

OLTD 509 ePortfolio Reflection #2

OLTD Program Learning Outcome(s):

- Critically assess and evaluate resources for best practice in online learning.
- Be familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to emerging technologies.
- Research and identify emerging technologies with educational applications not yet adopted by mainstream education or in early adoption phases.
- Examine current research around technology/pedagogy adoption and change management.
- Consider potential design/implementation opportunities and challenges of emerging technologies/pedagogies.

Evidence:

Emerging Technologies Jigsaw Activity on Measuring Learning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8nWSmTcQUQ>



Reflection:

The piece of evidence I have chosen to support the above learning outcomes is my contribution to the Emerging Technologies Jigsaw Activity that I completed from January 12th to 18th 2019. In this activity each member of the cohort was assigned a particular section of the NMC Report on an emerging technology in education. The portion of the report I was assigned was titled Growing Focus on Measuring Learning on pages 16 and 17. This topic focused on technological assessment tools that track and measure student learning called learning analytics. As an exercise in brevity, we were given a maximum of 2 minutes to present our topic either live or via a pre-recorded presentation. I decided to pre-record my presentation using Microsoft PowerPoint, Screencast-O-Matic, and upload it on YouTube.

In completing this assignment, I learned how learning analytics software is being utilized in various countries around the world to track student learning and evaluate the effectiveness of education programs. Many K-12 schools worldwide, particularly in the United States are currently using learning

analytics software to track the ability levels of students in key academic areas such as numeracy and literacy. Many school leaders and governments believe that mandated testing tracked by software helps them keep their finger on the pulse of their institutions and empowers teachers to make data-informed choices for the instruction and planning. This software can be used to keep schools accountable for the performance of their students and many schools believe that it has led to increased academic performance and graduation rates. Some educators and school leaders claim that an overemphasis on learning analytics causes undue stress on students and teachers and favours schools in higher socioeconomic areas. Some educators also believe that focusing too much on standardized test results can actually lead to less innovative teaching and is unable to track the development of soft skills such as creativity, collaboration, and social responsibility. I believe the strength of this evidence piece is that it demonstrates my ability to research, critically assess, and consider implementation of an emerging technology in education.

As an educator, either in a face-to-face or online environment, I believe that having an understanding of emerging trends in education is a very important aspect of professional development. In order to make an informed decision on whether or not to incorporate a new technology such as learning analytics software into your teaching you must first gather the facts about it, then analyse it from different perspectives, weighing both the positives and negative aspects. Even if you disagree with one element of an emerging trend, such as using learning analytics software to evaluate school performance based on standardized test scores, you may find another element of it that you can incorporate into your teaching, such as using the software to help identify areas of strength and weakness in individual students and use that information to differentiate learning. The ability to research with an open mind is a very important skill for educators when considering the opportunities and challenges of implementing emerging technologies and pedagogies.