CiC NEXTBOOK

Co-created Interactive Courseware
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Case study report - UoW: MA(Ed) Pedagogy module, 2022

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1. Context

This case study focuses on the application of Nextbook in the context of the module 7ED034, "Leading Change in Pedagogy" on the Master of Arts in Education program at the University of Wolverhampton in the UK. Th University of Wolverhampton is a well-respected university both regarding research and education. The MA(Education) is a multi-disciplinary one-year (FT) or up to three years (PT) Masters course that recruits many international students. The Leading Change in Pedagogy module is an optional module for students on the MA(Ed).

Typically, the Leading Change in Pedagogy module has around 35 students, and a high success rate of around 82%. Students entering the course have diverse backgrounds, with different levels of experience and skills in education, teaching and pedagogy. The case study focuses on how the co-creation software of Nextbook supported the transition to a new hybrid pedagogical approach based on dialogic flipped learning.

2. Challenge

This is a short-course module of just 12 sessions of input, leaving little time for discussion of the reading material. To overcome this, the tutor planned for students to engage on the online Nextbook platform. Materials were posted up ahead of classes, and students were encouraged to highlight sections of text and leave comments and questions.

The challenges were to engage students in the course materials, to provide incentives for them to complete the online material in time for the weekly on-campus sessions, to provide a social learning experience to students while preparing online for the on-campus sessions, and to offer the teachers a useful overview of student questions and discussion in order to prepare for the on-campus sessions.

3. Co-creation solution

On the Nextbook platform an outline of the course was created allowing students to get a structured overview of the course content. Material was not posted for each weekly session, as the University dictated that much of this had to be within its own VLE, Canvas. However, books and excerpts were posted ahead of some sessions, and students were invited to discuss, or ask questions about, the themes covered and the ramifications for them as educators. Students could then add a remark or question next to previous comments, thereby engaging in ongoing dialogue and thus preparing for the session effectively. The tutor was also able to see these comments and could choose to engage or to use the discussion to direct the teaching in the following session on campus.

One of the pre-session materials offered on 7ED034

Team Change

Matt Smith

English   Continue reading →

1 TEAM CHANGE
1.1 Introduction
1.2 What is a group and when is it a team?
1.3 Why we need teams
1.4 The types of organizational teams
1.5 How to improve team effectiveness

Archive

Dialogic comments from students on the materials

asking a number of pertinent questions:

- What is a group and when is it a team?
- Why do you need teams?
- What types of organizational teams are there?
- How do you improve team effectiveness?
- What does team change look like?
- What are the leadership issues in team change?
- How do individuals affect team dynamics?
- How well do teams initiate and adapt to organizational change?

The chapter aims to enhance understanding of the nature of teams and how they develop, identify how teams perform in change situations, and

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Team change

Initial thought: you are only a team when you work together and support each other.

Working towards a common goal/purpose.

Reply

Send

Struggling with one member of the team

Reply

Send

Q 2.1 Within your working life, what teams are you a member of and to which groups do you belong?

Q 2.2 Within your personal life, what teams are you a member of and to which groups do you belong?

Q 2.3 In what ways was it easier to answer in your personal life, and in what ways more difficult?

I belong to the GCSE Maths and English group, but my team are those who work with me in my maths department.

I belong to Module teams, but would class my personal students as a group, as I am the only common denominator - they are all working independently for their own goal.

GB English   Reply

Send

I am in a whole school team, and I have my own year group team. I would say the year group team fits more with the definition of team, as we work together to achieve the same outcomes.

Further comments from students on that module

> I found the difference in definition interesting. It is very subtle but highlights that a team requires the shared responsibility for achieving the same outcomes, sharing values and collaboration. Whereas, a group just work alongside each other, which could be on a more individual basis.

> Describing a team as a small group - are larger groups not teams? Or is a larger group classed as an organisation?

Students were asked to engage with the material connected to a lecture no later than half a day beforehand, in order to allow the teachers to prepare the session. Answers to questions were not only provided during the on-campus and livestreamed Q&A session but also in the Nextbook platform itself.

We situate the co-creation solution within the framework of Bovill (2019) – see below.

Question	Possible responses							
Who initiates the co-creation?	<mark>Staff-led</mark>	Student-led	Staff and students					Other (elaborate)
What is the focus of the co-creation? (see Bovill & Woolmer, 2018; Healey et al., 2014)	Entire curriculum (co-creation *of* the curriculum)	<mark>Learning & teaching (co-creation *in* the curriculum)</mark>	<mark>Educational research & evaluation</mark>	Disciplinary research	Wider student experience			Other (elaborate)
What is the context for the co-creation? (see Bovill & Woolmer, 2018; MercerMapstone et al., 2017)	<mark>Curricular</mark>	Extra-curricular	University-wide					Other (elaborate)
How many students are involved? (see Mercer-Mapstone et	1-5 (specify specific number)	6-10 (specify specific number)	11-20 (specify specific number)	<mark>21-30 (32)</mark>	31-100 (specify specific number)	101-500(250)	>500 (615)	Other (elaborate)

al., 2017								
Have you selected students from a larger group or are you involving a whole class? (See Bovill, 2019; Bryson et al., 2015)	Selected	Whole class/group						Other (elaborate)
Which students are involved? (See Bovill, 2014)	Retrospective	Current	Aspiring/Futu re					Other (elaborate)
What year of study are the students in?	First -year of Bachelor	Bachelor later than 1st year	Master	Master after Master	PhD	Postgraduate	Lifelong-learning	Other (elaborate)
What is the scale of the co-creation?	1 class/interacti on moment	several classes / interaction moments	1 project	several projects	Entire course	Faculty/schoo l-wide	Institution-wide	Other (elaborate)
How long does the co-creation last?	Days	Months	Years					
What is the role of the	Representativ e	Consultant	Co-researcher	Pedagogical co-designer	Participant			Other (elaborate)

student? (See Bovill et al., 2016)								
What is the nature of student involvement? (See Bovill, 2017; Könings et al., 2017)	Informed	Consulted	Co-researcher	Pedagogical co-designer	<mark>Contributor</mark>			Other (elaborate)
What is the nature of reward or recompense given to students?	Payment in money	Payment in vouchers	Course credit	Refreshments	<mark>No payment or reward</mark>			Other (elaborate)
What is the goal of the co-creation?	To improve the course	<mark>To enhance student engagement</mark>	Aiming for a socially just higher education	<mark>To get the benefits of co-creation in the course</mark>	Incorporating the student perspective	To enhance student's skills		Other (elaborate)

4. Results

Experiences were collected from the students using the University's official Course/Teacher evaluation administered at the end of the semester that the students took the course.

This official Course/Teacher evaluation consisted of a fixed set of questions that students rate on a scale from 1-10, of which 5 can be seen as related to the approach of delivering the course material in Nextbook: (3) You have accessed learning resources for the module (e.g. on the module CANVAS topic and/or through the Learning Centre); (4) You have undertaken a substantial amount of regular independent study to support your learning in this module (i.e. weekly outside of lecture times); (5) Your level of engagement on the module has impacted on your likely module grade; (10) There are opportunities for you to get support from academic staff during the module; and (14) Resources to support the module (e.g. weekly schedule, assignment briefs, and lecture slides) are available on CANVAS Additionally, students could also leave open remarks in two categories (what did you like and what could be improved).

Official Course/Teacher evaluation

18 students (56%) responded to the official course/teacher evaluation. The feedback was variable, but generally positive.

(3) You have accessed learning resources for the module: 100% strongly agree

(4) You have undertaken a substantial amount of regular independent study to support your learning in this module: 88% strongly agree; 11% agree

(5) Your level of engagement on the module has impacted on your likely module grade: 67% strongly agree; 27% agree; 6% neither agree nor disagree

(10) There are opportunities for you to get support from academic staff during the module: 56% strongly agree; 33% agree; 11% neither agree nor disagree

(14) Resources to support the module…are available on CANVAS: 83% strongly agree; 17% agree

Additionally, students could also leave open remarks in two categories (what did you like and what could be improved).

"One of the best things about using the Nextbook platform was how we could get deeply involved in peer discussions" (*based on their textual annotations*).

"I was surprised that others engaged in thoughtful and meaningful debates on my comments. This allowed me to understand some things better."

"I believe that the Nextbook platform played a role in creating a more collaborative and engaging learning environment for us."

"As I got to grips with the Nextbook platform, I realised how the collaboration features helped me engage with the material."

5. Discussion

Overall, the way Nextbook was used in the course was appreciated by the majority of students and was found to be generally easy to use. There were some clear drawbacks and difficulties, however, especially as the platform was not ready out-of-the-box and some issues required immediate attention which was not always forthcoming, leading to dissatisfaction and fatigue with it. These were the primary issues we identified:

- Limited visual engagement: A platform that is primarily focused on text may not be as engaging for students who are visual learners. They may have a harder time retaining information presented in a purely text-based format.

- Accessibility limitations: For students with visual or cognitive disabilities, a text-heavy platform can be challenging to navigate and comprehend.

- Boredom: A platform that is primarily text-based can become monotonous and boring for students, leading to decreased engagement and participation.

- Limited interactivity: While Nextbook allows for annotations and peer discussions, it may not have as many interactive features as other platforms, which can limit student engagement.

- Technical difficulties: With any technology-based platform, there is always a risk of technical difficulties and interruptions to the learning process.

- Cost: Text-heavy platforms like Nextbook may require a subscription or other costs, which can be a barrier for some students and schools.

Recommendation: It's important to keep these drawbacks in mind when considering the implementation of a text-heavy platform like Nextbook and to weigh the benefits and drawbacks carefully to determine if it is the best solution for a particular learning environment.

Despite these concerns and difficulties, there were clear advantages and positives in using the Nextbook platform. These were the benefits we identified:

- Students were able to actively participate in the learning process, co-creating the content and leaving annotations and comments as they progressed.

- The interactive nature of the platform encouraged students to engage in a more meaningful way with the material and with each other.

- Some students were more engaged and motivated in their studies, and there was evidence of improvement in some students' understanding of the material, although this was clearly linked to time spent on the project and the level of engagement with the dialogic nature of the collaborations.

- The platform provided a more interactive and dynamic learning experience, and some students were able to better retain the information they learned.

- Student engagement and the learning experience has been enhanced for some students, as per their feedback.

- The platform allowed for the material to be presented in a different (dynamic is stretching it) and engaging way, and my students were able to actively participate in the learning process through co-creation and annotations.

- Despite their increased engagement and understanding of the material, this did not translate to a corresponding improvement in their grades: the grade curve and average score was similar to last year.

- Discussions were driven forward with some students engaging in thoughtful and meaningful debates based on their annotations. This allowed me to take a step back from contributing and let the students take control of their learning experience.

- It also impacted on in-class sessions where students were better prepared in a flipped learning style. Sessions were more seminar-based than input-heavy lectures as they were ahead of the game.

- The peer-to-peer interaction was not only beneficial for their understanding of the material, but also for their overall critical thinking and communication skills.

Conclusion

Interactive courseware has clear potential to support online learning on Masters courses in education. The Nextbook platform can help students find support through engaging in co-creative and collaborative asynchronous tasks in preparation for on-site learning events. This engagement and participation allows for deeper learning to take place.

Acknowledgments