulled into the idea that all solutions will be found in the form of technical or economic developments or in

smart actions taken by politicians. We need a strong civil society to balance the short-sighted, unequal utilitarian quest for profit in business life and to challenge politicians so that they drop their internal squabbles, and instead, search for creative solutions for huge problems.

ANIMATORS AND OTHER FACILITATORS

The basic concept of socio-cultural animation and facilitation is very old. The ancient Chinese had the saying, "after a good leader has acted, people say they did it themselves". Empowering requires awakening, and awakening requires encouragement, time and space so that new perspectives may be adopted. We need animators and facilitators to create these free spaces.

During the project "The Netfolks – Web-age civil society network", Citizens' Forum developed a curriculum for network animators. Its idea is to encourage people involved in various associations and civil society organisations to experience their relationship with civil society in a new way.

In our network animator education, we study the ideas of socio-cultural animation

and how people and communities can be empowered through them. We also study what added value social media can bring to this process of empowerment. The themes in this education include awakening, participation and open dialogue – all in connection with matters familiar to us from social media, such as collaborative information production, collaborative writing, crowd-sourcing etc.

After the project, the network animator concept will be piloted by the largest member organisation of Citizens' Forum – The Finnish Youth Association. Means to boost participation are practised by the staff in their internal brainstorming and also by the entire organisation as it works towards a common mindset. It is empowering to be involved in matters important for oneself and for the community. ●

Journey to the Open Seas

– Assessing the Effectiveness of the Openness Accelerating Learning Networks Project (AVO2)

The Openness Accelerating Learning Networks Project (referred to as AVO2, an acronym of its Finnish name) was an ESF-funded three-year project with 12 organisations, 5 sub-projects and dozens of people contributing to it.

The purpose of the project was to generate and strengthen the collaborative, participatory and networked working and learning culture in educational institutions and organisations and among their stakeholders. The project also aimed to support the growth of teacher and expert networks as well as self-declared learning networks.

This article summarises the project study report written by **Yrjö Lappalainen**. This project study report focused on how AVO2 progressed towards its goals, the smoothness of project work and the effectiveness of the project. It also sheds light on the opportunities and challenges met when the working culture is open and networked; the report also compiles the lessons learned during the project (see the full report in Finnish).

According to the study, AVO2 displayed methodologies, tools and environments and was successful in promoting openness and networking. The project awakened a great deal of discussion, brought about cooperation and created and fortified many different networks. The many publications, reports, learning and teaching materials and other contents form a valuable reserve available to all and ready for further development after the project. The project's self-assessment of effectiveness, conducted using the IKKU-model (Instrumental, Conceptual, Consultative and Belief-creating Effectiveness), forms the basis for our statement that the AVO2 project was successful in all the dimensions of the model.

At the end of the project study, one project member shared the most important lesson learned from the project. This advice crystallises what AVO2 was basically about:

“Be open yourself about your ideas and what you do. Tell others about it and turn an open ear to the ideas and doings of others. In that way, you will be able to connect people and resources, empowering them so that something new, unforeseen or even great can be born. Instead of presenting well-founded criticisms, present well-founded suggestions and solutions. Ask if we could not do something in a certain new way because the current way is not very good and the new way would be better.”

As a final word, a heartfelt thank you to all of you, the people who participated in the project. As we all proceed to our next endeavours, I hope we take the many lessons with us and continue working towards a more open, cooperative and networked world. ●

AVO2 IN A NUTSHELL:

Instrumental Effectiveness:

AVO2 functioned as a tool to make concrete changes e.g. by producing materials, arranging training events and other events, establishing new networks and supporting the growth of current networks.

Conceptual Effectiveness

Through training, events and publications, AVO2 promoted the conceptual understanding of the subject areas of the project as well as openness and networking modes of operation. AVO2 awakened dialogue while it also clarified, established and confirmed new concepts relating to the subject areas the project dealt with.

Consultative Effectiveness:

Through training, events and individual consultation, AVO2 supported its target groups by introducing new ways of working. AVO2 produced instructions, guide-books and case descriptions about new tools and practices.

Belief-creating Effectiveness:

AVO2 promoted trust in new practices and tools by sharing good practices and success stories. The project itself was a pilot case that showed us the possibilities of new ways of working and new tools.

Learn more about the AVO2 project

<http://www.eoppimiskeskus.fi/en/avo>

AVO in English

<http://wiki.eoppimiskeskus.fi/x/I4BZ>

See the full project report in Finnish:

<http://wiki.eoppimiskeskus.fi/x/LIhYAQ>

Project Report Abstract in English:

<http://wiki.eoppimiskeskus.fi/x/HZJYAQ>

Open educational resources – valuable resources for Finland

The Ministry of Education and Culture has started the EduCloud consortium, a national market place for electronic learning materials. The service is developed primarily from the perspective of commercial learning materials.

EduCloud does not particularly note open educational resources (OER) such as the Internetix by Otava Folk High School, wikis and LeMill. In parallel with EduCloud, universities are therefore developing an ecosystem to support the development and distribution of high-quality international web courses such as MOOCs, massive open online courses.

Open educational resources are widely used and they involve certain special features. The term refers to learning contents that are, under various licenses, in principle open to anyone, and depending on the license, also available for editing and further refinement even commercially.

Otava Folk High School has developed a model for open educational resources that would collect national contents in one place to form a part of the actual Edu-

Cloud. The concept has been tentatively presented to the consortium.

The Ecosystem of Open Educational Resources (our working title) is based on microfinancing and crowdsourced funding in which purchasers of contents place requests for bids to materials producers. Unlike the custom in the commercial sector, materials are collectively paid for and paid only once; a payer may be a group such as all schools in a municipality. After payment, the contents are freely available to all under the relevant open license terms and conditions. The benefits would include significant annual savings in expenses nationally and flexibility in the availability of individual, even specific materials.

The Ecosystem of Open Educational Resources develops the production, distri-

bution and introduction of such materials at the national level. In Finland, we have produced open educational resources since the mid-1990s; an example of this is the Internetix by Otava Folk High School. There are many producers – Wikiversity foremost – but the availability of the supply is not centralised or actively communicated anywhere. Content producers and publishers are not networked or organised in any way.

On the other hand, open educational resources have been able to react to many commercially unviable niche-topics and learning needs earlier and faster than commercial productions and publishers. For example, Wikipedia and Wikiversity are commonly used in education due to either the lack of commercial supply or the fact that much of the supply is available in paper form only.

In addition to the lack of any proper organisation and communication, learning contents in Finland suffer from the lack of any life-cycle approach. Plenty of such materials are produced, but, much for resource-related reasons, there are no mechanisms to ensure the quality of the contents or any updates to the contents. Another reason for this is the non-profit and altruistic nature of this type of work: we do what we can and have the time for.

Many municipalities, educational institutions, industries, mechanical engineering enterprises, training organisations and associations have been interested in this project which is currently under preparation by the Finnish eLearning Centre. The preparatory phase of the project targets the years 2016 and 2017, i.e. the years of the “OPS2016 – Renewal of the core curriculum for pre-primary and basic education”.



Bright Future with Learning from Finland?

What makes Finnish Edtech best of its kind? Simply because Finnish Edtech is a combination of Finnish pedagogy with proven results and the best knowledge about gaming.

Finns didn't build nation's education system or the way of teaching and learning to be sold. We wanted to give our children the best possible skills to succeed in the future. We gave teachers freedom to teach the way they feel is the best for the kids. The rest is history. Everyone in education sector have noticed Finland's top ranked PISA results.

Finnish gaming industry had its global break through with mobile games like Angry Birds and Clash of Clans. There are many reasons why companies behind these games succeeded. One reason is the coming of touch screens and the fact that Finnish information and software engineers have a lot of knowledge and skills in mobile technology after working with Nokia. Many of those passionate talents are now working in gaming industry creating a better world with educational solutions.

Co-operation between universities, research institutes and companies is reality in Finland: the Edtech sector works closely with University researchers and many teachers work with Edtech industry and software companies developing and testing learning solutions at schools. In a short time pedagogical research is transferred in to the practice.

What is the recipe of a good educational software? It is as follows. You can decide in what order:

- Latest pedagogical knowledge about learning and teaching
- Best knowledge about information and mobile technology
- Best analytical tools behind software
- Knowledge what makes people like certain games and solutions
- Fun aspect

Learning is all about how to use information to create knowledge. Memorizing is not learning. Children need intellectual tools to learn also by themselves. Finnish Edtech learning solutions have it all. Feel free to try it out. Here are some tips for you to get started with:

- www | 10monkeys.com
 - www | educlusterfinland.fi/en
 - www | finpeda.fi
 - www | muuvit.com
 - www | opinsys.fi/en
 - www | otava.fi/english
 - www | petrasplanet.com
 - www | sanako.com
 - www | sanoma.com
 - www | sanakirja.fi/?__store=en
 - www | skillpixels.com
 - www | skilltize.me/en
 - www | songhi.com
 - www | tribalearning.com
 - www | viope.com
 - www | ydp.eu/
- See the whole Finnish Edtech offering at**
www | futurelearningfinland.fi

Accessibility and impediments in apps

THE WHOLE WORLD IN OUR POCKETS

Today everything is fine – technologically speaking. The phones we carry are miniature computers. While waiting for the train, we can browse the daily news. We have no problems navigating in cities strange to us. We have Angry Birds and other games to entertain us. There are applications for all situations, all moods, all needs and all kinds of people. Or are there?

What if you are in a city strange to you, holding a mobile device with a navigator application – but you cannot see the screen? Or anything else for that matter. You are trying to get on the train but it's impossible, because you'd need a ramp. Thousands of people struggle with problems like these daily. Whether blind, paralysed or whatever - we all are people and have the same needs. We don't often think of this if we are individuals who see, hear, understand and use our own legs for walking. The challenges and solutions to accessibility are among the issues we wanted to tackle in the AVO2 project.

EXPLAIN THE ORANGE COLOUR TO A BLIND PERSON

The project KUPS! was our platform for clarifying the challenges to accessibility in 2013; our goal was “gamified charting and production of accessibility information concerning cultural services”. We gathered a group of persons for this project who all had an impediment of some kind – e.g. reduced vision, confinement to wheelchair – and tried to make their everyday lives easier with smart phones by Apple. An application, the Blindsquare developed by Ilkka Pirttimaa, played an important role. Whether we managed to find anything particularly special for our test persons during the life cycle of our project is a matter of debate, but for me, the project was an eye-opener. Matters that we consider self-evident, such as news via our phones, Google Maps and mobile

games, are totally inaccessible or useless for a large portion of our population.

With this in mind, I started searching for information for a guide that I later called the “Guide to accessibility for developers of mobile and game applications”. I am not an expert in accessibility and impediments, but I saw during our project how often various services bypass the matter of accessibility. I saw this again when searching for material; it was nearly impossible to find material in Finnish concerning accessibility other than that for website developers. Perfect. Mr or Mrs X, our blind person, can now have Voiceover read many web pages because they are not packed full of links and advertisements and other non-essentials any longer... but how might X learn to use his or her Apple to activate Voiceover in the first place? I don't think the KUPS! project gave us any final answer to this, but that is actually not my most important point. I find it more worrying that there are not many in Finland in addition to Ilkka Pirttimaa who have understood the size of the portion of our population that suffer from various impediments. It is massive – and yet, we are hard put to find materials to guide us in the issue of accessibility. How can anyone design properly accessible applications and user interfaces if such design is not taught anywhere? I tried to learn and jot down relevant points – what we must note in application development to make our product usable to as many people as possible. My idea is that these requirements should be paid attention to by designers when developing an application, but in addition, those who purchase applications should know to ask

for accessibility. These issues form the core of the guide.

LET ME HELP DEVELOP

The guide to accessibility was not the only issue we focused on in the mobile AVO project. We also tried ourselves to develop a properly accessible mobile application. I will explain a little later why our final out-

come was anything but! Nobody in our team had any experience in coding, so we subcontracted the job and gave it to a group of students. And I applaud them: they did their best in the period of time we allowed for design and development. But we, the project team, made a mess of things because we believed that proper application development would be possible with a zero budget and in a couple of months.



Our application is calendar-based: you select a type of event from a pre-defined events list, e.g. "Medicine", the start time of the event, and whether it is once-only or recurrent. Finally, you enter optional additional information such as a description and informative illustrations. Save, and voilà: the application gives an alarm at the selected times. In theory, that is.

Imagine someone with a memory disorder using this application. Nurses have programmed the weekly schedule for him or her, and when the alarm goes off, the person does what the application tells him or her to do. Everything has worked fine for a full week, so what could possibly go wrong? Well, maybe there just simply is no alarm when there should be one. Yes, indeed, there is this tiny little bug in our application causing it to suddenly just stop giving any alarms. If, for example, someone's taking medication is dependent on this application, it goes without saying that there is havoc caused. When the bug was found during a pilot, fixing it was too late because the students had graduated and, in addition, I did not think them responsible for the matter any longer: the work was approved

and the grades were given. We asked a Helsinki-based software development company to help us, and their judgement was plain: the application must be completely rewritten. But we had no funds for such work in our project. You cannot get good cheaply, and if you add the words "killer schedule" to the equation, you are on very mushy ground indeed.

CHERRY-PICKING

We can turn this experience positive, however: first of all, we actually produced a prototype that showed us there is a demand for an application such as ours. In addition, we gained a concrete case that showed us the challenges of application development, those of a properly accessible application in particular. ➤

How can anyone design properly accessible applications and user interfaces if such design is not taught anywhere?

#Learningfestival

– Learning everywhere, all the time

Every day, when students enter their school in the morning, they encounter a familiar atmosphere. The teacher welcomes them in front of their classroom to learn new things once again. In the afternoon, the backpack is packed with lessons learned and the journey home begins. But what happens to learning? Does it stop when the doors close behind them? What am I learning in school, how do I learn best and most of all, where do I learn most? These questions are on the Top-10 list when it comes to building up motivation for lifelong learning and deepen the thought of learning everywhere, all the time.

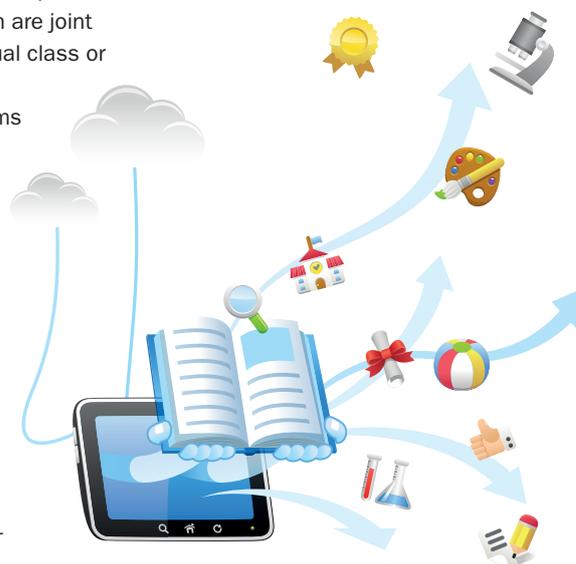
The researchers at the University of Helsinki, driven by the OmniSchool -project, started the Learning Festival. The purpose of holding these festivals in primary schools all around Finland is to pay more attention to non-formal learning environments and their importance in the learning process. It is all about the change of learning culture towards a more open one, where the environment becomes part of the curriculum. The idea of individual trips or visits to places of interest is changing, the aim is rather to be part of long-term plans and multipurpose learning, which are joint projects of more than an individual class or disciplinary boundaries.

The Learning Festival idea aims to change behavior and attitude towards learning and teaching in the context of primary schools around Finland. The process of the Festival is three-phased. It starts off with initial meetings of teachers at their own school. The pedagogical theories and backgrounds of the projects are discussed in teams to bring up thoughts of the situation in their own teaching environ-

ment. The teachers combine their multidisciplinary knowledge and cooperatively plan projects for and with their students. The projects aim to be multidisciplinary in subject or made in cooperation with different facilities reaching past the school's borders. The subject is open, but it has to meet the requirements of curricula work. "So, what's new in this", is the first question to be asked. Well, the idea is old, but reflecting on today's or even future learning attitudes and the new curricula work, which is aiming for big changes in 2016, it is most reasonable to stop and start changing habits.

The learning of future competence requires new approaches and perspectives. As early as in elementary school teaching, it is reasonable to take the first step towards the challenges of future. For example the use of mobile technology, multidisciplinary and the ability to adapt new ways of thinking are highly valued skills. Internalising skills of consolidation and innovative acting are not part of our human automations. The practise and adoption of these skills requires time and a big change of attitude in education.

The new, mobile learning environments and channels of communication not only enhance networking between teachers, but also open virtual doors for students and teachers to walk into digitalized learning habits. Not only to mention the most used social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest or Whatsapp used for communication and exchange of learning or teaching experiences, but also new combinations of non-educational applications and digital services used in an educational context, for example thinglink, imovie, popplet, padlet, skype, evernote, blogs, wikis, qr-codes, etc... There is no longer a need to work alone on problems and questions in educational issues. Community and openness has taken place in the educational world. Networks are built up to empower teachers in their work and to improve the adaptation of skills and motivation towards lifelong learning habits. •



OmniSchool -project:
<http://www.kaikkialla.fi/information-in-english/>



Mobile learning and the MobiLearn -project:
<https://sites.google.com/site/mobiililalluonnollisesti/in-english>



Digital learning and new learning culture:
<http://innoomnia.blogspot.fi/>



and
<https://innoomnia.wikispaces.com/>

Pocket sized authentic, dialogical and mobile learning

This article deals with the development measures for the current academic year at HAMK Professional Teacher Education Unit, as connected with developing the teacher education study module in a more mobile and collaborative format. The selected vocational study module was the Networks in professional education. The aim was to deepen and extend vocational training into teachers networks. With the planning launch, we wanted to find a pedagogical model based on interaction and collaborative learning for the implementation of the study module learning process.

A natural choice was the **DIANA** (Dialogical Authentic Netlearning Activity) model, developed by Principal lecturers **Helena Aarnio** and **Jouni Enqvist**. The original roots of the model are from the turn of the new millennium and, from the perspective of dialogical and collaborative working, the basic principles also apply splendidly to the modern world of mobile devices. The key point of departure in the birth of the Diana model was to clarify how net-based learning becomes a reality. Implementation of the model requires a genuine dialogical learning community, commitment on the part of learners and the teacher, and a solid presence on the net. (Aarnio & Enqvist 2001, 11–13.)

THE DIANA MODEL

Authentic dialogical learning on the net and community-based, constructive professional expertise can be segmented into an operational model by which it is easy to discern the components of learning as well as the dynamics of the model. The DIANA model is made up of four cornerstones (Fig. 1), which support authentic learning dialogically. (Aarnio & Enqvist 2001, 30–31.)

The developers of the model (Aarnio & Enqvist 2003; 2004), refer to net-based



teaching, but the model is equally well-suited to modern, flexible and mobile learning environments. The peer learning groups had an important role. Moreover, there was a desire to link the dialogical learning process to collaborative knowledge-building and thinking.

THE FOUR CORNERSTONES OF THE DIANA MODEL (AARNIO & ENQVIST 2014).

According to Aarnio (2014), operations compliant with the four cornerstones (Fig. 1) segment and structure the learning process. Cornerstone A creates the common ground for collaborative and dialogical learning. Cornerstone B deepens authenticity in learning community and student worked-out authentic questions and design connected with the learning goals of the study module. Deep-oriented learning through dialogical actions take place in the

next cornerstone C. Students are working and building knowledge together about the subject being studied. Cornerstone D links theory and practice together. The students weave synthesis in a community-based manner as well as look for missing pieces

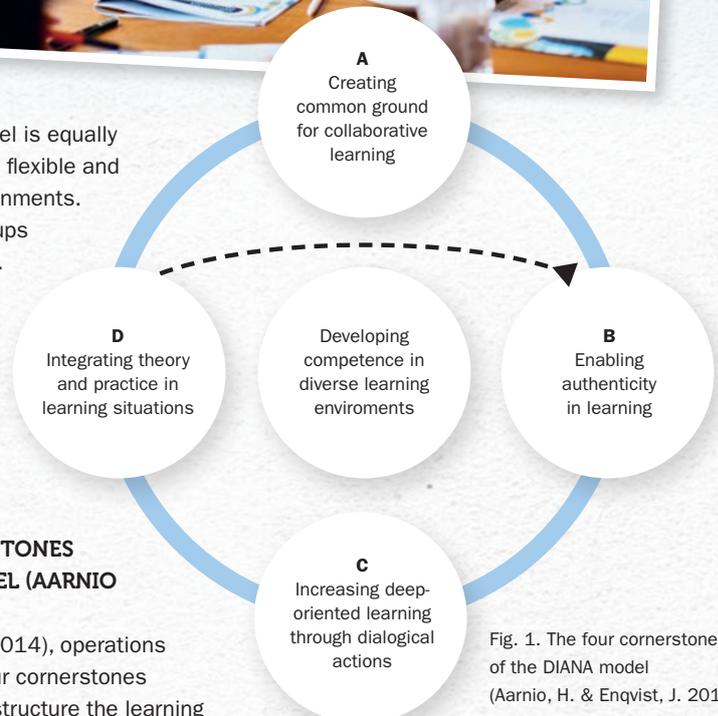


Fig. 1. The four cornerstones of the DIANA model (Aarnio, H. & Enqvist, J. 2014)

(new questions) vs the learning goals of the study module.

MLEARNING APPS

With the learning process being open and transparent, learning often becomes meaningful. When the problem of learning or competence is real, the authentic situation arouses the interest to clarify the matter more deeply and also from theoretical starting points. It's possible to learn in authentic learning environments with mobile devices. This needs teachers guidance.

MOBILE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Nowadays net and mobile applications are abundantly available. Some examples of applications which may be used in mobile learning are segmented in the figure (Fig. 2).

FITS IN A POCKET

The planning of the learning process was launched from the learning goals set in the study module. After this, the process was configured in accordance with the four cornerstones of the DIANA model, observing the dynamics of the pedagogical model. In the planning of the learning

process, the authenticity of the learning process was regarded as important.

The students created a common ground for working and for goal-oriented learning. The structured dialogical learning process enabled the development of competence and knowledge-building interactively. The selected applications and programs generated authentic and dialogical learning on their part, in addition to mobile learning. All learning and working environments in use were appropriate for mobile devices and enabled studying that was independent of location.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the survey we conducted, it is possible to say that there was a need for dialogicality and authentic learning in a supporting mobile study module. Future vocational teachers need increasingly more flexible information and communication technology-related usage skills, combined with pedagogical knowledge.

After the development work and realization, it must be noted that the study module's learning outcomes surprised us positively. Authentic learning and dialogical community, as well as the building of

knowledge, established enough space for even the most diverse kinds of final products. Each peer learning groups' own authentic question settings enabled this. The learning results of the study module were significantly impacted by the students' peer learning groups strong sense of community, which inspired, encouraged and enabled each one to bring their own strengths into dialogical learning.

The adaptation of the model to various vocational fields and mobile functions is possible, and the student teachers considered that they had obtained expertise for their own teacherhood.

Authenticity as a mobile teacher was significant to this development process. From our perspective, the courage to teach authentically during this study module created the possibility for the creation of and support for authentic learning situations, whilst believing in the results of authentic and dialogical learning. •

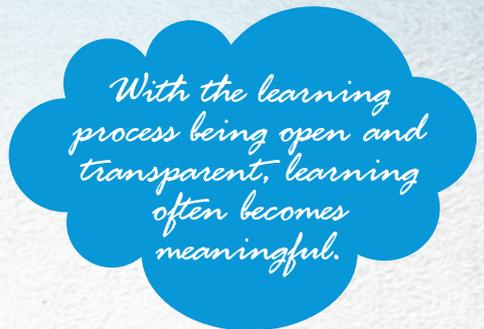
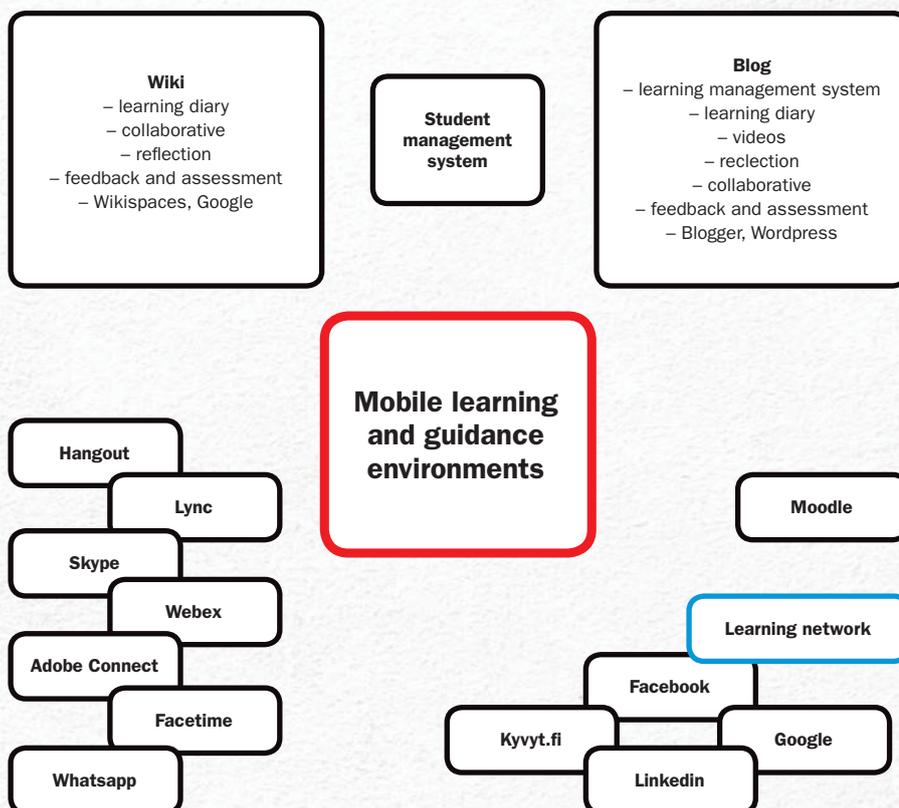


Fig. 2. Mobile learning environments



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Hands on learning and joy of doing things together on seminar days.

“So much more than just a web course”

Internet-based education is something people have attitudes about. Some like it, some don't. On the one hand it reduces the need for school premises and thus saves on travel expenses, while at the same time creating wider opportunities for students from different walks of life to participate in studies. It On the other hand some see studying via the internet as a lonely business.

Is it possible to find team spirit on the Web? Many internet discussion boards and sites show that it is feasible. There are plenty of social media groups where a team spirit has really grown and, of course, many on-line game environments have demonstrated that sharing the same time or space is not the most important thing when people feel that they belong to a community. But how to

achieve this group identity for educational purposes?

The most important aspect is the study space. Even in a virtual environment there have to be “free areas” where students can share thoughts and feelings which are not so strictly connected to specific courses; areas like a “student corner” with a discussion board or chat room. In addition, there has to be a means

for instant feedback in lectures. For example, during online video lectures, students should have the possibility to ask questions, or provide comments, in a chat box. This chat should not be too controlled, so that the discussion may wander away from the subject. The lecturer should not only be tolerant of this but also be ready to answer questions and give feedback about those “not so relevant” comments. Just as

in a real classroom, it is possible to create a feeling of true interaction on the internet. From the teacher it requires the ability to act and respond quickly in a virtual environment, both in real-time during online lectures and on a-synchronous discussion boards outside of the scheduled lectures.

A teacher's presence in a virtual learning environment is crucial. Students have to get the feeling, that there is someone there. On-line studies often comprise fewer lectures than traditional classroom-taught courses, making it more important for the teacher to be available on-line. The teacher should follow discussions, comment and give feedback frequently both in real-time and a-synchronously. The extensive opportunities to maintain communication with the students is one of the major advantages on-line teaching has over traditional teaching. To create an engaging learning atmosphere, it is a good idea to keep comments on the informal side. Teachers can be themselves also on the web, yet still retain the teachers' role. Sounds difficult? Not necessarily. Teachers can humanise the web environment just as they would traditional classrooms. Some teachers are more formal, some more easy-going and that encourages also students to express themselves more freely and free interaction between students is the key to a good team spirit.

If it is possible for the student group to meet in real life, for example, during seminar days, these occasions should be used for group building tasks and other interaction rather than just for lecturing, or other things that you might as well conduct online. Rare face-to-face contacts should be used for students to get to know their fellow students behind the on-line identities. After a small face-to-face group task,

students are more able (and willing) to engage in group work also via the internet.

When studying on the web is a long-term process, as in the 3,5-year KIRLAPPI project that comprises many courses with a bachelor's degree as the ultimate goal, the team spirit among the students is essential. Group synergy encourages students to study and to complete their studies. It is felt throughout the process. A good team spirit during web-based degree programs is the best way to guarantee that students actually stick with it until the end. It helps overcome difficult periods and it gives more motivation than anything a teacher can provide.

In web-based degree programs tutoring also plays an important role. There has to be a teacher who can answer questions about studying in general and studying on-line in particular. The tutor gives information, advice and encouragement when needed and follows the progress of the students. The tutor teacher also has to be active contacting students when it appears that someone is falling behind. When necessary the tutor acts as a link between teachers and students and listens to students' feedback, for example, about their workload.

Learning in a web environment is not the same as face-to-face classroom learning. It entails challenges in time management. Where in traditional classroom education there might be an "exam week" at the end of the period, this does not work on-line. There have to be small tasks throughout a course to keep students active, not just one exam at the end of the course. Nor should it be so that all courses end in the same week and the deadlines for all tasks also fall during that same week. An experienced web student

Free interaction between students is the key to a good team spirit.

may be able to spread the workload, but in most cases it would be better if teachers plan the schedules in such a way that the deadlines are distributed and that there are no high peaks in workload.

At its best a web-based degree program gives students the possibility to study a subject they couldn't otherwise study, for example, because of their remote location, or any other obstacle to attendance at a certain time and place. It also provides students with expertise in the use of technology and teaches them new types of social skills related to engaging in an on-line environment. Students who have graduated from a web-based degree programme, do not only have a degree, but also plenty of important meta-skills that allow them to work and communicate in an on-line environment. These are the kind of skills required in the information age. •

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. Team spirit is crucial.
2. Teachers have to be interested in the possibilities of web-based education.
3. Co-operation between on-line teachers is important.
4. You should be active on-line (this concerns both teachers and students).
5. Face-to-face lectures and teaching cannot be directly transferred into a web environment, but the differences are not insurmountable either.
6. In on-line degree programmes, there should be some teachers who accompany the students for the duration of their studies; there can also be teachers who only teach one course.
7. Tutoring is important...
8. As is an even distribution of the workload over the study weeks....



KIRLAPPI is a joint project of Oulu University of Applied Sciences and Lapland University of Applied Sciences (formerly Kemi-Tornio UAS) to run the Library and Information Services degree programme at Oulu UAS. KIRLAPPI is funded by ESF (European Social Fund). The project has created a UAS library service implementation model that allows the implementation of professional library training to be conducted using distance and e-learning methods. The project started in January 2011 and the first online Bachelor degree programme in Library Business Administration was completed in the fall of 2013. The project will continue as part of Oulu UAS adult education programme and a new on-line group started in January 2014.

The hottest thing right now – MOOC

Massive open online course –if that is the correct term for these large, open e-learning courses – is a hot topic in Tampere and around the world. Are the teachers ready? The students are already demanding MOOCs.

The vocational teacher education at Tampere University of Applied Sciences has already progressed from team learning and on-line studies towards open and international education. Stanford University implemented a course with over 160 000 students from all over the globe already in 2011. This may be seen as the beginning of MOOCs. Here in Tampere we are nowhere near such numbers and such openness. But the direction and beginning already exist.

For the past three years we have studied how the skills provided by our team learning support the transition into MOOCs, even though research alone is not enough to start working in a MOOC. You just go there. However, the teachers who are teaching future teachers would like to have researched data in order to facilitate change. MOOCs, after all, require all sorts of administrative and pedagogical changes in the operations of a university and there are no ready-made models to be copied. We are now organising our work in new ways, by redirecting our teacher resources and changing the students' opportunities for participation. TAMK has also looked at international teaching, which our teacher students can participate in as a part of their studies. The vocational teacher education, designed and implemented by our teachers, brings a large number of teacher students together to study on-line. Our learning environment consists of various social media tools. This is our transition into the world of MOOCs, which we will enter during next academic year the latest. This change is expected by not only the teachers, administration, our own teacher students, but also a number of our international students. For example, this autumn we host a cohort of Brazilian vocational teachers, who are seek-



ing to improve their knowledge in project learning and pedagogics. By developing our education to meet the needs of both our own students as well as our international students, we can build a new kind of educational framework within a MOOC.

The results from studying the skills, motivation and expectations of approximately 500 teacher students to studying in open learning environments as self-directed groups are promising. Our students have the skills and motivation to study on-line. The need for pedagogical support is great and right now the resourcing is not entirely clear. A MOOC itself does not cost anything; it is a part of educational development. The teaching and learning environments must be designed in a way which fulfils the promises made to the students and with structures which guide the students' actions. Both the teachers and the administration need to be on agreement on what it is we

want to do with MOOCs. The goals of business ideas and marketing are often very far from those of teaching and learning.

Based on our research, the teacher students are skilled in peer and self evaluation, responsible in their studies and the drop-out rate in on-line studies is low. The courage required to step into a MOOC – or should we call it a TOOC (TAMK open online course) – is there. The next step in our research is to take our vocational teacher education into a MOOC, or at least parts of it. We will soon see. •

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The Association of Finnish eLearning Centre

promotes new learning culture

The Association of Finnish eLearning Centre is a national association open to all, always ready to welcome new members. We are an independent non-profit promoter of web-based learning; we also form a cooperation forum for developers of digital educational activities and ways of working. We promote an open culture of doing and working together.

Our members include private persons, communities and organisations; their competences and knowledge form the foundation of our expertise. We very openly distribute this expertise for the benefit of all.

In addition to membership fees, we as an association receive our funding from various projects conducted to advance the information society and web-based learning, as well as from event productions and the sales of our services.

WE IMPACT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DIGITAL LEARNING CULTURE

We exert influence on many levels to impact decision making so that educators and trainers might fully benefit from all pedagogical uses of information and communication technologies; we also work to create preconditions for new experiments. We stay in close contact with decision makers in the public and private sectors to make our message heard.

We also wish to advance the introduction of work methods that are independent of time and place.

WE COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS, WE CARRY OUT RESEARCH, WE SHARE BEST PRACTICES

The Finnish eLearning Centre is well-known particularly in development networks in which learning, training and new forms of work are tried out and conducted using open multichannel digital services. We also participate in many EU-funded projects such as Openness Accelerating Learning Networks.

Our projects are all similar in that we want to spread wide the best practices gained through them without hiding any of the failures.

WE PUBLISH, WE COMMUNICATE AND WE SERVE

The communication and publishing activities of the Association provide the members with the latest information concerning web-based learning; the means involved include communication through various networks, reporting, seminars and events. We publish the SeOppi magazine in Finnish twice per year, and in English once per year.

The Association offers a diverse selection of projects, information services and events for everyone interested in the use and research of digital educational products and their development networks.

We publish our materials openly in the web. Our web service and social media channels feature a continuous information flow concerning current events and news.

Guidance and instruction form the foundation of our work. We carry out these activities e.g. through our participation in events and trade fairs, but we also have a field presence in the school world through our projects.

WE BUILD NETWORKS

We monitor the international developments in our field closely and apply best practices to our own work. The Finnish eLearning Centre is highly networked nationally and internationally. We have local and regional partners, and work internationally as well as in Finland. With the help of our networks, we have the possibility to carry out domestic

and international research and development projects. ●

JOIN US!

The Finnish eLearning Centre is a network node and a meeting point for experts in many different types of fields. You gain the best benefits from our work by becoming a member. Join us and make a difference!

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www | didactec.fi/eng.html

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**Omnia, The Joint Authority
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HAMK University of Applied Sciences

www | hamk.fi/english

HCI Productions Oy

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www | otava.fi/english

Otavan Opiston Osuuskunta

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**Palmenia Center for
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www | palmenia.fi

Pedapoint Oy

www | pedapoint.fi

Prommentor Solutions Oy

www | prommentor.fi/en

Sanoma Pro Ltd

www | SanomaPro.fi

Somea Ltd.

www | somea.org/en

Suomen oppimispelit ry

www | suomenoppimispelit.fi

**TIEKE Finnish Information Society
Development Centre**

www | tieke.fi

Typing Master Finland Oy

www | TypingMaster.com

Valopi Oy

www | valopi.fi

Velis & Remis Oy

www | velisetremis.com

WordDive

www | worddive.com

Supporting members:

3T Results Ltd.

www | 3tonline.fi

Consulo Oy

www | consulo.fi

Digital Lessons Finland Oy

www | digitallessons.com/en

Economic Information Office

www | tat.fi

Festo Oy, Didactic

www | festo.fi

KYAMK University of Applied Sciences

www | kyamk.fi

MJK Institute

www | mjk.fi/english

MKFC Helsinki College

www | educationfinder.com/helsinki-college

OK Study Centre

www | ok-opintokeskus.fi/en

TAKK Tampere Adult Education Centre

www | takk.fi

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www | utu.fi/en

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