3rd PROLEARN Doctoral Consortium
in Technology Enhanced Learning
Maastricht, The Netherlands, September 16, 2008

These are the Proceedings of the 3rd Doctoral Consortium Proceedings at the European Conference of Technology Enhanced Learning (EC-TEL 2008). The Doctoral Consortium took place on September 16, 2008, just before the start of the conference.
The theme of the 2008 edition of the conference was convergence. We see a lot of commonalities between the research of the students in the consortium, too. First, the all deal with the social structures of E-Learning, focusing on communities of practice, blended learning courses and virtual training. Maaike is the only one explicitly concentrating on the single learner. All the other take for granted that learning takes places in a social setting. Second, modeling is in center of all research. Students use modeling techniques for expressing their research models, their domains and the learning processes. Third, some research is directly related to some learning standards like IMS learning design.

These proceedings include 6 accepted papers. The papers were re-worked after the written reviews and the discussions after the oral presentations. They not only served to improve the initial manuscripts, but also helped the doctoral students to get or keep on the right path towards their doctoral research completion.

Christian Glahn is a PhD student at the Open University of the Netherlands, Heerlen, the Netherlands. His research focuses on informal learning processes. While concentrating on communities of practice and self-regulated learning, he is searching for interaction indicators. These smart indicators will help learners to reflect on their learning processes. This thesis is the finalizing phase and was working in the context of the IP TenCompetence.

Valérie Emin is working for the Laboratoire Informatique de Grenoble, Grenoble, France. In her thesis she has developed the ISiS model (Intentions, Strategies, interactional Situations), a conceptual framework elaborated to structure the design of learning scenarios using information and communication technologies by teachers who are also designers of content. It is interesting to see that she is dealing with goal-oriented approaches known from requirements engineering. Valérie will finalize her research soon.

Linda Castañeda is affiliated with the University of Murcia, Murcia, Spain. In her research she is creating a model for curriculum analysis. Her starting point is the unclear contribution of E-Learning technologies to the further development of curricula in higher education. Here, she wants to find key success indicators. She has already analyzed a high number of existing courses helping her to mature her analysis model. While further investigations are needed the approach is promising.

Nicolas Weber is asking what makes ontologies successful for knowledge management and learning. His approach is to add a social and an evolutionary dimension to ontology engineering. His observation is that in the Web 2.0 the maturing of informal concept collections (folksonomies) is quite successful while in the semantic web ontology engineering is a task performed by specialists only. Nicolas is located at the Technical University of Graz, Graz, Austria. He has started his PhD research recently in the context of the IP MATURE.

Maaike Harbers is doing her PhD research in the area of virtual training. She combines self-explaining agent technologies from intelligent tutoring with existing virtual training systems. The explanatory power of the agents shall help the learners to understand better the rationales

behind their actions. This shall lead to more reflection and insight in the learner. The evaluation is not yet done, so we have to wait for the results. Maaike is from Utrecht University in Utrecht, The Netherlands. She is in the middle of her research.

Akila Sarirete is from the National Institute of Computer Science in Algiers, Algeria. She could not present her work at the doctoral consortium. Her research is centered around communities of practice as the research of Christian Glahn. She is working on a comprehensive frame for communities of practice in E-Learning called COPE. It was nice to notice that she is using Ambjörn Naeves Conzilla Tool for modeling these communities. Her research is related to the IP PALETTE.

We would like to use the opportunity to motivate more advanced PhD students to present their work in a doctoral consortium. We started with relatively high numbers of submissions and participants. But we observed a decline of both in the following years. We could argue that with the success of the summer schools the interest of PhD students having a second arena for presenting their work is weaker than before. But, summer schools and doctoral consortia follow different goals and target different student groups. We created the summer school for early stage PhD research, a place where students can connect and get insights from leading experts in the field of technology enhanced learning. In contrast, the doctoral consortium should help advanced students to get constructive and comprehensive feedback from the experts. A doctoral consortium is the ideal forum for PhD students who have already or almost finished their research and are in the phase of writing their thesis. We have created a set of questions guiding the reviewers in supporting this process.

Finally, we would like to thank of all the doctoral students for their commitment to the research field of TEL. We would like also to thank all of the reviewers and discussants whose precious time has been so instrumental in giving professional guidance to the doctoral students. We would like to thank the organizers of the EC-TEL for giving us the opportunity to host our Doctoral Consortium at their event.

Ralf Klamma, Denis Gillet, Tomaz Klobucar, and Katherine Maillet
Doctoral Consortium Chairs
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