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A "Threshold" Self-paced Online Training for Teaching Staff: What's New?

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A "THRESHOLD" SELF-PACED ONLINE TRAINING FOR TEACHING STAFF: WHAT'S NEW?

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Abstract

In our latest publication (Wang Szilas & Birchler Emery, 2022), we have presented the development of a three-level approach to train the digital skills of the continuing education teaching staff, in particular those related to the use of the Moodle platform: namely, the Threshold level, the Standard level and the Advanced level. We adopted a design-based research (DBR) method to develop this project and have gone through two design circles, the main findings of which have been discussed as follows:

- 1st DBR circle (2019-2020): identify the essential skills for each level and organize the workshops
- 2nd DBR circle (2021-2022): implement a Threshold level self-paced online training course on Moodle for all teaching staff

We are now at the end of the second design circle and the beginning of the third design circle with the following objectives:

- 3rd DBR circle (2023-2024): refine the design and find out more general design principles that can be adopted by other similar projects

What we want to share in this paper are the latest discoveries and especially the reflections made during the analysis of the data collected, including course participation, evaluation of learning outcomes, and feedback from participants through a questionnaire.

Based on our analysis of the data we have collected so far, some preliminary results have already started to prompt us to reflect on the following points:

- Design principles to be drawn from this project
- Future training courses to develop the skills for the standard and personalized level
- Best way to engage more learners, as participation is not mandatory and role of the institution in promoting the engagement
- Encourage and ensure that our teachers do use their new competences in designing their courses

There are three key findings in this paper. Firstly, because teaching teams are very diverse and each profession has its own characteristics, we believe it is necessary to develop specific training for specific groups of teachers; secondly, it is necessary to give the possibility of not using advanced digital tools or methods for teaching exclusively but staying at the first level, because people have different attitudes to digital tools. It is not necessary to use very high-level and complex digital technologies in some teaching. Finally, there is a need to provide a progressive training that guarantees the acquisition of an adequate level of competence in a very short period of time to cope with distance learning in emergency situations.

Keywords:

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