UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

# Using Blogs and Vidcasts to Scaffold Independent Learning on an EAP Pre-sessional Course

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# Introduction

- Development of new technological tools

  – Enhance the learning experience
  – Increase the ability of self-learning (Aguilar et al 2012)

# Southampton Pre-sessional

- Approximately 830 students

- 20 Independent Learning Assistants

- Students have two hours Independent learning study skills seminars a week

- One to one advising sessions with Independent Learning Assistants

- Tutorials with reading and writing teachers

# VLE

- Blackboard

- Resources easily accessed

  - Vidcast
  - Podcasts
  - Blogs
  - Weblinks
  - Weeks class handouts

- Gate-way to scaffolding IL

- Students engaged far more with Blackboard than teachers

# Blogging

- Space for reflective writing

- Creates student ownership of publishing (Lin 2006)

- A space for student teacher feedback and discussion

- A 'comfortable' space for asking questions

- Motivation through charting progress

# Student Blog Example

In this morning, I had to present my presentation in speaking class. **While I was speaking, I worried about my pronunciation that I tried to put at the end of the words.** Before presenting the presentation, on Thursday night, **I practised my pronunciation with Macmillan English Dictionary. I tried to listen at the end of each stress words in my scripts and the tried to pronounce. I discovered that I can predict the patterns how to put at the end of words e.g. '-ge' - the words which had 'ge' at the end (e.g. usage, advantage and emerge) always pronounce 'dʒ' at the end. And, '-ce' - the words which had 'ce' at the end (e.g. distance, hindrance) always pronounce 's' at the end.**

# Evaluation of Blogs

- Simple and effective?

- Focussing the student blogs

- Limitations not in IT but in peoples engagement with IT

- Engagement and responsibility of staff

- IT training for teachers

- Time consuming

- Assessment?

# Vidcasting

- 'Pills of knowledge' (Aguilar et al, 2012)

- Core topics

  - Independent learning
  - Critical thinking
  - Learning styles and strategies
  - Planning organisation and time management
  - Learning resources and researching skills

- Development process

  - Panopto

http://coursecast.soton.ac.uk/Panopto/Pages/Viewer/Default.aspx?id=f3422035-fea9-4693-9852-c7c9fecadc93

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Welcome - Panopto Viewer

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**PSCA2012-STU: Pre-sessional Co... : Welcome**

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**PANOPTO**

Slides | Screen Capture

# Studies at Southampton

Avenue Campus

00:18

Contents | Notes | Se... | Info

Search

| Time | Topic |
|------|-------|
| 0:00 | Welcome... |
| 0:14 | Studies at Southamp |
| 0:19 | Life at a British unive |
| 0:35 | What to expect |
| 0:51 | English must be spoken at all times No homework... |
| 1:24 | Time-keeping and attendance |
| 1:39 | Good advice! |
| 1:51 | This part of the course has been designed to help... |
| 2:17 | About independent learning |
| 2:33 | Support and advice |
| 2:45 | Your handbook... |
| 3:02 | Life in the UK |
| 3:15 | Britain is a mixture of new and old It has exciting... |
| 3:34 | Weather |
| 3:40 | Sun and snow... |
| 3:48 | The weather in Britain is very changeable. The... |

**Welcome...**
- Welcome to Southampton
- We hope you will be very happy here
- The University is known throughout the world and produces important research and innovation

**Studies at Southampton**

**Life at a British university**
- Life at a British university **can be very different**
- At universities in the UK you are expected to do **many extra hours of unguided learning**

**What**
- Tead
- Lect
- Tuto
- Sem
- Grou
- Pres

Done

Local intranet | Protected Mode: Off

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- Integrated classroom approach

    – Consistency
    – Employability

- Authentic material: the language produced by a real speaker/writer for a real audience, conveying a real message (Morrow 1977; Porter & Roberts 1981; Swaffar 1985; Nunan 1989; Benson & Voller 1997)

- Ability to watch over again, pause, rewind

- Available on smart phones and tablets

# Student Feedback

"Independent Learning resources are very useful, I watch the videos again at home and at school's library. I use them to think and use in my study, not only enhance my listening skill but also increase my reading ability. I use this experience put into my listening practice. Give me the deepest impression was" plan time" this class. It can make me more reasonable arrange my time. Do the entertainment and learning combination.These video very vivid, words is also very simple to understand. It can be very good to attract the attention of students.I am very like these videos.Thanks so much." – (Chengfan Zhang, 2012)

# Student Feedback

"In the class, I listened to a short lecture on the internet. I have never had a lecture online. It was first time for me to have a lecture on the internet, so I felt very strange. However, it was very useful because I could listen again what I could not understand. I liked online lectures." - (Tomoe, 2012)

# Observation Feedback

"They are produced in a format which appeals to the you Tube generation and may be easily accessed via the students 'smart phones or iPads.[....]their use complemented the work of the ILA syllabus delivered by ILA tutors. It was interesting to see that the tutors used them in a variety of ways. The students enjoyed using them and were able to view them out of class in their own time. A large proportion of pre-sessional students arrived with poor listening skills and the clips were another means of helping students to make progress in this area out of class." – (Jones, 2012)

# Evaluation of vidcasts

- Appropriate levels for all courses

- Costing

    – Time
    – People

- Access issues through Blackboard

# Conclusions

- Move towards digital literacy

- Opens spaces for new tools

- Accessibility

- Blogs and Vidcasts

  – Reflective learning

- Future development