



Projects r+i+i: Research

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Project Name

Guidelines for analysis intervention in virtual learning environments: relevant dimensions and assessment tools

Project data

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Abstract

The main research goal is the elaboration and validation of analysis tools for the assessment of the quality of teaching and learning formal environments where different forms of non-face-to-face interaction take place by means of information and communication technologies (ICT). In order to reach this goal we proposed the following specific objectives:

- to ground, theoretically and methodologically, the elaboration of analysis tools for virtual teaching and learning environments, that contribute to its comprehension;
- to identify and characterise the relevant dimensions of analysis of the tools to be applied in the study of processes of knowledge construction in non-face-to-face teaching and learning formal environments;
- to elaborate these tools in agreement with the established dimensions being coherent with the initial theoretical framework;
- to validate the dimensions and tools improving them in agreement with the results of its pilot application in concrete case studies of processes of knowledge construction in formal educational environments.

The research design follows a case study methodology and aims at identifying, describing and understanding the forms that educational interaction takes in five instructional processes mediated by ICT. The differences among these five instructional processes are the basic dimensions of the educational uses of technologies, that means, the mediation type and the degree in which technology is used in each process. The observation unit is defined according to the specificities of each case, considering the hypothesis of the project to be contrasted.

According to the first phase of the project, the research team exposes in the first Workpaper (Workpaper 1. 2003) the theoretical and methodological requirements derived from the initial theoretical framework, specially those that arise from taking the interactivity between teacher and students and among students as a basic unit of analysis of knowledge construction processes that include ICT. In agreement with this approach, there are four main dimensions that constitute the backbone of the analysis of the educational process: real technological interactivity, potential technological interactivity, real instructional interactivity, potential instructional interactivity.

The second phase of the project results in the elaboration of the analysis tools, in accordance with the dimensions established in line with the theoretical framework. The validation of the basic dimensions, the tools and their protocol of use will be completed at the closure of the project. During this period we will complete the development and the final characterisation of the assessment tools of teaching-learning environments. The fulfilment of these final activities depends eventually on the data collection of each case and the analysis of all these data in order to reach a better understanding of our object of study. The relevance and utility of the tools will be validated through the significance and relevance of the data collected, and will allow the final design of the assessment tools and eventually the achievement of the final research goal.

(end of abstract)

