Poster presentation

Giving lectures a voice for a cross-cultural audience

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The purpose of this poster is to outline a current research project investigating the value of the inclusion of online audio lectures, in units involving cross-cultural student audiences. This research project arose from two contributing factors: The increase in the number of international students, studying both on and off campus, and the movement for universities to go 'online'.

Cultural advantages of audio lectures

The aim of the creation of online audio lectures is not to replace the face to face lectures, but to enhance the unit resources and promote an unbiased learning platform for all students. It is the intention of this research project to see if the addition of audio files to unit lectures has an educational benefit for international students. It is assumed that students will use the audio lectures to catch up on content missed when they are unable to attend a lecture. This assumption is extended one step further with the expectation that international students will use the audio lectures to revisit the lecture in order to better understand the unit content so that they are able to retain the information presented.

The two major cultural groups at Deakin University have been identified as Australian and Asian. Once identified, we then have an insight into the audience we are creating the audio lectures for. It has been acknowledged that students from Asian cultures have a tendency towards rote learning. However, how can rote learning occur when a lecture is presented only once? Students do have unlimited access to text based lecture notes, but the physical content conveyed by the lecturer within a 'real time' on campus lecture is only delivered once. Therefore by creating an environment where students are able to revisit and re-access information at their convenience is an important step towards fostering rote learning.

The creation of the audio lecture is currently being conducted. The audio lectures are recorded using an audio recording device during the 'real time' on campus lectures. The audio files are then transferred from the device to the computer, where they are converted to either *wave* or *mp3* files. The files are then modularised into smaller files that correspond to the text based lecture material. The modularised audio files are attached to there corresponding lecture slides, in Microsoft PowerPoint. The synchronised audio files and PowerPoint slides are then transferred to the Internet where they can be accessed by those students enrolled in the selected unit. The access to these audio lectures by the students and the subsequent student's opinions will be collected and reviewed to assess the significance/relevance of the inclusion of audio lectures as unit resources.

Conclusion

It is expected that the research project will identify that the online audio lectures have a niche market for distance education and international students, as the ability of the students to revisit the information holds the major benefits for Asian cultured students, as it reflective of their rote learning style.