Media & Learning News

New EU Commissioner to tackle fake news

According to Euractiv, the new EU Digital Commissioner, Mariya Gabriel, has announced plans to establish an expert group on fake news as one of the first measures she is taking in the job. Mrs. Gabriel also announced that she is planning to spend the next two or three months drafting a public consultation on fake news, this is a detailed call for feedback on specialised topics, which may lead to new EU legislative proposals. However, she also said that she has not yet made up her mind about whether there is a need for a hard law at EU level to deal with incorrect news reports that are often spread online. You can read the full story here.

European Schoolnet launches new round of courses

European Schoolnet Academy is a platform where you can learn about innovation in the school and classroom through free online professional development courses for teachers in primary and secondary schools. New courses for the coming year have just been announced and include: “Opening Schools to STEM Careers”, “Our Fragile Planet” and “Collaborative Teaching and Learning”. All courses are free, flexible and offer you a digital certificate and digital badges upon completion. Find out more here.

Common European classification of occupations and skills including media skills launched

The Commission has launched the first full version of the European classification of Skills, Competences, Occupations and Qualifications (ESCO). This new classification is available in 26 languages and aims to facilitate dialogue between the labour market and the education/training sector by providing a common language that can help overcome labour market imbalances and increase occupational and geographical mobility in the EU. Skills related to media usage are extensively covered as are occupations like multimedia producer, instructional designer and digital media designer. You can access ESCO freely here.

Media Education training material available from e-MEL

e-Media Education lab (e-MEL) is a European project supported under the Erasmus+ programme which brings together partners in 4 countries to create innovative training strategies for both initial and in-service teacher training in order to reinforce teachers’ media education competences. The project is coming to an end and has made available a range of training resources that have already been pilot tested with more than 350 practicing and trainee teachers. Take a look at what e-MEL has to offer.

Tips on how to celebrate Global MIL Week 2017

Global Media & Information Literacy week promoted by UNESCO takes place this year from 25 October to 1 November and the UNESCO GMIL office have circulated tips and suggestions for how different organisations can organise an event as part of this week. You are also invited to register your activity so other people can learn more about what is happening in your school or library. Different suggestions aimed at schools, libraries and media outlets are available here.

Penn State implements 360-degree videos in online courses

Penn State World Campus in the US has announced that it is using 360-degree videos and virtual reality for the first time with the goal of improving the educational experience for online learners. The technology has been implemented in the curriculum of a graduate-level special education course in Penn State’s summer semester. Students can use a VR headset to watch 360-degree videos on a device such as a smartphone. The course, Special Education 801, focuses on how teachers can respond to challenging behaviours, and the 360-degree videos place students in a classroom where they see an instructor explaining strategies for arranging the classroom in ways best-suited for the learning activity. The videos were produced using a 360-degree video camera and uploaded into the course in just a few days. Read more about this initiative here.

Lecture Capture tips from University of Cambridge

The Lecture Capture pilot project, which ran during the 2016-17 academic year, forms part of the Digital Strategy for Education; supporting the University of Cambridge’s Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015-2018. The pilot’s aims were to set up, run and evaluate the use of lecture capture within a range of teaching scenarios to support or enhance the educational experience across the University. During the pilot, researchers tested the benefits to students and staff and the results of these pilots are available as case studies that make for interesting reading if you are considering a move to lecture capture. You can find them here.

Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme Published

The European Commission has published the latest annual Erasmus+ work programme on 17 August. This work programme outlines the structure and funding of the programme for 2018 and highlights the link between the policies as well as changes from 2017. It’s worth noting that the programme places a great emphasis on activities in support of social inclusion and equity in education and training and states the intention of the programme to support projects that aim to foster media literacy amongst other skills and competences. You can download the full programme here.
Taking higher education into the world of 360° video

Virtual reality is becoming increasingly popular, in particular 360° video. 360° VR has become very accessible: if you have the YouTube or Facebook app on your smartphone, you can start watching 360° videos right now. But one of its major potential uses remains relatively untouched: education. At Leiden University, we asked ourselves the question: can we use 360° VR for education, and if so, how?

Why use 360°?

Let’s back up slightly: why would you use 360° VR in the first place? The most compelling reason is that you can show more than a simple camera shot. You can look around you and experience a virtual world in all its glory. It gives the viewer a sense of presence.

A second, equally important reason to use 360° VR is virtual empathy, the ability to stir the viewer’s emotions. Traditionally, universities have focussed on transferring knowledge to their students, but have neglected emotions. Virtual empathy can teach the surgical student what it’s like to be in an operating room, or a psychology student how it feels to have a difficult session.

There are many more reasons why you would use 360° VR: interactivity, enhanced observation & repeatability, social learning, accessing the inaccessible, etc. I can’t list them all here. However, it’s important to note that preliminary research shows that teaching through VR shows great promise in knowledge transfer and retention.

The practical part

Ok, now you know why we use it. But how do you do it? Let me break it down for you.

We start with a strong case study, one that lends itself well to a virtual environment, storytelling, and to the aspects I mentioned in the previous paragraph. We make sure our educators know what they’re getting into, and that they’re as enthusiastic about experimenting with new technology as we are.

In my experience, people have the tendency to focus on the technological side more than on the content, but storytelling and learning experience design are just as important. Coming from the university, we first have to come up with a strong, didactically sound concept. Just as we do for every knowledge clip we make, we ask ourselves the same questions: What are the learning goals of my 360° video? What’s going to be the viewer’s take-away? What’s the story? Why is it engaging?

Every shoot is different. There are no standards yet, as there are with regular cinema. That means we have to experiment a lot. We extensively scout the locations of our shoots, we talk to the people involved and we do a few test shoots. Planning ahead is important, because we’re going to have to direct people, but we can’t appear on-screen. We’ll have to get the right shots, but you can’t frame it like with a regular camera.

Shooting in 360° comes with its own quirks. As a filmmaker, I’m used to standing behind the camera. But in 360°, there is no ‘behind the camera’. Everything is in view! Many times, I’ve had to find a hiding place in order not to appear on screen.

Another issue: our 360° camera consists of six GoPro’s, which means pushing six recording buttons when you start. That’s why I got a remote control, which turns them all on or off at the same time. But the remote works on Wi-Fi, which is an energy drain. So, you’ll need more batteries, or a USB hub to charge them while shooting. This in turn will lead to overheating cameras that shut down automatically. And so on, and so forth. The process is still quite complicated and difficult. The technology hasn’t fully matured yet.

360° VR for education

To conclude, let’s go back to my original question. Can we use 360° VR for education? My answer is yes, absolutely. It’s a powerful new tool in our creative, didactic arsenal. 360° videos create a whole new sense of presence, increase our capability of teaching through storytelling and bring our theoretical lectures into the real world.

Like I said before, this is uncharted and unfamiliar terrain, but I think we owe it to our learners to give them the best educational experience possible.

Educational Repositories in an increasingly open environment

By Elena Shulman, European Schoolnet

The Educational Repositories Network (EdReNe) brings together web-based repositories of learning resources with content owners and other stakeholders within education across Europe in order to share, develop and document strategies, experiences, practices, solutions, advice, procedures, etc. on the organisation, structuring and functionality of repositories. Its overall goal is to improve the provision of and access to learning resources. Since 2016, EdReNe’s coordination and activities are sponsored by the Learning Resource Exchange Subcommittee of European Schoolnet.

EdReNe develops practical guidelines and recommendations, but most importantly, constitutes a collegial network of European repository nodes and stakeholders that meet on average twice a year. EdReNe’s next
meeting will be hold on Sep. 26 and 27 in Florence, Italy. The event is coordinated with FIERA DIDACTA.

An important part of this 15th EdReNe meeting will be dedicated to issues related to Open Educational Resources (OERs), Open Educational Practices (OEP) and the role these contents play in Open Education (OE). During the meeting, members will look at some of the OER trends and issues that are potentially relevant to the development of learning repositories.

Looking at the draft action plan of the 2nd World OER Congress organised by UNESCO this month, there are several points that are especially relevant to EdReNe. These points include but are not limited to:

- The importance of teacher training not only on how to enhance learning with OERs but also on how to find, modify, create, and share OERs;
- The importance of communities of teachers for sharing OER-based teaching material;
- The necessity for OER repositories to have clear action plans with performance indicators to encourage goals such as accessibility, interoperability, and sustainability;
- The importance of mobile devices as a way to democratisse creation and access to OERs;
- The necessity to come up with new business models to make OER-related activities sustainable.

Distribution approaches for bringing OERs to their users will be another topic of discussion. Content can either be pushed or pulled:

In a push approach, Ministries of Education, teaching institutions, teachers, and publishers produce pedagogical content (that meets explicit pedagogical objectives) and push out this content as Open Educational Resources. In the process, they legitimise this content by associating it with themselves (a well-identified educational institution).

In a pull approach, it is assumed that most if not all the content needed by learners and instructors is available online. In this approach, instructors are viewed as facilitators of learning who help learners develop their skills in finding, analysing and applying content. During the meeting, members will be invited to explore pedagogical approaches that enable students to produce their own OERs. This includes teaching them how to:

- Find open content,
- Quickly assess:
  - its reliability (can it be trusted?),
  - its openness (can it be reused?),
  - its suitability (is it relevant?), and
  - the effort required to adapt it to the student’s goal (is it worth the effort?)
- Build a new resource
- Share this resource with others

For more information about EdReNe, please contact elena.shulman@eun.org

Editor’s note: if you are interested in taking part in the next EdReNe event in Florence, please contact Elena directly.

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Tools of the Trade

**Mistika Insight, a training solution for video post production**

*By Mathy Vanbue, ATiT, Belgium*

Mistika is a unique video finishing suite by SGO, unique in the way it combines video editing, effects, colour correction, compositing and mastering (rendering) all in one. It does all these to the highest degree of flexibility, precision and accuracy. It is a post-production suite that does not have the familiar look of the many editors that are out there. A key aspect of its philosophy is its different approach to tracks: the timelines do not have predefined tracks as such but allow the editor just to drop the video where it should go into the Mistika grid, creating a feeling of infinite tracks.

Working on any of the video assets, whatever operation you are carrying out: colouring, matting, effects... all happens within the grid, making it easy to keep track on the state of each asset. Mistika is a real high-end suite and its colouring and visual effects capacity (for example retiming such as slow motion with Timewarp) are impressive. But all this power and functionality comes at a price: it is not a tool that you intuitively will be using within 15 minutes. It has a steep learning curve. That is why Mistika Insight was released: it is the free training version of the suite with all functionalities activated so that any trainee or novice editor can start to get used to it and explore it. Mistika Insight is an ideal training resource for film students because it allows them to gain experience in all aspects of the post production workflow in one. Mistika Insight is supported by webinars and online tutorials. Insight is a free download for Mac and Windows. Outputs of the free educational version are limited to 1920x1080 in MPEG4 format.

**Media & Learning Book Review**

**Introduction to Media Literacy**

*By W. James Potter, reviewed for Media & Learning by Paul Held, Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany*

Here is another book from James Potter about Media Literacy (see Media & Learning News 8/2017). This one is very practical, conceived as a college book. It stimulates interaction with the reader, and reflection. Potter makes use of many - perhaps too many - didactically useful elements like pre-self-tests, advance organisers, examples, summaries, further readings and hints.

The first section is about clarifying the concept of media literacy. Potter does not give a short definition and does not like "critical thinking", for whatever reason. He introduces three related components: the personal locus, the knowledge structure of the individual and skills of media literacy which have some overlap with the (non-cited) Bloom’s Taxonomy. These dimensions provide a useful grid for description and analysis.
The second section is about media history, industry and audience/use, in an economy and egoism biased view. The media world is presented as a game, with winners and losers and strategies to maximise the benefit for industry and the individual. Media history is described as a process of convergence, which is partly true but does not show the full complexity.

The third section is the most useful one. It is a good basis for (stimulated) self-reflection about media use and media effects which are clustered according to timing (short term/long term), type (psychological concepts like cognition, attitudes...), value (positive/negative) and intentionality (of media industry and individual). This is followed by clusters of recommendations centred on the described dimensions. The book ends with a collection of twelve guidelines on how to develop an individual media literacy strategy. The appendix provides real-life cases and guides the intellectual debate.

The book is a valuable resource of ideas for lecturers and teachers who are about to discuss media literacy issues with their students, provided they have their own vision of the topic – as some sections of the book do require adjustments or completion.

This book is available for $64.00 and is published by SAGE, ISBN: 978-1-4833-7958-6.

Resources of the Month

Here is a selection of resources recently added to the Media & Learning Resources Database:

- **E-Media Education Lab**: provides training resources on media education and media literacy for teachers
- **European Cinema and Mathematics**: bank of activities and teaching resources to help teachers teach maths through movies
- **Edutopia video collection**: broad selection of educational videos demonstrating different teaching strategies and approaches
- **NOVA Education**: digital resources for educators in science, technology, engineering, and maths

Awards Schemes & Events

**Flemish Media Literacy Congress 27 September, Brussels**

This year’s annual congress on Media Literacy in Flanders, Belgium takes place in the Royal Library Brussels on 27 September. This year’s congress includes a keynote by Lara Ankersmit, Head of Digital in NOS followed by 4 practical examples of initiatives broadly aimed at making news more relevant for young people. More information about this event is available [here](#) (in Dutch).

**JTEL Summer School 9-13 October, Aveiro**

The 13th Joint European Summer School on Technology Enhanced Learning is taking place from Monday, October 9 to Friday, October 13, 2017 in Aveiro, Portugal. Pre-summer school activities are organised all day on Sunday, October 8. The programme covers topics from a broad range of domains which contribute to advancing the field of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL). The summer school is organised by the European Association of Technology Enhanced Learning - EATEL. For more information, check out the summer school [website](#).

**EADTU conference: Milton Keynes 25-27 October**

The draft programme for this year’s EADTU conference organised under the banner headline ‘Higher Education for the Future; Accelerating and strengthening innovation’ is now available. This conference is hosted by the Open University UK in Milton Keynes and will focus on open education and widening participation, strategies for the future of continuous professional development and policies for change in Higher Education, [here](#) is the conference website.

**Media Literacy Seminar 26 October, Amsterdam**

Mediawijzer.net in the Netherlands is organising a seminar on 26 October with the aim of taking a fresh perspective on media literacy. This afternoon seminar takes into account the rapid pace at which technology is changing and the effect this is having on our cultures and relationships as well as a recognition that digital natives have different relationships with media than millennials and older generations. Find out more [here](#).

**mLearn2017 30 October – 1 November, Larnaca**

The annual mLearn conference on mobile and contextual learning provides a forum for researchers, policy makers, professionals and educators from higher education, school education and vocational education, government departments, industries and international organisations as well as IT developers and solutions providers to share knowledge, research and practices and debate critical issues pertaining to sustainable futures for mobile learning. This year, the overarching conference theme is ‘mLearning and Design for Social Change and Innovation’. The conference website is [here](#).

**Spinelli Prize promotes European Union values**

This prize will reward outstanding contributions that communicate the founding values, history, action and key benefits of the EU to citizens; enhance citizens’ understanding of the EU; broaden ownership of the European project and build trust in the EU’s promise of a better future for all. There will be six first prizes of €50,000; six second prizes of €30,000 and ten third prizes of €17,000. Read [more](#) on how to apply.

For more information, to submit content or to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please contact the Media & Learning News Editorial Team.

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