A Design Science Research Methodology for Developing an Open Source Computer Supported Collaborative Learning System

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Agenda

- What is collaborative learning?
 - Range of views
 - Knowledge sharing vs. construction
 - Social interaction
 - Common Ground
 - Socio-cultural perspective
 - The interplay among perspective
- How can technology support collaborative learning?
 - Fundamental constructs
 - Design science research methodology
 - General model
 - Application of design science guidelines
- Comments & Questions

What is Collaborative Learning?

- Collaborative learning takes on a great variety of forms along a spectrum from individual to group
 - Learning is fundamentally a creative cognitive process within an individual's mind, yet this process can be enhanced in settings of collaboration (Eryilmaz et al., 2013)



Knowledge Sharing vs. Construction

Constructivist Epistemology: "Learning involves active struggling by the learner because knowledge has to be discovered, constructed, practiced, and validated" (Hiltz et al., 2000)

Three basic elements:

- Selecting relevant information,
- Organizing it into a coherent representation,
- Integrating it with existing knowledge (Mayer 1999)



Social Interaction

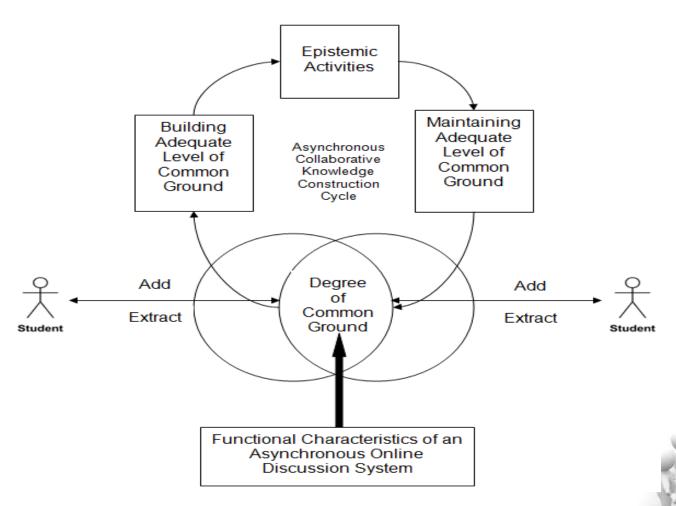
- A key to successful collaborative learning is social interaction
- Interaction can be defined as a reciprocal event that requires at least two objects and two actions (Wagner, 1994)
- Establishing and maintaining an adequate level of "common ground" is a pressing problem in online discussions



Difficult Common Ground Based Questions

- How are students' communication activities affected by the degree of common ground facilitated by the functional characteristics of an asynchronous online discussion system?
- How is common ground built and maintained in ways mediated by the functional characteristics of an asynchronous online discussion system?

Common Ground



Eryilmaz, E., Ryan, T., Van der Pol, J., Kasemvilas, S., & Mary, J. (2013). Fostering quality and flow of online learning conversations by artifact-centered discourse systems. Journal of the Association for Information Systems, 14(1), 22-48.

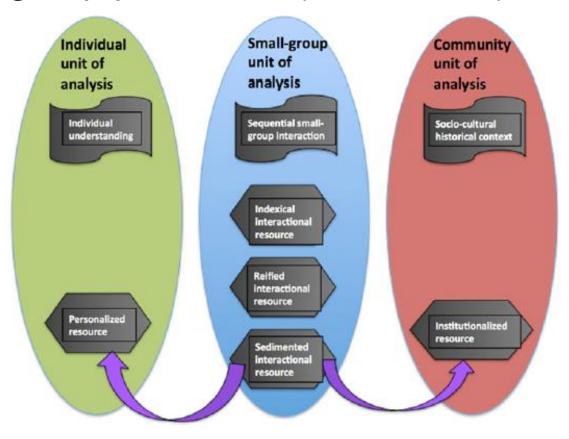
Another Perspective on Collaborative Learning

- Socio-cultural perspective: Learning always arises as a product of a social community of practice where people are involved in different types of processes to create meaning.
- Meaning is intersubjective (Suthers, 2006).
- Learning not only accomplished through the interactions of the participants, but consists of those interactions (Koschmann et al., 2005)



The Interplay Among Perspectives

 Learning is a mix of individual and group processes (Stahl, 2013)





How can technology support collaborative learning?

Two fundamental constructs

- Affordances: potentials for action in relation to the actor (Gibson, 1977), of which salient affordances are expected to be the most relevant (Norman, 1999).
- Constraints: complement affordances by indicating the limitations of user actions



Research Methodology

- Design Science Research: Creation of an innovative IT artifact yielding utility for a specific problem domain (Hevnar et al., 2004).
- IT Artifact: Any hardware/software design encapsulating structures, routines, norms, and values implicit in the rich contexts within which the artifact is embedded (Benbasat and Zmud, 2003).

General Model

Follows six steps described by Peffers et al. (2008)

Step 1: Identify problem

- Step 2: Define solution objectives
- Step 3: Design and development



General Model

Step 4: Demonstration

Step 5: Evaluation

Step 6: Communication



Application of Design Science Guidelines

- Step 1: Problem Identification and Motivation
 - High levels of knowledge construction is difficult to achieve
 - Establishing and maintaining an adequate level of common is a pressing problem in online discussions!

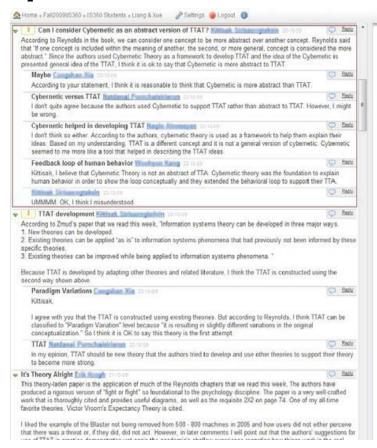


Online Discussion Example

- Student 1: The relationship between perceived avoidability and avoidance motivation is negatively moderated by perceived threat so that it is weaker when perceived threat increases'. Is the message here that as the threat increases people go into denial?
 - Student 2: Frankly, I do not have the slightest idea what that is supposed to mean. Where did you read it?
 - Student 1: It is on page 14. See proposition 9.



Open Source Annotation Tool



Malicious Versus Virtuous IT

We distinguish between malicious IT and virtuous IT so that their different consequences can be delineated and IT users' different reactions to them can be understood. We propose that the differentiation between mulicious IT and virtuous IT can be based on designer intention or user perception. Based on designer intention, malicious IT refers to computer programs designed to cause system dysfunction or security and privacy breaches and virtuous IT refers to computer systems designed to provide communicational, computational, or decisional aids to users to increase their performance. However, an IT designed to be virtuous might be perceived by users as mulicious due to contextual complexities and interest conflicts. For example, advertising e-mail is designed to help sellers market their products. For the sellers and consumers who are interested in the products, the e-mail is virtuous. Yet for the consumers who are not interested in the products, the e-mail is malicious spum. Therefore, users' perspective needs to be taken into account to provide a clear conceptualization.

As Figure 1 shows, designer intention and user perception. converge in quadrant 1, in which IT is designed to be virtuous and achieves its design objective from the user's perspective. and quadrant 3, in which IT is intended to be malicious. Quadrant 2 includes the IT that is designed to be virtuous but fails to achieve its design purpose from the user's perspective. Quadrant 4 is empty because IT designed to be malicious is highly unlikely to produce positive outcomes to users. Regardless of designer intention, users react to a given IT based on their percentions of the IT's characteristics and potential impact on them. Thus, in this paper we choose to identify IT muliciousness and virtuousness based on user perception. Specifically, malicious IT is defined as systems perceived by users to be repulsive and to cause negative outcomes, and virtuous IT is defined as systems perceived by users to be attractive and to cause positive outcomes.

Traditionally, theory building efforts in the 18 discipline are focused on virtuous IT. Several theories have been imported from other disciplines or developed within the IS discipline to explain why a certain IT is for is not) adopted given that such adoption is a good thing to do. This can be seen from a voluminous body of literature applying innovation diffusion theory (IDT) (Rogen 1995), theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajeen and Fishbein 1980; Fishbein and Ajeen 1975), theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajeen 1991), and sectinology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis 1989; Davis et al. 1980; Verkizers) and Davis 2000. Substantial emmirical evidence

and Benhasat 1991; Taylor and Todd 1995; van der Heijden 2004; Verkatesh and Brown 2001; Venkatesh et al. 2003). On the contrast, few theories are centered on multicious IT. Avoidance of malicious IT is often simplified as adoption of safeguarding IT so that existing acceptance theories can be applied.

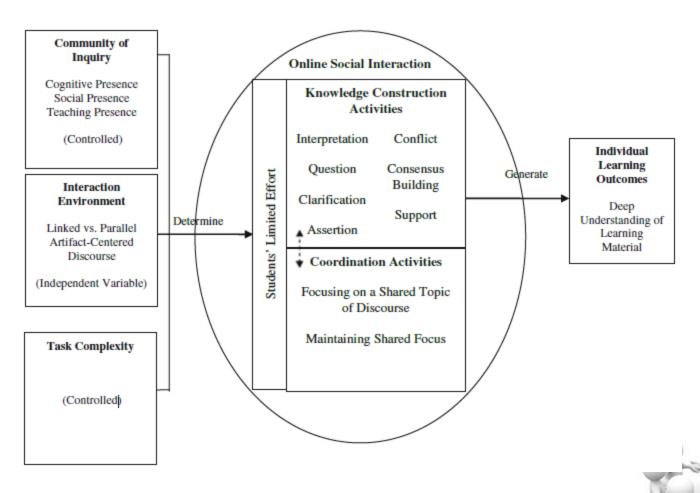
However, adoption of safeguarding IT is only a part of the mulicious IT avoidance phenomenos. The mulicious IT avoidance phenomenon tends to be underrepresented by applying IT acceptance theories to study safeguarding IT adoption. This is because IT acceptance theories are not intended to explain avoidance behavior. Following the expectancy paradism (Steers et al. 2004; Vroom 1964). IT acceptance theories assume that human behavior is purposeful and goal directed and users will go through a cognitive process to choose the behavior that will lead to their most valued rewards. However, the goal that directs human behavior and the process through which the goal is achieved are not explicitly considered in the theories, at least as it is applied in extant IS research. This omission limits the explanatory potency of existing IT acceptance theories in the context of IT threat avoidance.3 For example, if users do not perceive spyware as a threat, they may choose not to install anti-spyware although they think it is useful to counteract spyware and easy to use. Based on this observation, we may falsely reject TAM. Yet, this conclusion is unfair to TAM because it is not developed to explain avoidance behavior. Drawing on cybemetic theory, we illustrate this point in detail next.

Cybernetic Theory

We use sybernetic theory (Wiener 1948) as a framework bishow why IT acceptance theories cannot fully explain people's IT threat avoidance behavior and to build a new theory that is more appreopriate for explaining this behavior. Cybernetic theory is chosen because it is consistent with expectancy theory (Vrocm 1964) and widely accepted as a theoretical framework for understanding human behavior (Edwards 1992). It is argued to be general systems theory because cybernetic processes are ubiquitous, identifiable in virtually may self-regulating systems (Carver and Scheier 1982). The principles of cybernetics have been widely applied in social and benith psychology and organizational behavior theories (Carver and Scheier 1982; Edwards 1992; Green and Welsh 1988; Klein 1989).



Motivation



Eryilmaz, E., Van der Pol, J., Ryan, T., Clark, M. P., & Mary, J. (2013). Enhancing Student Knowledge Acquisition from Online Learning Conversations. International Journal of Computer Supported Collaborative Learning, 8(1), 113-144.

A Problem with Existing Software

Students have difficulty with deep processing of complex instructional materials

- Students gravitate to familiar (comfortable) topics and avoid challenging topics (Hewitt, 2005)
- Online discussions drift from one familiar topic to another, without diagnosing and resolving challenging misconceptions (Potter, 2008)

Problem Demonstration

Student 1: The paper's results reflect my own experiences. Information technology at my organization acts just in the ways described by the workers at the investigated organization. My colleagues and I act as knowledge brokers due to the nature of our jobs.

Student 2: I have also encountered the research problem in this paper in my own work when I consult with accountants, physicians, and attorneys



Collaborative Knowledge Construction

Student 1: I do not have clear understanding of "process-product." Does it mean that if a prescribed procedure (a process) is followed, the result (product) will be the same? Is this a cookbook approach to student achievement?

Student 2: I am also having hard time with this. My take is that depending on the content, the students, and the context, as the instructor I choose what seems to be the best. For me, explicit instruction does fit at times. Inquiry and constructivist methods also find a place. It really depends on the learning goal...but I guess if I'm the one deciding then it really isn't constructivist at all, is it?

Define Solution Objectives

 Offer students an indirect way of focusing their attention on deep processing of challenging concepts

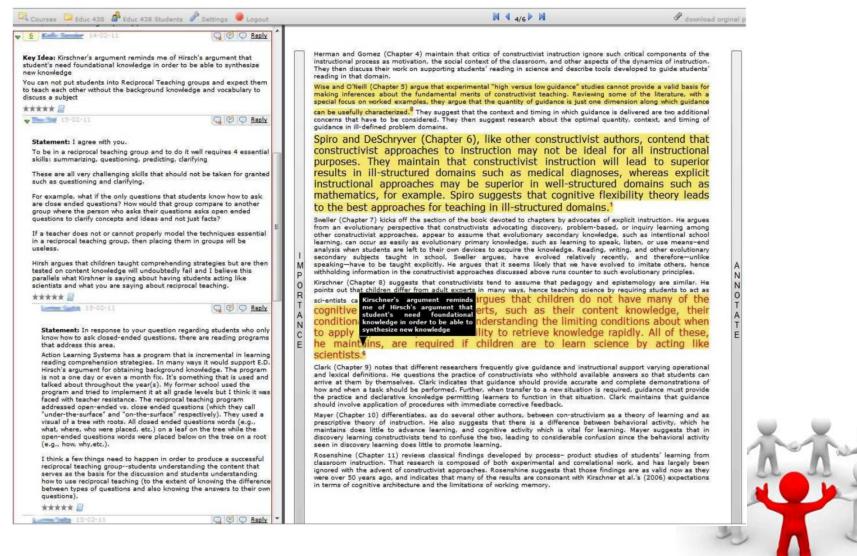


Design and development

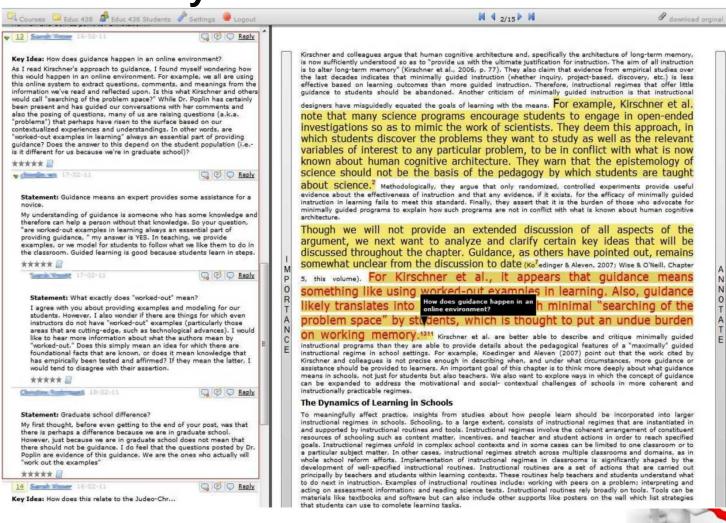
- Font size is an effective visual property to capture attention in an involuntary and obligatory fashion (Lohmann et al., 2009)
- Faded instructor-based attention guidance functionality
- Peer-oriented attention guidance functionality



Faded-instructor based attention guidance functionality



Peer-oriented attention guidance functionality



Demonstration

Longitudinal Experiment with two small groups:

- Treatment group: Switched from instructor-based to peer-oriented guidance software
- Control group: No access to attention guidance



Condition	Discussion topic					
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Instructor-based attention guidance functionality						
Frequency of student annotations focusing on challenging concepts	9	12	10	7	14	10.4 (2.7)
Total number student annotations	14	17	12	9	19	14.2
Selection ratio of challenging concepts	64%	70%	83%	78%	74%	73%
Control software system						
Frequency of student annotations focusing on challenging concepts	3	8	6	5	7	5.8 (1.9)
Total number of student annotations	9	19	17	16	21	16.4
Selection ratio of challenging concepts	33%	42%	35%	31%	33%	35%

Note. Standard deviation in parenthesis.



Condition	Treatment group	Treatment group		
	Instructor-based attention guidance functionality	Peer-oriented attention guidance functionality		
	Mean of 1st 5 topics	6th Topic	6th Topic	
Frequency of student annotations focusing on challenging concepts	10.4	11	6	
Total student annotations Selection ratio of challenging concepts	14.2 73%	16 69%	21 29%	



Instructor-based attention guidance (10 students)



Peer-oriented attention guidance (9 students)

100%



Control Software

(8 students)

100%



Evaluation-Message Content

Messages		Instructor-based attention guidance functionality		Control software system		Z	р
		Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion		
Task-related	Sharing	66	0.30	76	0.33	0.68	0.50
	Questioning	52	0.24	36	0.16	2,12*	0.03
	Elaborating	30	0.14	11	0.04	3.73***	< 0.001
	Negotiating	23	0.11	5	0.02	3.90***	< 0.001
	Producing	3	0.01	1	0.004	0.77	0.44
	Total task-related	174	0.80	129	0.56	5.43***	<0.001
Non task-related		43	0.20	102	0.44		
Total		217	1.00	231	1.00		

p < 0.05, p < 0.01, p < 0.01, p < 0.001.

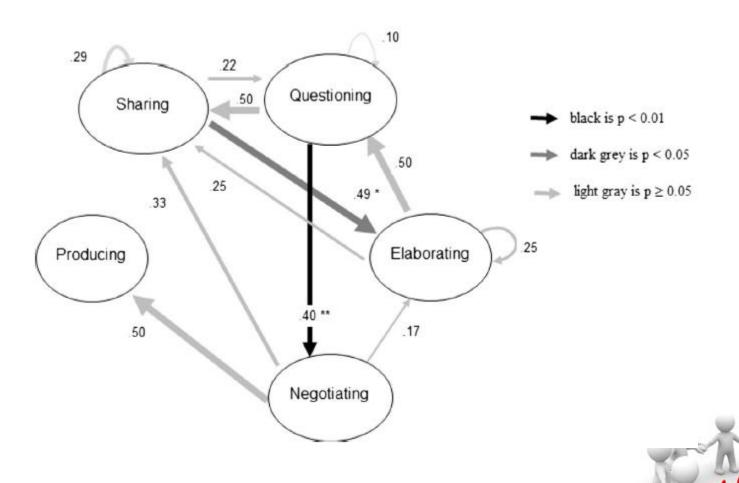


Evaluation-Message Content

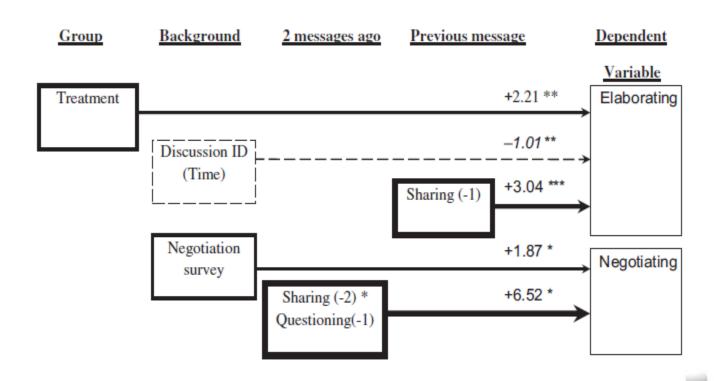
Messages		Attention guidance functionality				Control software system	
		Instructor-based		Peer-oriented			
		Mean	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion	Frequency	Proportion
Task-related	Sharing	13.2	0.30	15	0.32	13	0.34
	Questioning	10.4	0.24	13	0.28	6	0.16
	Elaborating	6.0	0.14	5	0.11	1	0.03
	Negotiating	4.6	0.11	6	0.13	2	0.05
	Producing	0.6	0.01	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Total task-related	34.8	0.80	39	0.84	22	0.58
Non task-related		8.6	0.20	8	0.17	16	0.42
Total		43.4	1.00	47	1.00	38	1.00



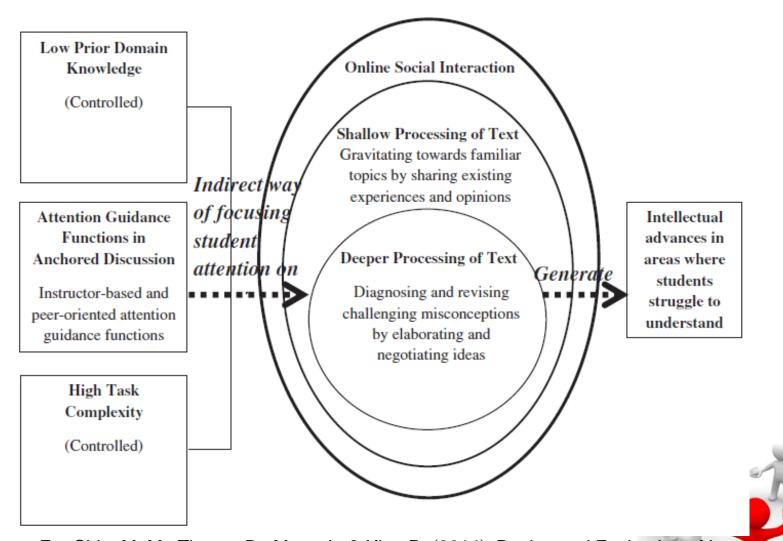
Evaluation-sequential organization of messages



Evaluation-sequential organization of messages



Communication



Eryilmaz, E., Chiu, M. M., Thoms, B., Mary, J., & Kim, R. (2014). Design and Evaluation of Instructor-Based and Peer-Oriented Attention Guidance Functionalities in an Open Source Anchored Discussion System", Computers & Education, 71, 303-321.

Future Research Questions

- What are relationships among different types off technologyenhanced scaffolds and how can we fade them to facilitate adaptive webbased systems?
- If students become dependent on technology-enhanced scaffolds, do they interact less with peers and instructors?



More Information

- Eryilmaz, E., Chiu, M. M., Thoms, B., Mary, J., & Kim, R. (2014). Design and Evaluation of Instructor-Based and Peer-Oriented Attention Guidance Functionalities in an Open Source Anchored Discussion System", Computers & Education, 71, 303-321(Impact Factor 2.775)
- Eryilmaz, E., Thoms, B., Mary, J., Kim, R., Van der Pol, J. (2014).
 Attention Guidance in Online Learning Conversations, Proceedings of Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-47), January 6-9, 2014, Waikoloa, Hawaii
- Eryilmaz, E., Ryan, T., Poplin, M., & Mary, J. (2012). Re-Design and Evaluation of an Anchored Discussion System, Proceedings of Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-45), January 4-7, 2012, Maui, Hawaii. (Nominated Best Paper)

Thank You for Your Time





Your Comments and Questions are welcomed.

Please address feedback to: eeryilma@bloomu.edu