EMRE ERTURK

Eastern Institute of Technology, New Zealand

USING RESEARCH AND INDUSTRY-BASED CONCEPTS TO FUEL ONLINE TEACHING

Abstract:

Training teachers for online delivery is important, especially in 2020 during the COVID lockdown when many have suddenly switched to the online mode. While many of the initial workshops focus on specific software tools, there is need for further approaches that are more systematic, involving broader perspectives, problem-solving approaches, and self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

Lean and Agile software and product development methods offer some interesting guiding principles ideas for practical course design and change. Simplicity and the importance of evaluation need to be considered in more depth.

Next, Active Learning Theory is often already applied to online delivery when building new objects on the course website. What would be even better is a more systematic approach to reviewing the existing objects of a course site, based on evidence around how the learners have dealt with these objects so far.

The role of a teacher in online delivery encompasses multiple dimensions, especially the following: Pedagogical, Administrative, and Social. Therefore, further training needs to target all of these factors. For existing courses, a thorough evaluation would be highly beneficial to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of each course and its design along these dimensions.

As a result of these ideas, the researcher devised a hands workshop for faculty teaching on university level programmes. The workshop itself is conducted online using Zoom with the participants each having a course site open to work on during the session. The participants collaborate simultaneously using a Google Doc, which also documents the session and the resulting course design and improvement related information. The participants are later divided into smaller groups in Zoom. Each participant makes at least a few changes to their own course by the end of the session. The various findings are analysed after the session is completed.

This research presentation first briefly reviews the relevant academic and industry literature. Then it reflects on the running and the outcomes of this new workshop. Finally, there are helpful recommendations for other teachers and researchers.

Keywords:

E-learning Strategies, Educational Technology, Active Learning, Higher Education, Agile Learning Design

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