INTEGRATING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES WITHIN E-LEARNING COURSES: A FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT
Most e-learning courses do not include research as part of teaching materials for learners. A framework SOAR (Scholarly articles) based on an educational theory can foster a circle of educational knowledge building and sharing between educators and learners that emphasizes a better understanding of scholarly articles. This framework has been validated in several courses and its results demonstrate that it has a positive impact on students’ learning, which has shown a significant improvement as well as an increase in both creativity and innovation skills.

Categories and Subject Descriptors
Scholarly Articles, E-Learning

GENERAL TERMS
Educators, Learners

KEYWORDS
Student learning, educators, learners, scholarly articles

1. E-LEARNING CHALLENGES
Two challenges faced by learners while using E-learning systems are: 1) Uninteresting course materials fail to promote deep learning, and 2) learning approaches are insufficient to increase knowledge that extends beyond theories and concepts.

2. INTRODUCTION OF SOAR FRAMEWORK
SOAR (Scholarly Articles) – a framework we developed – can help to guide educators through the process of integrating a research component into their courses and create a learning environment that is more conducive and meaningful to students.

Our framework allows learners a thinking space in which to develop creativity and apply it by enabling them to build their problem solving and research skills. The design of this framework is based on Brown et al.’s [1] educational theory and framework, which aims to foster a circle of educational knowledge building and sharing. Our framework (SOAR) in Figure 1 requires a subject as an input. Scholarly articles are picked because past, present and future works in each field are clearly presented.

This creates an educator’s thinking space in which to decide whether to use scholarly articles [2] as a 1) class activity, 2) a test assessment or 3) whether to integrate it and remix into a tutorial. The e-learning interface acts as a middle process or agent to facilitate open discussion via social networking and as a process to promote a learner’s space which will encourage more collaboration, participation and presentation.

3. METHOD
INPUT: Course materials and scholarly articles uploaded on an e-learning system.

PROCESS: Students must read each scholarly article and relate it to its concept and apply it in the context of a case study. Students must contribute their discussions or answers on a discussion board questions being asked by presenters.

OUTPUT: Group presenters summarize their findings including the outcome of student discussions and present their talk (an overview of the paper, research questions and a summary of participants’ comments) in a class or a video conference.

4. RESULTS
The results of the learning outcome show that students in groups understand scholarly articles and the concepts they have learned in the class. Students surveyed about the framework say that they find it very useful, because it helps them sharpen their critical thinking skills. The results (evidences from screenshots of an e-learning system) further imply that the framework gives students a better opportunity to learn that help improves their analytical skills, and enables them to contribute innovative ideas.

5. REFERENCES