DISCUSSION SECTION

The tipping point: a response

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I am grateful to Gilly Salmon for providing further personal insight into the five-stage model for e-learning, reviewed in my recent paper (Moule, 2007). Professor Salmon plots the development and use of the model, first conceived some 12 years ago, and encourages us to reflect further on a model that has been so widely adopted. The longevity of its use in a fast-changing field is testament to its appeal to educators, developers and learners. It is clear that a number of *ALT-J* readers will know of, and have used, the model and may want to express thoughts on its current applicability, as Salmon invites.

In challenging the model with the proposed 'E-learning Ladder' (Moule, 2006), I am also encouraging a discourse about the pedagogy of e-learning at a time when technology continues to offer great scope for further development through virtual learning environments and Web 2.0 technologies. I believe it is important to encourage academic staff engagement in designing for online pedagogy, although I support Salmon's suggestion that this remains far from easy. Too frequently I encounter concerns relating to an information and communications technology-driven pedagogy, where academics struggle to ensure learning outcomes are met through the available computer technology. These issues are explored in a recent publication (Shalnti, 2006), where it is suggested that technological developments, including mobile devices, continue to be defined in relation to delivery capability rather than accounting for different learning needs.

The e-learning ladder presents my construction of a conceptual model that acknowledges the range of e-learning approaches available to academics and e-learning designers. It shows how learning might be positioned from instructivist through to constructivist, giving examples of the types of e-learning that might be located within. These ladder 'rungs' could be developed further to take account of the range of Web 2.0 technologies now available, particularly in respect of m-learning. The ladder 'sides' represent a number of the requirements to support e-learning identified through the research. These I feel might also be enhanced, to include, for example, the role of gender in e-learning. It is my intention to develop this through further research and use, and hope that others in the e-learning community will engage in this as well. I

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developed the model to take account of learner diversity and pedagogic innovation. It was my intention that it should support academics and designers in thinking through the learning approach, on an instructivist to constructivist continuum, to identify how the technology could enable achievement. I wait to hear your thoughts and feedback.

References

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