Media & Learning News

March 2014 Issue

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Meeting of EU Media Literacy Expert Group in Brussels

The Media Literacy Expert Group which gives advice to the European Commission on policy issues met in Brussels on February 3, 2014. The meeting began with news about the forthcoming Commission report on Media Literacy which will be a very important document as it will take stock of the work taking place on Media Literacy across the Commission and will pave the way for future Commission initiatives within this field. The meeting went on to hear about two major studies in the area of curriculum; EMEDUS and MEDEAnet along with a pilot study into the assessment of Media Literacy levels across 10 countries. FILMED, a new study on the Use of films in Schools, was also presented along with good practices in the field of Media Literacy.

Mapping MOOCs and Virtual Mobility Developments around the globe

eMundus is a new European Commission supported project that aims to strengthen international cooperation in Higher Education by exploring the potential of various Open Approaches including OER, MOOCs and Virtual Mobility. It is coordinated by the MENON Network in Belgium and includes partners in Brazil, Spain, UK, Mexico, Russia, New Zealand, Canada and Indonesia. eMundus is looking for "community partners" who are willing to help by commenting and enriching the project wiki, proposing tools to be included in the eMundus repository, joining one or more of the eMundus webinars and events, and more. Find out more and get involved here.

e-Skills for Jobs 2014

The European Commission has selected DIGITALEUROPE and European Schoolnet to deliver the e-Skills for Jobs 2014 campaign. It aims to raise awareness of the need for citizens to improve their command of information and communication technology (ICT) skills for work. The campaign comes under the umbrella of the European Commission's Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs, an EU-wide multi-stakeholder partnership helping to address a shortfall in the number of European citizens with ICT professional skills, and to exploit the employment creation potential of ICT. One of the first key activities is Get Online Week, a pan-European event organised by Telecentre Europe on 24-30 March to get new users online and improve their digital skills for working life.

Successful Safer Internet Day

For the 11th year running, more than 100 countries from all over the world celebrated Safer Internet Day (SID) on February 11. SID is an initiative of the European Commission's Safer Internet Programme, organised by Insafe. The day which was organised under the motto "Let's create a better internet together", marked an annual opportunity to engage in making the Internet a safer and better place for children and young people. The next Safer Internet Day is already being prepared and will take place on 10 February 2015. More information here.

Video used to tackle substance abuse in Finland

Happi, the Finnish Youth Activity Centre has recently launched a highly innovative educational video entitled The Story of Choices, a substance use education method targeted at 6th grade pupils and their parents or guardians. The Story of Choices was produced along with several theatre and media activities and consists of an orientation session for educators, a Story of Choices and lessons for pupils, a parents' night and a feedback lesson for pupils given by a teacher. The Story of Choices lesson includes a story with an introduction video, action-based exercises and discussion. Its basic premise is to ask the right questions instead of providing ready-made answers that we think of as being the right answers.

Assessing the educational needs of digital media and arts sector workers

A survey organised by partners in the European iPro project was launched on 27 February to identify gaps that exist between the skills and training that professionals in the digital media and arts sector need and the types of courses and educational opportunities provided by higher education institutions aimed at such professionals. This survey was launched in Belgium, Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, Croatia, Lithuania and Poland. If you are working in advertising, digital design, multimedia, web design or any other area in the domain of new media and arts, you can fill the survey here (8 different countries to choose from). If you are working in Belgium, you have a chance to win an iPad 2 16GB as it will be offered to one of the first 100 participants in the Belgium survey. More information about the project here.

European Newspaper Publishers Association launches publication on media literacy

The European Newspaper Publishers Association (ENPA) recently published "What's Your News?" which highlights the vital role that print and digital newspapers play in driving media literacy in Europe. "What's Your News?" showcases media literacy initiatives in schools across 18 countries in Europe, based on contributions from ENPA's national associations and publishing houses. In a foreword for the publication, EU Culture & Education Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou said: "Modern technology has increased exponentially the media offer as well as the possibilities for accessing it. But of course, being able to access these different forms of media is only the first step: if knowledge is indeed a form of power, information is only powerful when you know what to do with it. That is why media literacy constitutes an indispensable life skill for the 21st century." You can download the publication here.

Latest journal on Children's Films available

The European Children's Film Association (ECFA) recently published their first journal for 2014 in which they announce the 10 finalists for the ECFA Award 2014. The journal also includes a focus on children's film in the Netherlands given by Monique Ruinen and plenty of information about Children's Film festivals across Europe. Download the journal here.

Featured Articles

10 Tips for Making Online Video a Joined-Up Experience

by Russell Zack, VP and GM EMEA at Online Video Platform Kaltura

Today, video plays an ever-increasing role in education. However, there is a major difference between an ad hoc, disjointed approach to video and a joined-up approach that sees video embraced as an integral part of university life.

Here are a few things to look for from an online video platform:

1. Ease of use

An intuitive user interface is essential to maximise adoption. Staff and students should not have to worry about file formats and streaming and should be able to click a couple of buttons to upload, download or view content. Look for user-friendly video authoring tools, editing tools and support for sharing via social media sites.

2. Multi-device support

Choose a video solution that works seamlessly on mobile platforms too, so that the viewer has the best possible experience on a wide range of devices.

3. Protect students and staff

Ensure that a robust set of security controls are built in. Check for varying levels of access control, a range of user authentication options, and moderation of uploaded content. A flexible digital rights management solution is also essential.

4. Accessible and discoverable rich media content

Choose a solution that supports multiple content input options – manual uploading, in batch or via an API. It should allow you to organise content into meaningful categories and offer a good search function that extends to custom metadata. The ability to perform in-video search across libraries of transcribed content is useful.

5. Consider the cloud

Hosting your own video library can take up a lot of storage space. A cloud deployment removes the costs associated with adding more storage on campus, provides scalability and flexibility, enables automated updates for adding new functionality, and enables videos to be stored securely in the cloud by your platform provider.

6. Integration and future-proofing

Make sure that your video solution can be easily integrated into your existing technology framework and that it adapts to current workflows, such as your Learning Management System.

7. Market your content externally

Choose a video solution that makes it easy to market your university's achievements and USPs to attract new students and to publicise research. A good platform will allow you to undertake live events online, record and broadcast them as VOD content, feed your content to third-party partners (e.g. YouTube/ iTunesU) and create RSS feeds.

8. Measurement drives learning

Use the analytics feature to undertake back-end analysis of how effective your rich media content is at engaging viewers and learn from what works and what does not. Some basic analytics and metrics include bandwidth monitoring and tracking individual students' viewing of coursework videos.

9. Support for distance/blended learning courses

As the number of blended and distance learning courses continues to rise, it is useful to choose a solution that supports remote learning (e.g. support for webcam recording).

10. Ease of integrating third-party licensed video content

More and more third parties are now licensing professionally produced video content for use in classrooms digitally. Choose a platform that makes it easy for lecturers to incorporate educational video programming from content rights owners.

Video allows you to reach and engage today's YouTube generation with new and exciting teaching and learning techniques. The trick is to make your video solution an integral, joined-up part of your university's culture in order to benefit from the resulting step-change in learning that can be achieved.

Web 2.0 Applications as a Media Literacy Tool

by Julie Smith, Webster University, St. Louis Missouri, USA

We are saturated with media messages, and media literacy skills for today's students are more necessary than ever. With Bloom's Taxonomy now listing "Create" at the top, it is time for us to implement new strategies for not only reaching students, but helping them demonstrate their knowledge in a way that hones media literacy skills. Web 2.0 applications are timely and interesting to students, and helpful to educators who are interested in advancing media literacy.

Web 2.0 applications basically refer to websites that help users create, organise, share and present information. Our students – digital natives – are very comfortable using Web 2.0 tools. In a survey of my university students, 100% of them stated that they had at least one social network account. Indeed, in today's world, four out of five active internet users visit social networks and blogs.

Ninety-four percent of the students I surveyed claimed they wished that their teachers used more technology in the classroom. However, many teachers claim that they a lack of training prohibits them from trying Web 2.0 applications in the classroom.

My current work is to share Web 2.0 knowledge and training with other teachers. By using these new tools, educators can engage their students and get out of the PowerPoint habit, which critics have claimed causes teachers to fall into presentation habits. These participatory applications can also teach students valuable media literacy skills by encouraging the use of new literacies and critically examining information.

Students want to use these tools in the classroom. With the proper teacher training, Web 2.0 applications can stimulate teacher presentations as well as provide students with creative assessment options.

Presentation Sites: You can get out of the PowerPoint habit by trying ThinkLink which allows you to create links for videos, photos or articles within a photo.

Curation Sites: Challenge the critical thinking and evaluation skills of your students by having them compile online LiveBinders or Pearltrees. Can they determine what web material is valid? How are their editing skills?

Infographs and Timelines: Have students create stunning infographics to demonstrate visual literacy with Piktochart or well-organised, beautiful timelines with Tiki-Toki.

Cartoons and Animations: Perhaps your students could give reports via avatar with sites like Pixton or PowToon? Or consider how engaged they would be if you decided to use this as a lecture format one day! What would your students think if you gave them an assignment via an internet meme? Explore Meme Generator to see how you can spice your lectures up.

Online Posters: Encourage students to show their work online through online poster-creation sites like Padlet or Tackk. Padlet can even work as a collaborative bulletin board in the front of class if you'd like to backchannel your lectures or get immediate feedback.

Embrace their desire to create online material and you might find your students are more engaged then ever!

Julie teaches media literacy at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri USA and took part as a presenter at the Media & Learning Conference in December. She travels to schools around the world providing workshops for teachers. More info from her website and she can be reached at heyjuliesmith@gmail.com.

Dubbing and subtitling for language learning

By Stavroula Sokoli, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain

Why Clips?

Using audiovisual material for educational purposes is now easier than ever. Foreign films, considered by many the most effective way to learn a language, can be accessed by language learners at the touch of a button. At the same time, teachers try to find activities to engage learners and help them become active users of the language instead of passive viewers.

Such active tasks include silent viewing and predicting, ordering sentences, role-playing, analysing, summarising and describing.

Why subtitling and dubbing?

Simulating a professional environment, that of a subtitler or a dubber, emerged with a view to expanding the range of available activities. ClipFlair proposes a productive and motivating way of working with AV material: by asking learners to revoice or caption a clip. Revoicing involves recording one's own voice onto a clip, so allowing for foreign or same language dubbing, free commentary, audio description and karaoke singing. Captioning is to add written words onto the clip: standard subtitles, captions for accessibility, annotations or intertitles. Clips can be short video or audio files, of any type, whole or parts of a longer video, fiction or non-fiction, including documentaries, film scenes, news pieces, animations and songs. This way, even a simple "fill-in-the-gaps" exercise can become more engaging, as it has a tangible, shareable result: the subtitled or dubbed clip.

ClipFlair is based on a methodological framework for learning through the interaction of words (written and spoken), image (still or moving) and sound. It includes fundamental principles and factors involved in language learning and video awareness, including clip selection criteria.

The ClipFlair Studio offers the captioning and revoicing tools needed by activity authors to create activities. It is a zoomable area where components are added, a clip, texts (instructions), captions, revoicing, images, maps, and then saved as a single file. This file can then be used locally or uploaded on the Gallery to be accessed by any users.

The ClipFlair Gallery makes activities, clips, texts and images available. Given the component-based nature of ClipFlair, the same material can be mixed differently for different activities in different languages. For example, the same clip may be exploited in another way for other levels, or the same set of instructions can be used with different clips. Each item in the Gallery is accompanied by relevant metadata which facilitates searching and identifying.

ClipFlair Social is a community of users of the ClipFlair Studio, including teachers, learners, activity authors and researchers interested in the field, collaborate, communicate and interact through ClipFlair Social. They can also use it to provide feedback to software developers, as well as watch and read tutorials on how to use or create activities.

The platform is free and open-source and it officially offers material in 15 languages – Arabic, Basque, Catalan, Chinese, English, Estonian, Greek, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Ukrainian – but it is also open to teachers and learners of other languages.

Tools of the Trade
Wrangler

Wrangler is developed for digital video makers. This Android app allows video makers to input either planned filming time or the storage space available, after selecting the video format used the app will calculate either how long you can be recording and how much storage space you will need. This app can also calculate how much hard drive space is needed for the amount of data shot when converted into different codecs. The app is as accurate as possible and based on an average of various recordings of different kinds of shots, and then averaging how much one minute would be in megabytes or by using the bitrate to calculate the data size. (not free, Android)

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Resources of the Month

This section includes a selection of resources from the Media & Learning Resources Database.

- **Guide for teens: Think Before You Share** – Provides tips from Facebook and Mediasmarts about sharing and making decisions online for teens.
- **InformED - Teacher Resources** – Brings a selection of the most user-friendly teaching tools and resource packs on the topics and subjects that you care most about.
- **Fighting Cyber Crime** – Dr. Gerhard Eschelbeck is one of the world's most influential IT-experts. He holds several patents concerning IT security and explains things students have to be careful about.
- **Medienratgeber** – This collection of resources and links gives a comprehensive overview about the use of media by children and young adults.

MEDEA News

Conference themes announced for Media & Learning Conference 2014

The main theme for this year's edition of the Media & Learning conference taking place on 20-21 November is: "From passive to active use of media in teaching and learning". This idea of active engagement with media will be at the heart of this fifth annual conference is aimed at policy-makers, service-providers and practitioners.

12 core themes have been chosen which will be used to underpin the programme, they are: Effective media literacy schemes; Embedding film literacy in education; Programming as creativity; Best of research outcomes related to media literacy and education; Incorporating video in the design of Higher Education courses, including MOOCs; Media supported language teaching; Games – an educational media phenomenon; Competent and safe use: teaching and assessing digital competence; Media supported science teaching; Media archives and teaching; Cultural education and the role of media and Curating OER and OER Repositories.

Visit the conference website if you would like to submit a proposal to give a presentation, lead a discussion or provide a master class, the closing date for submission of proposals is 31 May 2014.

Related Awards Schemes, Training Opportunities & Events

TACCLE2 Courses announced on ICT

The popular TACCLE Courses will continue to be offered under the new Erasmus+ programme. This includes a 6 day TACCLE course in April 2015 and in April 2016 in Italy and a 4 day TACCLE2 course in Dillingen in Germany in March 2015 and in October 2015 in Belgium. TACCLE2 will combine theoretical input with practical examples and hands-on activities. An outcome of the training will be activities created by the participants that can be used in the classroom. Find out more here.

Take part in new 5-day teacher training courses in the Future Classroom Lab

A programme of comprehensive five-day courses for teachers' professional development organised by European Schoolnet is now available. All the courses will take place at the Future Classroom Lab, a unique and inspiring learning environment in Brussels. To cover the participation fees, schools can apply for Erasmus+ grants. Read more here.

New courses offered by ATiT announced

ATiT has just announced their new courses for 2014-2015 under the new Erasmus+ Programme:
- Exploring the use of media to support learning
- Using video to support teaching and learning
- Creating Educational Apps
- Using and making videos for teaching
- Enhancing science teaching through the use of video
- Video supported language teaching

Aimed at enthusiastic educators who would like to create and use educational materials, these courses organised by ATiT combine theoretical and practical elements and will raise awareness as to the value media, apps and video can bring to teaching and learning. Find out more from ATiT.

TISLID'14 Conference on language technologies and language learning applications in May

TISLID'14 will be hosted by the ATLAS research group at the University of Salamanca's campus in Ávila (Spain), on 7 – 9 May 2014. This event will include keynotes, workshops, paper presentations, posters and roundtable debates, including a EUROCALL Special Interest Group (SIG) session on MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning). TISLID´14 is intended to spread and share the latest advances in language technologies and language learning applications all over the world. As such, it is a great opportunity for anyone who is interested in any of these areas.

Call for entries to European Science TV and New Media Festival and Awards

Television and web/new media have become one of the most relevant ways to reach the general public. Because of this, the European Association for the Promotion of Science and Technology (EuroScience) and the European Public Awareness of Science organisation (EuroPAWS) have set up an annual European Science TV and New Media Festival and Awards. Prizes are offered in four television and new media genres, and four in "science in society" areas. This year's focus will be on Environment. Entry is free and the deadline for submissions is Friday 28 March 2014. More information here.

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