# COMBLE – BL Expert Trainer Course

## *Readings Overview*

### Week 0 (35): 24.08-30.08 2009

**Mandatory:**

**Trapp, S. (2006):** *Blended Learning Concepts – a Short Overview. IN*: E. Tomadaki and P. Scott (Eds.): Innovative Approaches for Learning and Knowledge Sharing, EC-TEL 2006 Workshops Proceedings, p. 28-35.

> *This paper presents a short overview of blended learning, showing arguments for and against these concepts. Potential blended learning scenarios are described that vary depending on the degree of instructor involvement, learner self-organization and on-line moderation or coaching. The paper ends with an example of successful application of a blended learning concept in industry.*

**Barret, T. (2005)**: *Understanding Problem Based Learning. IN*: Barrett, T., Mac Labhrainn, I., Fallon, H. (Eds.). Handbook of Enquiry & Problem Based Learning. Galway: CELT. P. 1-13.

> *This chapter focuses on Problem-based Learning (PBL). Enquiry-based Learning is defined in the first chapter as "a broad umbrella term used to describe approaches to learning that are driven by a process of enquiry," O'Rourke and Kahn (2005:1). Within this context Problem Based Learning is seen as a set of approaches under the broader category of Enquiry-based Learning. One of the main defining characteristics of Problem-based Learning, which distinguishes it from some other forms of Enquiry-based Learning, is that the problem is presented to the students **first** at the start of the learning process, before other curriculum inputs. Another defining characteristic of PBL is that in PBL tutorials students define their own learning issues, what they need to research and learn to work on the problem and are responsible themselves for searching appropriate sources of information.*

**Zuber-Skerritt, O. (2002):** *The Concept of Action Learning. The Learning Organization Volume 9, Number 3, pp 114-124*

> *This paper reviews the concept of action learning with reference to the classic texts by Reg Revans and texts that are likely to become classics, such as recent studies from the UK, Germany, Austria, South Africa, Australia, North America and Latin America. Action Learning is now a international fields and this paper draws widely from this field. The paper focuses on defining the concept of action learning and revealing its*

*underlying philosophical assumptions. The terminology, features and success factors of the action learning program are also considered*

**Jennings, N. & Collins, C. (2007):** *Virtual or Virtually U: Educational Institutions in Second Life. IN:* International Journal of Social Sciences 2; 3. p. 1-7.

*Educational institutions are increasingly exploring the affordances of 3D virtual worlds for instruction and research, but few studies have been done to document current practices and uses of this emerging technology. This observational survey examines the virtual presences of 170 accredited educational institutions found in one such 3D virtual world called Second Life®, created by San- Francisco based Linden Lab®. The study focuses on what educational institutions look like in this virtual environment, the types of spaces educational institutions are creating or simulating, and what types of activities are being conducted.*

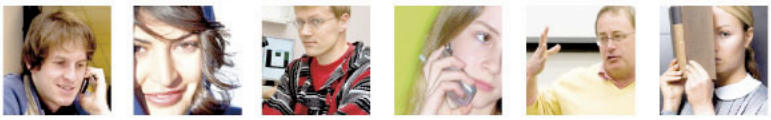
**Optional**

**Stahl, G.; Koschmann, T. & Suthers, D. (2006)**: *Computer-supported collaborative learning: An historical perspective.* Laboratory for Interactive Learning Technologies. p. 1-20.

*Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) is an emerging branch of the learning sciences concerned with studying how people can learn together with the help of computers. As we will see in this essay, such a simple statement conceals considerable complexity. The interplay of learning with technology turns out to be quite intricate. The inclusion of collaboration, computer mediation and distance education has problematized the very notion of learning and called into question prevailing assumptions about how to study it. Like many active fields of scientific research, CSCL has a complex relationship to established disciplines, evolves in ways that are hard to pinpoint and includes important contributions that seem incompatible. The field of CSCL has a long history of controversy about its theory, methods and definition. Furthermore, it is important to view CSCL as a vision of what may be possible with computers and of what kinds of research should be conducted, rather than as an established body of broadly accepted laboratory and classroom practices. We will start from some popular understandings of the issues of CSCL and gradually reveal its more complex nature. We will review CSCL's historical development and offer our perspective on its future.*

**deFreitas, S. (2008):** *Emerging trends in Serious Games and Virtual Worlds.IN:* Emerging technologies for learning. Volume 3.p. 58-72.

*The role of 'serious games' in modern culture is a recent phenomenon, and broadly arises out of the wider use of electronic gaming for leisure purposes and the increasing use of the internet to support large online communities. Serious games, as distinct from leisure games, provide users and players with opportunities to explore non-leisure applications using games and immersive world applications for education and training, as well as supporting business and medical uses (Michael and Chen, 2006). The term has been coined to create a separation between leisure and non-leisure*



*games-based activities in order to take games as training or learning tools more seriously. The use of serious games, in this way, may engage under-served learners, liven up school and tertiary curricula or provide support for lifelong learners in new and innovative ways. The emergence of virtual world applications such as Second Life and ActiveWorlds provides potential for supporting learning communities in new ways. Virtual world applications, like immersive serious games applications, offer the capacity for using three-dimensional spaces as new learning spaces. This can support seminar activities, streaming lectures, create cybercampuses and help to support distributed and remotely located learner groups. This may add value to existing educational provision, as well as extending new provision of learning. The paper gives an overview of these trends.*

## Week 1 (36): 31.08-06.09 2009

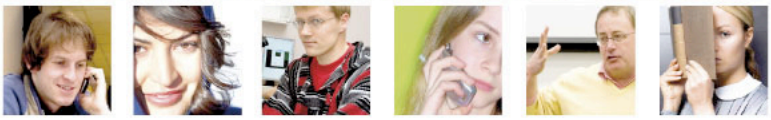
**Mandatory**

**Heinze, A. & Proctor, C. (2004**): *Reflections on The Use Of Blended Learning*. Education in a Changing Environment Conference. p. 1-11

*This paper reflects upon the experience of the delivery of a program at the University of Salford using blended learning. Facilitated by action research, it reports on the lessons learnt since the paper by Procter "Blended Learning in Practice" (Procter, 2003). Within the first cycle of action research we captured staff and students' opinions regarding the program, these are discussed in this paper. A number of lessons and conclusions are drawn, in particular, we argue for the need for a theoretical underpinning and that Laurillard's Conversational Framework (Laurillard, 1993) is a valuable tool for blended learning, leading us to test the theory in practice over the coming two years. One of the main findings is the importance of transparent communication on a blended learning course.*

**Savery, J. (2006)**: *Overview of Problem-based Learning: Definitions and Distinctions. IN*: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning. Volume 1, no. 1. p. 9-20

*Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that has been used successfully for over 30 years and continues to gain acceptance in multiple disciplines. It is an instructional (and curricular) learner-centered approach that empowers learners to conduct research, integrate theory and practice, and apply knowledge and skills to develop a viable solution to a defined problem. This overview presents a brief history, followed by a discussion of the similarities and differences between PBL and other experiential approaches to teaching, and identifies some of the challenges that lie ahead for PBL.*



**Optional**

**deGraff, E. & Kolmos, A. (2007)**: *History of Problem Based and Project Based Learning. IN*: deGraff, E. & Kolmos, A. (eds.): Management of Change. Implementation of Problem Based and Project Based Learning in Engineering. Sense Publisher. p.1-8

**Holmberg, K. & Huvila, I. (2008):** *Learning together apart: Distance education in a virtual world. IN:* First Monday, Volume 13 Number 10 – 6. p. 1-14.

> *A course in information studies was partly held in the virtual world of Second Life. Second Life was used as a platform to deliver lectures and as a place for organizing group assignments and having discussions. Students' opinions about Second Life were studied and compared to their opinions about more traditional methods in education. The results show a lower threshold for participation in lectures. According to the students, Second Life should not replace face–to–face education, but it could serve as an excellent addition to other more traditional methods and platforms used in education. The students also considered that lectures held in Second Life were much more "fun" than those using other methods. This particular aspect, and its effect on learning outcomes, requires further research. This research demonstrates that Second Life has potential as a learning environment in distance education.*

## Week 2 (37): 07.09-13.09 2009

**Mandatory**

**Dilworth, R.L. (1998):** *Action Learning in a Nutshell***.** Performance Improvement Quarterly. Volume 11, number 1. Special Issue: Action Learning. p. 28 – 43.

> *This article attempts to provide a short profile of Professor R. W. Revans the founding father of action learning. It traces a life which quickly indicated intellectual and athletic gifts–with determination and deep humanitarianism. In the 1930s, Revans cleaned the blackboard for Einstein and was the last doctoral student of J.J. Thomson (father of the electron) at the Cavendish Laboratories (Cambridge), where Baron Ernest Rutherford headed the laboratory and worked to split the atom. Revans' work before, during, and after the war is referred to, mentioning his days at the Coal Board, Manchester University, the HIC (Hospital Internal Communication) project, Belgium, and finally mentioning some current action learning developments.*

**Dixon, N.M. (1998):** *Action Learning: More than just a task force***.** Performance Improvement Quarterly. Volume 11, number 1. Special Issue: Action Learning. p. 44 – 58.

> *Action learning, as it is often implemented in the U.S., differs little from a typical cross-functional task force. Those characteristics of action learning that originated with Reginald Revan's work and that have such potential to change both organizations and participants are often absent in the Americanized version of action learning. Outlined here are the principles that underlie Revan's work as well as an explanation of why*

*they are so critical to both individual development and organizational problem resolution. These principles are then contrasted with a case study of a Fortune 500 company which implemented the more Americanized version. The benefits of that implementation are explored as well as a discussion of the learning difficulties the teams experienced.*

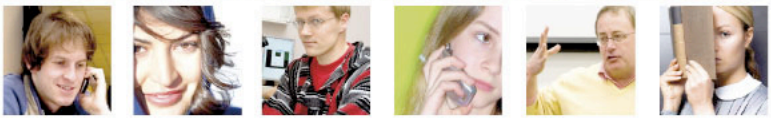
**deGraff, E. & Kolmos, A. (2007)**: *History of Problem Based and Project Based Learning. IN*: deGraff, E. & Kolmos, A. (eds.): Management of Change. Implementation of Problem Based and Project Based Learning in Engineering. Sense Publisher. p.1-8

**Jonassen, D.H. & Hung, W. (2008)**: *All problems are not equal: implications for problem based learning. IN*: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning. Volume 2, no. 2. p. 6-28.

*Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional model that assumes the centrality of problems to learning. Research on PBL has focused on student learning, student roles, tutor roles, problem design, and technology use (Hung, Jonassen, & Liu, 2008), but little attention in the PBL literature has been paid to the nature of the problems that provide the focus for PBL. In this paper, we articulate a model for evaluating problem difficulty. Problem difficulty is define in terms of complexity, including breadth of knowledge, attainment level, intricacy of procedures, relational complexity, and problem structuredness including intransparency, heterogeneity of interpretations, interdisciplinarity, dynamicity, or competing alternatives. Based on these characteristics, we identify four classes of problems and then describe three different kinds of problems: decision-making, diagnosis-solution, and policy problems. We then examine the amenability of these classes and problem types as foci for PBL curricula. Finally, we challenge PBL researchers and designers to consider the issue of problem difficulty in articulating PBL curricula.*

**Paulus, T. (2007)**: *CMC modes for learning tasks at a distance*. IN: Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12(4), article 9.

*Which communication mode(s) do experienced distance learners choose as they collaborate on tasks, and what do they talk about in each mode? How do the participants choose modes for various aspects of a task, and which phases of knowledge construction are present? In this study, case study and computer-mediated discourse analysis procedures are used to investigate transcripts and individual reflections of 10 small groups of distance learners. The findings reveal that the discussion forum was used significantly more often for conceptual moves and for later phases of the knowledge construction process. Email was used more for social moves, and chat was used more for later phases of knowledge construction. Implications for providing groups with various CMC modes to complete tasks and for advising novice online learners about the affordances of each mode are addressed.*



**Optional:**

**Nonnecke, B. & Preece, J. (2001)**: *Why Lurkers Lurk*. AMCIS Conference 2001. p. 1-12

*The goal of this paper is to address the question: 'why do lurkers lurk?' Lurkers reportedly makeup the majority of members in online groups, yet little is known about them. Without insight into lurkers, our understanding of online groups is incomplete. Ignoring, dismissing, or misunderstanding lurking distorts knowledge of life online and may lead to inappropriate design of online environments. To investigate lurking, the authors carried out a study of lurking using in-depth, semi-structured interviews with ten members of online groups. 79 reasons for lurking and seven lurkers' needs are identified from the interview transcripts. The analysis reveals that lurking is a strategic activity involving more than just reading posts.*
*Reasons for lurking are categorized and a gratification model is proposed to explain lurker behavior.*

**Wagner, C. & Ip,R.K.F. (2009)** : *Action Learning with Second Life. A pilot study.IN:* Journal of Information Systems Education, Vol. 20(2). p.1-14.

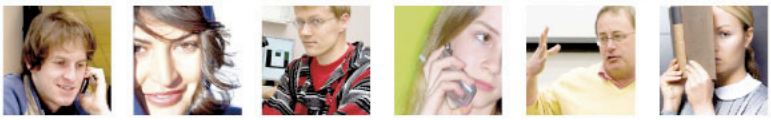
*Virtual worlds, computer-based simulated environments in which users interact via avatars, provide an opportunity for the highly realistic enactment of real life activities online. Unlike computer games, which have a pre-defined purpose, pay-off structure, and action patterns, virtual worlds can leave many of these elements for users to determine. One such world, Second Life (SL), is frequently used as platform for revenue generation, information and knowledge sharing, and learning. As a learning environment, Second Life appears to be particularly amenable to action learning, where learners are not simply observers, but plan, implement, observe, and draw conclusions from their actions. We tested the usefulness of SL as an action learning environment in a senior course for management information systems students. The findings demonstrate learning in the SL environment contributes to the students' perceived value of learning through the Action Learning steps.*

## Week 3 (38): 14.09-20.09 2009

**Mandatory:**

**Ryberg, T. & Christiansen, E. (2008):** *Community and Social Network Sites as Technology Enhanced Learning Environments. IN:* Technology, Pedagogy and Education, vol. 17, no. 3, pp. 207-219.

*This paper examines the affordance of the Danish social networking site Mingler.dk for peer-to-peer learning and development. With inspiration from different theoretical frameworks, the authors argue how learning and development in such social online systems can be conceptualised and analysed. Theoretically the paper defines development in accordance with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development, and learning in accordance with Wenger's concept of communities of practice. The authors suggest analysing the*



*learning and development taking place on Mingler.dk by using these concepts supplemented by the notion of horizontal learning adopted from Engeström and Wenger. Their analysis shows how horizontal learning happens by crossing boundaries between several sites of engagement, and how the actors' multiple membership enables the community members to draw on a vast amount of resources from a multiplicity of sites. They show how the members thereby also become (co)producers of such resources, which then in turn become resources for other communities.*

**Dalsgaard, C. (2006):** *Social software: E-learning beyond learning management systems. IN:* European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning (EURODL).

*The article argues that it is necessary to move e-learning beyond learning management systems and engage students in an active use of the web as a resource for their self-governed, problem-based and collaborative activities. The purpose of the article is to discuss the potential of social software to move e-learning beyond learning management systems. An approach to use of social software in support of a social constructivist approach to e-learning is presented, and it is argued that learning management systems do not support a social constructivist approach which emphasizes self-governed learning activities of students. The article suggests a limitation of the use of learning management systems to cover only administrative issues. Further, it is argued that students' self-governed learning processes are supported by providing students with personal tools and engaging them in different kinds of social networks.*

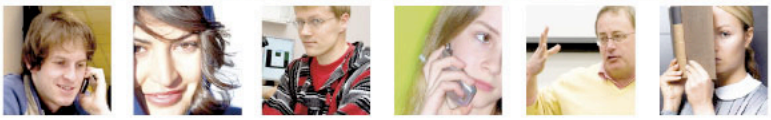
**Optional:**

**Ryberg, T. & Larsen, M.C. (2008):** *Networked Identities: Understanding relationships between strong and weak tie sin networked environments.* Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 103-115.

*In this paper we take up a critique of the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP) voiced by several authors, who suggest that networks may provide a better metaphor to understand social forms of organization and learning. Through a discussion of the notion of networked learning and the critique of CoPs we shall argue that the metaphor or theory of networked learning is itself confronted with some central tensions and challenges that need to be addressed. We then explore these theoretical and analytic challenges to the network metaphor, through an analysis of a Danish social networking site. We argue that understanding meaning making and 'networked identities 'may be relevant analytic entry points in navigating the challenges.*

**Abraham, A. & Jones, H. (2008):** *Enabling authentic cross-disciplinary learning through a scaffolded assignment in a blended environment*. Ascilite 2008 conference. p. 1-10

*This paper reports on the development of a scaffolded learning assignment with blended components in a cross-disciplinary setting. The assignment has been developed in a sociocultural context, based on a Vygotskian approach and this paper*



*details the design and development of the assignment. The five stages of the assignment have been carefully scaffolded and include elements of individual and group tasks, finishing with an individual reflection on the process. Formative assessment and associated feedback are important elements of the scaffolding and suggestions for further applications for the learning design of the assignment are suggested.*

**Tolsby, H.; Nyvang, T. & Dirckinck-Holmfeld, L. (2002)**: *A Survey of Technologies Supporting Virtual Project Based Learning.* Networked Learning Conference. p. 1-8.

*This paper describes a survey of technologies and to what extent they support virtual project based learning. The paper argues that a survey of learning technologies should be related to concrete learning tasks and processes. Problem oriented project pedagogy (POPP) is discussed, and a framework for evaluation is proposed where negotiation of meaning, coordination and resource management are identified as the key concepts in virtual project based learning. Three e-learning systems are selected for the survey, Virtual-U, Lotus Learningspace and Lotus Quickplace, as each system offers different strategies for e-learning. The paper concludes that virtual project based learning may benefit from facilities of all these systems.*

**Hayes, E. (2006):** *Situated Learning in Virtual Worlds: The Learning Ecology of Second Life.IN:* Proceedings of the Adult Education Research Conference. p. 1-6.

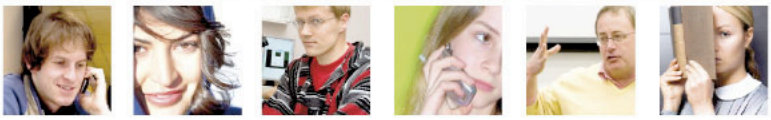
*This research investigated the "learning ecology" of the virtual world, Second Life. Study goals were to: (a) determine how the design and social dynamics of one virtual world support as well as constrain various types of learning, and (b) suggest implications for the use of virtual worlds in adult education.*

## Week 4 (39): 21.09-27.09 2009

**Mandatory:**

**BOND (2004):** *Action Learning Sets***.** Guidance Notes number 5.1

*Action learning sets are one approach that can be used to foster learning in the workplace. They have been used by a number of organizations in the NGO sector in recent years. The emphasis is on learning from experience and then acting on that learning. This is shown in the learning cycle (illustrated) which is fundamental to this methodology as an experimental approach to learning. Simply put, the Action Learning Set approach provides a structured way of working in small groups which can provide the discipline we often need to help us learn from what we do, and improve our practice as a result.*



**Optional:**

**Juwah, C. (2003):** *Using peer assessment to develop skills and capabilities.IN:* Journal of The United States Distance Education. p. 1-12.

*This paper presents the use of a seven–stage peer assessment process and peer learning in an online context to develop desired skills and capabilities. The contextualized and authentic assessments included case studies, projects, critique and portfolio of evidence. This approach helped ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the assessment method and practice in meeting intended learning outcomes. The ideas discussed in this paper are based on evidence drawn from research and practice in facilitating the development of online tutoring skills.*

**Jarmon, L.; Traphagan, T. & Mayrath, M. (2008)**: *Understanding project-based learning in Second Life with a pedagogy, training, and assessment trio.* IN: Educational Media International, 45:3, p. 157 — 176.

*This paper presents an empirical study of how Second Life (SL) was utilized for a highly successful project-based graduate interdisciplinary communication course. Researchers found that an integrated threefold approach emphasizing project-based pedagogy, technical training and support, and assessment/research was effective in cultivating and understanding learning in SL. Based on research findings, a projectbased application of SL that fully accommodates student experiential learning is recommended. It is suggested that teachers who are new To Whom It May Concern: SL and are preparing to "take the plunge" adopt a systematic team approach to integrate this trio of components. The students participating in this study formed an interdisciplinary team for their required SL project in which they chose to initiate a collaboration with the Basic Initiative and a group of architecture students to create a virtual presence for two green, sustainable, urban housing designs called the Alley Flats. Preliminary survey results suggest that the use of SL substantially enhanced the quality and experiences of student learning. Specific areas for improvement in future use are also identified.*