

## EAIT editorial 17-3

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As most readers will be aware, the journal of Education and Information Technologies is the official publication of the Technical Committee on Education (TC3) of the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP). If you want to find out more about IFIP or the activities of TC3 you should go to: <http://www.ifip.org/> or <http://www.ifip-tc3.net/>. The third issue of EAIT this year has articles ranging from online seminars to reflection on the history of educational media reflecting again the wide range of topics related to this field.

We begin this issue by looking at: ‘*How and why do students of higher education participate in online seminars?*’ in this article is by Stefan Hrastinski and Jimmy Jaldemark. Online education continues to gain in popularity in educational institutions and this paper investigates how higher education students participate in online seminars and why they participate in certain ways. The research involved an online class that attended asynchronous and synchronous online seminars and it was shown that the participation of students varied between aspects such as exchanging information, managing tasks and providing social support and that the emphasis of these aspects were related to the tool they communicated through.

‘*Using a wiki to facilitate an online professional learning community for induction and mentoring teachers*’ by Amy Hutchison and Jamie Colwell is the next article. The article reports a case study on the use of a wiki as a tool for conducting online professional learning communities (OLCs) with induction and mentor teachers. Results indicate that Web 2.0 tools may be most effective in OLCs when the social features are utilized in addition to the features that enable task completion and that using Web 2.0 tools restrictively, and without consideration of their affordances, may inhibit the success of OLCs. They also found that online learning communities for induction teachers may be most effective when supplemented with face-to-face discussion and that a task-driven environment in OLCs can encourage professional dialogue and reflection, but may make induction teachers feel isolated and unsupported.

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Following is an article by Douglas A. Kranch on: ‘*Teaching the novice programmer: A study of instructional sequences and perception*’. The author notes that studies show that for many years the courses teaching computer programming skills to novices have engendered a dislike for programming in many students. In the first phase of the study identical content in one of three instructional sequences was presented to programming novice college students to determine which produced the greatest development of programming expertise. The second phase sought evidence that there were differences in perception and the complexity of knowledge in long term memory between novices and experts programmers by comparing the fifteen top performing participants on the programming assessment with three programming experts in chunking a short program and in constructing the central solution statement to four programming problems.

‘*An examination of gender differences among college students in their usage perceptions of the internet*’ has been contributed by Tao Hu, Xihui Zhang, Hua Dai and Ping Zhang, and examines gender differences among college students in their usage perceptions of the Internet. Results of their study suggest gender differences in usage perceptions of the Internet can be detected among college students. Specifically, the differences are reflected in that male college students have a higher level of perceptions of Internet self-efficacy, experience, and information overload than females.

The next article is titled: ‘*Copyrighted Internet material in education—teacher needs and use arrangements*’ and is by Merja Halme and Outi Somervuori. The article notes that teachers are in need of mechanisms to allow them to routinely reproduce and distribute digitally copyrighted material, and that this was the starting point in their study on teachers’ Internet material use benefits in Finnish education. The study considered the use and reproduction of Internet material like text, graphs and pictures and conjoint analysis was used to measure teachers’ individual benefits for different types of Internet material. Special attention was given to how teachers wanted to reproduce the material as well how the price paid affected their choices.

The final article in this issue provides a reflection on the history and future of educational media. ‘The eventful genesis of educational media’ by Wim Westera reviews the rise and fall of various “revolutionary” learning media and analyses what went wrong. The author notes that three main driving factors influence the educational system: educational practice, educational research and educational technologies. In the article the role and position of these factors is elaborated and critically reviewed.

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