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In 2015, Rdouan Faizi, Raddouane Chiheb and Abdellatif El Afia conducted a study to understand the student perspective of using Web 2.0 technologies in education and found that 47% of learners devoted more than 40% of their time on Web 2.0 technologies to enhance learning in different subject areas (p. 32). While studies show more and more students are utilizing Web 2.0 tools, it is equally important to note that there is also a good number of students who have little to no experience with Web 2.0 tools. Although the American College of Education Instructional Design and Technology Program had students use CourseSites, the Learning Management System was far too advanced and would deter learner engagement in a class of students who had little to no access to education technology. In creating a dynamic, interactive hybrid course that would give educational technology exposure to college bound students, the focus was placed on the learner-interface interaction. A learner’s success in an online course depends largely on their knowledge and understanding of the interface design of the course. Hillman, Willis, and Gunawardena (1994) explain that learner-interface is a process of manipulating tools to accomplish a task and further define it as a process where successful learner-interface interaction requires the learner to operate from a paradigm that includes understanding not only the 15 procedures of working with the interface, but also the reasons why these procedures obtain results (p. 34). If a course requires learners to engage in Google Hangout and record a session, but the learner has little to no knowledge of Google Hangout or how to create a recording, that learner cannot be successful in that course. In order to better support learner-interface interactions, instructors need to host tutorial videos to teach all the tools required in their course or make better decisions to meet the needs of their unique group of learners.

A Dynamic and Interactive Hybrid Course Design

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### Abstract

Online courses or components of online courses need to provide learners with a dynamic learning experience in order to engage learners in the enculturation process where “...learning is continuous and the group’s influence on the cognitive development of each individual is assured” (Moreillon, 2015, p.41). This paper discusses the components of a high school psychology hybrid course designed to align with Lev Vygotsky’s social constructivist learning model and Robert Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction instructional design model. The course design uses Weebly, YouTube, Zaption, articles, and Quizlet to create a dynamic and interactive learning experience for learners.

### A Dynamic and Interactive Hybrid Course Design

All learning experiences should be dynamic. In order to motivate learners to learn, they need to create meaning by working with not only the content, but in a social learning environment as well. Even online courses or online components of courses need to provide learners with this dynamic learning experience allowing learners to engage in the enculturation process where "...learning is continuous and the group's influence on the cognitive development of each individual is assured" (Moreillon, 2015, p.41).

The dynamic and interactive course is a hybrid course for a Psychology elective course at a public high school. This course is only offered to juniors and seniors who are enrolled in this college preparatory elective course. The course not only will prepare students to understand and be knowledgeable about the content of psychology, but it will also help prepare students to utilize technology as an educational resource. Most of the students in the course have little to no experience using technology as a means of learning. The course was designed as a hybrid course due to the fact that most of the students do not have the means or access to technology outside of school. The entire course, whether online or traditional, is built around a dynamic interactive experience for learners to construct knowledge as they engage with their learning community and their content.

#### **The Course and its Interactive Activities**

The Course Map for the High School Psychology I Hybrid Course can be found at <http://bit.ly/2pqJLBt>. Four interactive activities were created to align Lev Vygotsky's learning theory of social constructivism and Robert Gagne's instructional design methodology of the "Nine Events of Instruction", which serve as the foundation of the hybrid course. The following

interactive experiences were created and each activity will be discussed in depth below: creating electronic portfolios, content videos with Zaption, connecting content with real life through analyzing articles, and reviewing terms via Quizlet.

### **Dynamic Interactive Experience with Electronic Portfolios**

The dynamic interactive experience with electronic portfolios asks students to create their own electronic portfolios on Weebly. Weebly was used to build students sites instead of CourseSites because most of the students have little experience and exposure to educational tools online and Weebly offers learners with a more engaging interface. With the target audience having such a low exposure to technology for education, my main challenge is to present engaging, yet educational tools for them to be interested in and not overwhelmed by. The students in the Advanced Psychology Hybrid Course have been creating Weebly e-Portfolios and have really enjoyed having access to it as they move onto college and they have reported that they had to use Weebly in numerous other college courses, so I have decided to introduce Weebly to my Psychology I students.

Learners are presented with a model site that walks them through building their own Weebly e-Portfolios. The components of the e-Portfolio is created in the first week of instruction before any content is presented. The rest of the site is built slowly throughout the semester as it aligns with the content. I am extremely mindful of not overwhelming students by the e-Portfolio as I have had a couple of students in the past grow extremely frustrated by their lack of knowledge and ability to understand the technology process. Learners love the opportunity to personalize their sites on Weebly. This is also a great opportunity to teach students about internet safety and digital citizenship. In addition to learning about safety and security, students are also

taught about the different audiences that exist and how an e-Portfolio is for an academic audience, which presents its own boundaries and guides. All of this is important in teaching students about the goal of this course in getting learners to use technology to be more college and career ready. Throughout the remainder of the course, learners build their e-Portfolios and have a product to show for their growth in knowledge of Psychology and technology, which they use for their end of the semester reflection.

The incorporation of e-Portfolios have exponentially increased the caliber of work my students produce. No longer am I their audience. The entire world is their audience and as their audience grew, their presentation became more fine tuned. They engage with not only me as the instructor, but they engage with one another, the content, the interface, and even with themselves. The use of e-Portfolios have transformed teaching and learning to be more dynamic.

### **Dynamic Interactive Experience with Zaption Content Videos**

Another means of offering learners with a dynamic, interactive experience is by the use of content videos paired with Zaption. I have viewed numerous content videos that are not extremely engaging or interactive and after searching for ways to make content videos more interactive, I stumbled across Zaption. Zaption allows me to upload YouTube videos, whether they are created by me or somebody else, and add interactive elements such as slides, quiz questions, invitation to draw, among others. Most of the time instructors don't know if students watched their videos or they don't know if they understood the content presented in these videos. With my Zaption videos, I have added formative assessment questions and checks for understanding for viewers. Zaption records the data and I have information about what students understood and what I may need to reteach in class.

The videos are always less than ten minutes long and in addition to the Zaption video, I have added the link to the YouTube video for learners to revisit as needed throughout the duration of the course. Zaption transforms a boring video that students passively watch into an active learning experience by incorporating links for additional information, polls, multiple choice questions, and even discussions. Zaption demonstrates to students that learning online does not have to be boring or stale. Online learning is different from traditional learning as it is more self-directed, flexible, and student-focused rather than being teacher-focused (Buzzetto-More, 2015, p.59). Learning online can be dynamic, engaging, and interactive. This also builds in accountability, which is also important in designing an online course. As an instructor, my favorite element of Zaption is the data it provides as it helps me better understand the needs of my students. The data helps me support my community of learners as I see what works and what might need to be reworked.

### **Dynamic Interactive Experience with Relevant Articles**

One of the goals for this High School Psychology I Hybrid Course is for learners to recognize that the discipline of psychology is everywhere in the world around them. I wanted to create an activity where learners were exposed to opportunities to make the connection between the concepts of the unit and the real world. Learners are introduced to the terms and the concepts in class, but their knowledge and understanding becomes more concrete when they are able to practice application. One way this is done is through the discussion boards, but I wanted to create another activity at the end of the unit that invited learners to apply their knowledge and understanding before the summative assessment.

Students are randomly assigned one of seven articles to read on their own and practice connecting the article to the concepts learned in the unit. They will then collaborate with other students who were randomly assigned to read the same article as they work on putting together a presentation where they summarize the article, find evidence of five unit terms/concepts in the article, explain where and how psychology is in the world around us, and demonstrate the ability to create a formal APA citation of the article. This dynamic, interactive experience provides learners with the opportunity to engage with other learners, the content, and themselves. It also meets the goals of the course that learners will be able to connect the content with real world application as well as demonstrate APA knowledge and understanding. This activity will take an entire class time for students to read and prepare the presentation and the presentation can take place the next day. This is a great review activity prior to the unit summative assessment and will be beneficial for all students as it is dynamic and interactive

### **Dynamic Interactive Experience with Quizlet**

Another dynamic and interactive experience created in this hybrid course is a review tool for learners to utilize technology to assist them in learning. Students will create an account on Quizlet and will be invited to be a member of my online group. Their membership will allow them to have access to the virtual flashcard I created for each module. They can print them out to make actual flashcards to use as a learning tool if they like. Quizlet's test is what I will utilize as a review tool the day before the test. Students will log on to Quizlet and take the test, which assesses their understanding of the terms and its definitions. Students are instructed to take the test until they are able to demonstrate at least a 78%. Each attempt is recorded and each new



attempt presents a different test. Quizlet is a study tool that will help students prepare for their test. It will also provide them with a resource for other courses in the future.

Students demonstrate little understanding of studying and preparing for tests. Past student reflections have shown that students do not study for unit tests or even final exams. They have little knowledge of what it means to study and do not practice efficiency in studying. In order to prepare students for their post high school future, I wanted to present learners with an interactive tool that could be used in the future as a study tool. By giving learners the opportunity to engage with the material, learners are learning how to engage with the content and themselves. This activity ensures that learners prepare for the assessment, even if it is embedded into the course.

### **Reflections of Creating Interactive Activities**

Creating curriculum of any kind is an intensive process where educators and instructional designers have to be not only mindful, but deliberate for every part must fit cohesively and align together. As the educator and the instructional designer, the task of designing activities is easier since I already know my target audience. Knowing the skill level of the learners and their frame of reference allows me to design a course that will meet them where they are in order to propel them to meet the goals of the course. The four activities I have created are not only innovative and interactive learning experiences, but they also align with the main goals of the course to learners utilize technology in their learning and to be better prepared for their post secondary ambitions. The four activities are cohesively aligned with the other tasks and activities already embedded into the course as they are all focused on interactivity. This interactivity is also something that is the center of both the traditional and online elements of the hybrid course to again ensure cohesive alignment as to not feel like two separate courses. When I first started

using CourseSites, I did not feel that it was the most appropriate for my needs and for my learners and after working with it again for this course, I am still feeling as though this is not something for new online learners as the interface is not as easy to understand and maneuver for learners who have little to no experience with using technology in education. I would like to have CourseSites be the Learning Management System that students work towards while in high school as it offers an interface that closely resembles that used by many colleges and universities, but being that the course I am designing will be an introduction to technology in education, I would want to investigate something a little more user friendly for my target audience.

The design process helped me see my strengths and weaknesses as an instructional designer. Curriculum design and making sure that each component fits the overall vision is an area of strength for me. I enjoy creating purposeful, innovative activities that help learners meet the goals of the course. An area I still need to work on is in the area of becoming more familiar with different tools. I plan on growing in this area by using my Personal Learning Network, devoting regular time into investigating and exploring technology tools, and by trying out different tools to feel out its affordances and constraints.

### Conclusion

Not all digital natives would describe themselves as being member of “a generation of hyper-connected learners, [who] consider Web-based technologies integral to the information gathering process” (Buzzetto-More, 2015, p.55). There are gaps in access and those gaps have resulted in gaps of learning and achievement. In order to bridge that gap, a hybrid course has been in the design process to help students of low means build their knowledge, practice, and understanding of education technology tools to support their learning. All components of the

course has been created with the intention of providing a dynamic and interactive experience for learners. Educators and instructional designers need to be incredibly mindful of the foundation of learning theories and design methodologies and work to align all tasks and activities to ensure a cohesive framework in the course design. It is also essential that educators and instructional designers have strong goals to serve as an anchor as they create effective, innovative, and interactive learning experiences for learners.

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