



With this issue, the journal begins the publications of some invited papers related to the different teacher training methods.

The idea behind this initiative is that a reasonable development of educational technologies cannot ignore the diversity that is inside every individual discipline. We believe that it is appropriate to go past the general discussion on the phenomenon of e-learning and focus on the differences among different disciplines. In fact, at least two main differences need to be considered:

- The difference between the different contents: teaching literature is very different from teaching mathematics.
- The difference between the skills that students should develop their own work after graduation.

In this issue we begin from mathematics with the contribution of Flavia Colonna and Glenn Easley (*Hints on how to improve mathematics instruction*), two American scholars who are familiar with the reality of our universities. In future issues we hope to continue this way, hosting the discussions from other disciplines.

Most of the works contained in this issue will follow the themes developed during the national conference of the Italian e-Learning Association held in Milan (October 20–22, 2010). The organizers of the conference have selected a dozen from the most relevant communications. The authors of these communications have submitted an extended version of their works to the journal, that have gone through the usual review process.

For this reason the issue is multi-thematic and heterogeneous and it is difficult to summarize a preview. However, it is possible to identify some of the most relevant themes that, in a way, describe the research fields in Italy.

The first of these fields involves a more systemic vision of the initiatives / e-learning experiments in different application contexts. This systemic view is described explicitly in the work (invited) of the research group of the Department of Computer Science at the University of Bari composed by Pasquale Ardimento Nicola Boffoli, Nicola Convertini and Giuseppe Visaggio (*The Lifelong Learning in the University: Learning Networks and Knowledge Transferring*) where the theme of lifelong learning is approached from the point of view of a university.

The same vision is reflected in the work by Paola Perin, Elena Caldirola, Pacifico Cofrancesco and Amedeo Marini (*Monitoring academic progress in a Faculty of Pharmacy*), where the ability to analyze the traces of the students' behaviors in online university courses makes it possible to correct problems in the face to face situations. Similarly, but in the pre-university education, the work by Simone Paiano (*How to evaluate the effectiveness of ICT in teaching*) describes the methodology to compare different experiences adopted by teachers in activities that involve the use of ICT, using a common frame. Carla Limongelli, Filippo Sciarrone and Giulia Vaste (*Personalized e-learning in Moodle: the Moodle_LS System*) try to address the problem of the personalization of learning paths.

A second line of investigation concerns the differences in the behavior of the so-called "digital natives". Valentina Comba's work (*Net generation and digital literacy: a short bibliographical review and some remarks*) tries to identify the emerging trends on the basis of published literature and describes the evolution of the young people digital competencies.

Following this approach, the work by Antonella Martini and Maria Cinque (*Social networking as a university teaching tool: what are the benefits of using Ning?*) shows that "digital natives" do not differ so markedly in their behavior from the usual college students.

The three remaining works differ from the two major themes.

The work of Angela Spinelli and Andrea Volterrani (*Non-standard Methodologies in the Evaluation of Online Interaction*) describes an attempt to develop a non-standard methodology for the study of online interactions. The work of Gianluca Tramontana and Nuccia Silvana Pirruccello (*ScribaLAB 2.0: an environment for digital writing*) is concentrated on the evolution of a specialized environment for learning and creative forms of professional writing.

The last paper is not coming from the Milan Congress and it is written by Alberto Mirisola, Vincenza Benigno and Antonella Chifari (*A study of the relationship between regulatory systems, assessment e locomotion, and online learning groups*). The authors examine the relationship between the constructs of assesment and locomotion in distance education, describing the results of their experience.

We recall that the 2011 membership subscription for the Italian e-Learning Association (SIE-L) is open, for more information please visit www.sie-l.it.

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