

Project Sheet

wle

CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE
in work-based learning
for education professionals

Teachers as Media Producers in Virtual Classrooms

People Involved

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Key Words

e-learning, web conferencing, teaching framework, media production

Description

This research project examines synchronous

audiographic conferencing, or 'virtual classrooms', as a communication tool for distance and flexible education. It focuses on the roles of teachers and aims to develop a teaching framework based on the metaphor of a media production. This includes an identification of pedagogical and operational challenges and an exploration of potential benefits of this technology in applied contexts. The project is funded by the Centre for Distance Education, University of London and runs from November 2005 to October 2006. It uses the advanced technological resources of the WLE Centre to reach participants in local, national

and international contexts. As a part of this project, a number of private and public web conferences will be produced.

Methods

The project will have five stages:

1. Technology Implementation:

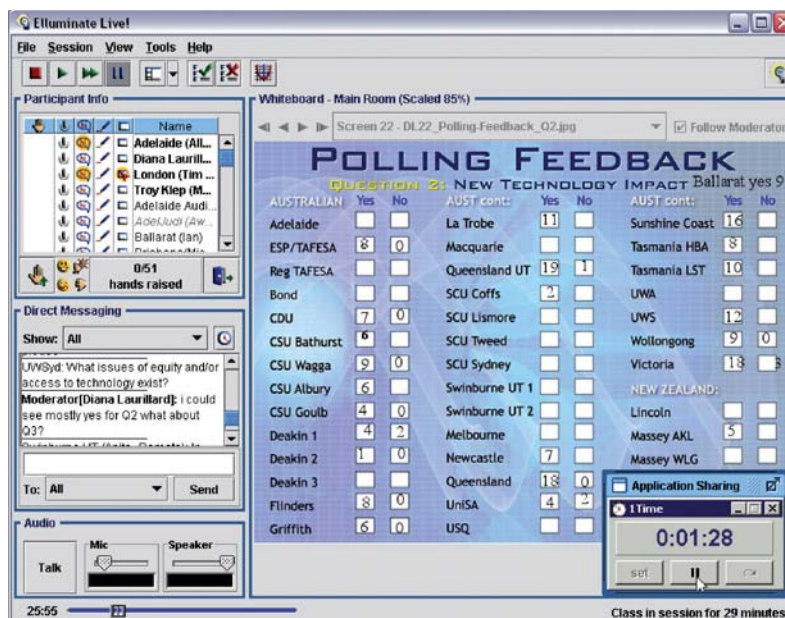
Relevant technology will be selected, acquired and implemented, based on market research and collaborative activities with partner institutions.

2. Framework Development:

Based on a review of literature and practitioner reports, a framework for teaching in virtual classrooms will be developed. It will be based on the view that teachers need to identify themselves as media producers in order to design meaningful, high quality teaching episodes.

3. Training and Preparation:

This stage will include staff training sessions, supported by the development of guidelines for working with the technology and pedagogic session preparation. ▶



4. User Testing and Data Collection:

The actual sessions will be run. Data will be collected through session recordings, student/participant surveys, and semi-structured teacher interviews.

5. Analysis and Dissemination:

While standardised analysis methods for surveys and interviews can be used, a multi-modal analysis of Virtual Classroom recordings will be based on a combination of emerging methods such as thread theory and completely customised methods of audio stream analysis for parameters that are not usually captured in content analysis, in order to gain insights on role behaviour.

Outcomes

This project will contribute to enhancing knowledge about synchronous audiographic conferencing and roles that teachers might adopt in these environments. Among the more tangible outcomes are practical guidelines and an innovative framework for teaching in Virtual Classrooms, and the project will build practitioner experience in the use of the relevant technology, including the handling and management and the educational use of the

technology. A repository of recorded sessions will serve as an archive to explore the potential of reusing the content produced in Virtual Classroom sessions. In a collaborative effort, resources and expertise will be made available and integrated into the operations of the WLE Centre, the London Knowledge Lab and the Centre for Distance Education, University of London. ■

Project information page:

www.lkl.ac.uk/research/neumann_vc.html

Project partner institutions:

www.wlecentre.ac.uk
www.lkl.ac.uk
www.cde.london.ac.uk

