Chapter 10

E-Portfolios as Tools for Collaborative Learning on Digital Platforms

Ana Claudia Loureiro
University of São Paulo, Brazil

Cristina Zukowsky-Tavares
Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil

ABSTRACT

In this chapter the authors discuss on the increasingly use of virtual learning environments - Learning Management Systems (LMS) - in university education. Analysis the potential of learning methodologies and more collaborative, problem-solving and dialogical assessment. The authors emphasize the concern with the concepts that underlie technology-enabled assessment processes such as the use of e-portfolio as a resource to monitoring the students’ performance, thus being redesigned upon the assessment process, mediated by an educational practice of individual and collective knowledge construction on digital platforms and mobile communication devices.

INTRODUCTION

New Information Technologies and Communication (NTIC) give rise in the present days to renewed challenges and opportunities for the Universities, with respect to the understanding and the use of multimedia features, the internet and mobile communication devices in the service of learning. Multiple experiences resurface in international university environment, with innovative education curriculum frameworks that rely on active problem-solving methodologies which nurture education, providing professors and students with further autonomy and active participation. In a scenario featured by fast-paced technology changes and revamped university education processes, it is worth questioning and rethinking whether these changes lead to better learning results, too. What academic and professional profile has in Brazilian mind? Changing tools without rethinking conceptions? What buttresses our educational, learning and assessment perspective? Aware of the challenges proposed, by the New Information Technologies and Communication, in teaching
and assessment of learning in University Education, we propose in this chapter to resume the educational socio-political scenario where these technology changes take place, in an integrated view of network collaborative learning, discussing on the possibilities and limits of the use of e-portfolios as teaching and evaluation tools, on a critical, reflexive and informed basis.

VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The transformations in human life are backed by a relentless wave of technologies, which is the backdrop where all social phenomena occur. Nowadays, communication is interconnected and emerges as a new form of universal language, unlike static writing, since virtually all messages are dipped into a pot teeming with life, cheered up by transverse, chaotic, passionate, and fractal communications. Whatever the addressed message is, it connects with other messages, other texts which are probably fragments of a hypertext in constant movement that serves as a mediator or means for a reciprocal, interactive, seamless communication.

In cyberspace the technologies allow new forms of access to information as hypertext navigation, new styles of reasoning and knowledge as simulation. The key metaphors of the relationship with knowledge are currently the map and the navigation in an ocean of information without borders and constantly changing, depending on cyberspace and its tools (fiber optics, high-capacity database, shared and interconnected through the Internet - cloud computing), making it the main economic, social and cultural infrastructure of humanity.

All these tools, supported by bits, are part of a suite of technologies that provides fluidity and very fast pace to all messages, recovering the ability to link a context that had disappeared with writing: “It is possible, ..... to find again a living community of orality, .... in an infinitely further broadened and complex way” (Lévy, 2000, p. 14).

With virtual hypertextuality and new digital tools, the web has changed the educational dynamics. Several virtual learning environments emerge as tools for universities to use cyberspace in support of educational processes in order to improve their teaching ability, research and extent, making the internet network to win the educational space, allowing new processes of knowledge construction, in addition to face-to-face classes or as a facilitating environment for distance learning courses, able to meet the demands of today’s society, to know:

- Need to know how to work in groups – teamwork.
- Need for ongoing learning process. We are living in a learning society.
- Need to know how to be supportive.
- Need to know collaborative learning.

There are currently a large number of options of teaching and Learning Management Systems (LMS), which provide tools that support the sharing of participants’ roles, in which they can be both tutors and learners, and collaborative generation of knowledge, such as wikis and e-books, as well as dialog environments, such as journals, forums, chats, and more. The LMS has resources to develop learning environment in which the professor, as a mentor of learning, helps students construct knowledge based on their own skills and knowledge, rather than just publish and stream contents.

In these environments, the flow of knowledge, the transaction expertise and access to information profoundly change the language and education of man. What you need to learn can no longer be planned in a static and unidirectional way. This does not mean that the recognition of digital lan-
Related Content

Automatic Cognitive Load Classification Using High-Frequency Interaction Events: An Exploratory Study
[www.igi-global.com/article/automatic-cognitive-load-classification-using-high-frequency-interaction-events/80412?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/automatic-cognitive-load-classification-using-high-frequency-interaction-events/80412?camid=4v1a)

Global Culture and Computer Mediated Communication
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/global-culture-computer-mediated-communication/22352?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/global-culture-computer-mediated-communication/22352?camid=4v1a)

Academic Weblogs as Tools for E-Collaboration Among Researchers
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/academic-weblogs-tools-collaboration-among/22316?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/academic-weblogs-tools-collaboration-among/22316?camid=4v1a)

Of New Media Influence on Social and Political Change in Africa: Introspects, Retrospectives and Futuristic Challenges
Anthony A. Olorunmisola (2013). *New Media Influence on Social and Political Change in Africa* (pp. 423-440).
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/new-media-influence-social-political/76857?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/new-media-influence-social-political/76857?camid=4v1a)