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Orchestrating Communities, Ubiquities, Time and Space: International Experiences in the Use of Educational Technology

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Abstract

In this brief introduction we frame the special issue on “Orchestrating communities, ubiquity, time and space: International experiences in the use of educational technology.” It constitutes the result of the “International experiences in the use of Educational Technology” panel session celebrated within the XXI University Conference on Educational Technology (XXI Jornadas Universitarias de Tecnología Educativa) (JUTE) in Valladolid, Spain in 2013. Every article has gone through a double-blind peer review process with the aim of ensuring not only the quality of the issue but also the adaptation of the initial presentations given in the aforementioned panel session to the rules of scientific publications. This issue brings together five of the works presented in the panel to address a number of relevant challenges in the field of Educational Technology. The topics accomplished by the articles spin around the (mis-)uses of technology in the national accreditation process of teachers in the United States; the tensions derived from the use, re-use and sharing of Open Educational Resources (OER’s) in Europe; an interpretive proposal to orchestrate the evaluation of complex technology-enhanced learning settings, and finally; an experience in the collective generation of documentaries at the Galiano Islands (Canada).

Keywords: (mis-)uses of technology, orchestration, evaluation, open educational resources, arts-based research

Orquestando Comunidades, Ubicuidades, Tiempos y Espacios: Experiencias Internacionales en el Uso de Tecnología Educativa

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Resumen

En esta breve introducción enmarcamos el número especial titulado “*Orquestando comunidades, ubicuidades, tiempos y espacio: experiencias internacionales en el uso de tecnología educativa.*” Constituye el resultado de la mesa de comunicaciones titulada “*International experiences in the use of Educational Technology*”, que se celebró en junio de 2013, dentro de las XXI Jornadas Universitarias de Tecnología Educativa (JUTE), en Valladolid, España. Cada artículo se ha sometido a un proceso de revisión doble ciego no solo con la intención de garantizar la calidad de este número, sino con la de velar por la adaptación de las presentaciones realizadas en las JUTE a las características de los artículos científicos. Este número especial aglutina cinco de los trabajos presentados en la mencionada mesa, con la intención de abordar algunos de los retos a los que se enfrenta actualmente el campo de la Tecnología Educativa. Los temas planteados van desde los (ab)usos de la tecnología dentro del proceso de acreditación de maestros en USA y las tensiones derivadas de la utilización de recursos educativos abiertos en Europa, hasta una propuesta interpretativa para favorecer la orquestación de la evaluación de escenarios educativos complejos mediados por TIC, pasando por una experiencia creativa de elaboración colectiva de documentales en las Islas Galiano (Canadá).

Palabras clave: (ab)usos de la tecnología, orquestación, evaluación, recursos educativos abiertos, investigación basada en las artes

On the 27th and 28th of June, 2013 we celebrated at the *Facultad de Educación y Trabajo Social, Universidad de Valladolid* (Spain) the XXI University Conference on Educational Technology (XXI Jornadas Universitarias de Tecnología Educativa) (JUTE), under the following motto: Inno-research challenges in Educational Technology: Orchestrating communities, ubicuity, time and space. The conference is yearly organized by the *Red Universitaria de Tecnología Educativa*¹ (RUTE) who is trying to internationalize its scope. This was the main reason for the local organizers of JUTE to include in the program a panel session on “International experiences in the use of Educational Technology” for the first time ever. The aim of the panel was to bring together the research work accomplished by participants on a collaborative international level.

The present special issue of *Qualitative Research in Education* has been configured around a selection of five of the works presented in the aforementioned panel session. All of them address particular challenges of high relevance within the field of Educational Technology. The main issues accomplished by the articles spin around the (mis-)uses of technology in the national accreditation process of teachers in the United States; the tensions derived from the use, re-use and sharing of Open Educational Resources (OER’s) in Europe; an interpretive proposal to orchestrate the evaluation of complex technology-enhanced learning, and finally; a experience in the collective generation of documentaries at the Galiano Islands (Canada).

We summarize below the main contents the reader will find in each of the selected works:

The first article, elaborated by **April Munson** (Kennesaw State University, USA), entitled “*The (mis)use of technology in the national accreditation process*” underscores the issues derived from the indiscriminated use of technology in the United States National Accreditation System. Dr. Munson offers a continuous dialogue with the reader through a careful narrative, raising the tensions, losses, errors and misuses of technology as the backbone of the accreditation processes of young teachers.

This work does not address ideological or moral questions on the appropriateness of professional accreditation processes, but emphasizes the changes that are currently taking place in accreditation procedures. Evaluators have moved from *in situ* data collection of teacher’s

performance, to highly virtualized standard-based procedures that have almost nullified face to face visits from evaluators assessing the work of future teachers. Dr. Munson alerts us about some uses, (ab)uses and approaches that could affect traditionally standardized-free countries regarding the use of technology in accreditation processes.

The second article, "**Bones of the Earth**", has been proposed by **Mikel Correa Gorospe** (University of the Basque Country). It recounts his experience in the Gulf Island Film and TV School (GIFTS) (Galiano Islands, Canada) during the elaboration of the documentary "Bones of the Earth". Mikel does it from an Arts-based research approach where his perpetual quest for learning is based on the social use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and in knowledge and creativity generation as well. He provides a delicately elaborated text strongly committed with collective processes of transformation and social change.

The third article "**Orchestrating evaluation of complex educational technologies: a case study of a CSCL system**" elaborated by **Luis P. Prieto** (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne), **Yannis Dimitriadis** (Universidad de Valladolid) and **Juan I. Asensio** (Universidad de Valladolid), proposes an interpretative framework for the orchestration of the evaluation of complex educational scenarios that are mediated by ICT. The increased complexity of these settings constitute not only a challenge for educators, who have to orchestrate a vast number of pedagogical issues in a daily basis, but also a pitfall for researchers eager to analyze their educational advantages. The author's proposal relies on an internationally-evaluated conceptual framework of "orchestration aspects" (design, management, adaptation, pragmatism, etc.) which helps the evolution of the case study narrative used to illustrate the tensions between "front office accounts" of research publications and the "shop floor practice" of evaluation of technology-enhanced educational settings.

The following article, "**Sharing Resources in Open Educational Communities**" has been proposed by **Paolo Tosato** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), **Beatriz Carramolino** (Universidad de Valladolid) and **Bartolomé Rubia Avi** (Universidad de Valladolid). It addresses the need of leaving aside current content-oriented research on the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) towards a research more focussed on the needs teachers, learners and institutions have when using OER. Their work calls for the systematic search for interconnections between current uses of

Open Educational Resources and the functioning of mainstream Open Educational Communities (OEC's). All with the aim of clarifying the complex rules governing the sharing of resources between teachers when promoting innovative teaching and learning practices.

The closing article, "**ORIOLE, in the search for evidence of OER into teaching. Experiences in use, re-use and sharing and influence of repositories**" has been elaborated by **Gema Santos-Hermosa** (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya). It presents the main findings around a survey generated within the ORIOLE project (Open Resources: Influence on Learners and Educators project) with the aim of evaluating the use, re-use and sharing of Open Educational Resources by European teachers. This work might be of particular relevance for individuals, departments and institutions responsible for delivering online training, since it gives insight on the different motivations to engage with OER and the shifts in experience and expectations across Anglo-saxon and Mediterranean contexts.

The pervasiveness of information and communication technologies in our lives is creating new habits, particular forms of social organization, and what is most relevant in our field, drastic changes in the ways we teach and learn. Despite not being an easy task, it is our duty as teachers and researchers to identify these challenges and propose ways to overcome unexpected drawbacks.

A formula that will certainly facilitate our work is the strengthening of international cooperation through the enhancement of research networks. This will help the collectively address of common issues found along the way.

This special issue highlights the excellent health of international collaboration networks promoted by associations such as RUTE. This aspect is illustrated by the participation of nine researchers from six institutions of higher education (Universidad de Valladolid, Kennesaw State University, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, and Universidad del País Vasco) who share their interests, concerns and proposals for helping the change to more contextualized and reflective uses of ICT.

Notes

¹<http://www.rute.edu.es>

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