

Teaching on a Web 2.0 Environment

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The *Challenge*

Who to teach and to learn

In a “knowledge society”

where there are tools that allow for

collaborative

networked

and personalized interactions

The Internet, itself, has changed

Web “2.0” is conceived as a platform for services
that allows “two-way” communication

<<insert some web 2.0 logos>>

Web 2.0 and Social Software

Not all Web 2.0 are focused on meeting social needs

Social software, in the context of learning:

“networked tools that support and encourage individuals to learn together while retaining individual control over time, space, presence, activity, identity and relationship” (Anderson, 2005, p. 4)

Teachers, Students and Web 2.0

Most powerful driver for the use of Web 2.0

Student engagement and motivation

(The base of the educational process)

Challenges for the Teacher

Skills used in face-to-face communication

not directly applicable online

Teacher has to:

- learn new interaction methods
- unlearn some previous ones...

Important strategy for
effective teaching

Try the role of the learner

- understand the experience the student has
- develops same motivation that students have

Social software changes the
classroom dynamics

The context becomes wider

and

conversations' audience extends

Becta Report (2008)

UK

100s of teachers / managers,

1000s of students

Becta Report (2008)

Web 2.0...

1. Promotes new modes of inquiry
2. Enhances collaborative learning activities
3. Facilitates new forms of participation
4. Develops competences needed to publish

Observatory on Borderless HE (2008)

Blogs and other social software technologies

enhance authenticity

Also, can be catalysts of student

commitment and responsibility

Why Education has to include Web 2.0

Web 2.0 tools are widespread in society

Using them is clearly an advantage

(in professional, cultural and social terms)

Major Risk

Using Blogs, Wikis and Podcasts

traditionally...

(e.g. inside “controlled” LMS's like Moodle)

Traditional ICT-mediated learning

Three actors...

1. The teacher

2. The learner

3. Content

(Dron, 2006)

Next Generation of Online Learning

Not teacher-centered

Not content-centered

But...

Learner-centered

The generational gap between
teachers and students
is not problematic
but...

Educators must understand
the digital culture
where students are immersed

Significant adjustments required:

1- emphasis in collaboration

2- quality assurance in integrating external inputs

Collaborative vs Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning emphasizes the product

Collaborative learning emphasizes the process

Gaspar (2007)

Also,

in cooperation: controlled by the
teacher

whereas, in collaboration: the whole
class is responsible

Social Software Systems:

The group is a Gestalt

The individual:

- 1- Guides is own learning,
- 2- Is guided by the environment

Knowledge

Not finite

Not detachable from social context

Not possessed by the teacher

Giving Away of Control

Current generation of students require:

- 1- Greater autonomy
- 2- Greater connectivity

(McLoughlin & Lee, 2007)

Giving Away of Control

“Traditional” LMS's (e.g. Moodle):

- do enable the expression of personal viewpoints
 - but, still close to the classroom model

Pedagogy and Social Software

Web 2.0 can enhance application of
constructivist principles

Allows teachers and students to engage in more:
authentic, flexible, open
ways

Pedagogy and Social Software

Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Tagging, etc

can be used in “scaffolding”

but are open, by their own nature

Example: in the context of a Wiki...

Scaffolding is...

1- structuring the entry, or

2- entering some main themes to be developed

Two ways of using Web 2.0...

1- as a repository of resources (e.g. “guided-tour”,
by the teacher)

2- as a complete educational platform (where
learners produce content)

Any of these ways lead to the mixture of formal
and informal elements in learning

Two important concepts

1- “Personal publishing”

2- Syndication of learning contents

(Downes, 2005)

The question of Quality Assurance

web 2.0 is less prone to “centralized authority”

but..

students have a fine-tuned ability to evaluate

individual contribution

in the work of a group

(Franklin & Van Harmelen 2007)

Strategies for teachers

- a) integrate assessment along the course
- b) promote high degrees of interaction
- c) develop good tolerance for ambiguity
- d) use scaffolding and mentoring
- e) use activities that operationalize course contents

Fox and Helford (1999)

Useful suggestions

Caplan & Graham (2008) give useful suggestions:

1. create a FAQ
2. make the student pass through a course Forum
3. separate teacher's from help-desk's functions

but...

Not so good suggestions (we think)

“Think of online environment as just another classroom environment to interact with students”

“Rewarding faculty” as being “more meaningful”
than establishing a supportive context

Final Recommendations

1. start with simple steps (like creating a wiki)
2. depart from traditional models of education
(based on the teacher or the classroom)
3. extend learning beyond the walls of the school
4. encourage collaboration through IT tools