

Enabling Educators to Apply Web 2.0 in the Class Room: Use of an Integrated Web 2.0 Platform Approach

Thomas M Connolly, Gavin Baxter, Mark Stansfield

University of the West of Scotland (United Kingdom)

thomas.connolly@uws.ac.uk, gavin.baxter@uws.ac.uk, mark.stansfield@uws.ac.uk

Abstract

Web 2.0 is a concept associated with a range of software applications that allow people to collaborate, create content, generate knowledge and share information online (Grosbeck, 2009). An area where the use of Web 2.0 software applications is being used is in the field of education. Despite the implied benefits of using Web 2.0 for the purposes of education, barriers for effectively applying it in educational settings can sometimes exist, particularly for educators new to using Web 2.0 tools who are unfamiliar with their pedagogic value, how best to apply them in the classroom in addition to being unable to choose the best Web 2.0 solution for their teaching needs and the learning requirements of their students.

This paper presents the findings from a current EU Project that has established a European Resource Centre (ERC) for simplified and targeted Web 2.0 tools for educators and students to use in schools, Higher Education (HE) and adult education. The project aims to enhance the use of Web 2.0 by educators by lowering barriers to usage acting as a direct catalyst to change in the use of ICT.

The paper reports on the results of a recent number of pilots run by educators who have used the integrated Web 2.0 ERC platform developed in the project in a range of subjects covering: languages, sciences, social science, technology, business, media, art and teacher education. The findings of the project are analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

This paper contributes to the body of knowledge associated with Web 2.0 use in the classroom by identifying best practice in the field of Web 2.0 in education based on the results of the project. This paper will also present an innovative pedagogical framework for the use of Web 2.0 and will illustrate the use of this framework through a set of pedagogical guides for schools, HE and adult education sectors.