
Assessing the Learner: Using Real Time Assessment

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Abstract

In many teaching environments it is often difficult for the lecturer to ascertain if the student group is absorbing the lecture content in the manner expected by the lecturer. Such issues as class size, the pre-knowledge of the class, the class age all have bearing on the method of course content delivery which means that the same material could be delivered in different variations each time. For many subject areas formal assessment may not be a practical means of establishing if the 'general concepts' are being grasped by the majority of the student body. In these situations 'real time' electronic communications between staff and students during the lecture as an informal assessment method provide feed back as to student understanding.

Keywords

Ubiquitous Presenter, Real Time Assessment, Students, Lecturer

Introduction

Introductory programming has always been a challenge to teach. At CPIT we experience a wide range of ability and prior knowledge in our students. One of the greatest learning hurdles is teaching logic and then applying this to both 'real world' problems and programming problems. In Term 1 of this year

This poster paper appeared at the 1st annual conference of Computing and Information Technology Research and Education New Zealand (CITRENZ2010) incorporating the *23rd Annual Conference of the National Advisory Committee on Computing Qualifications*, Dunedin, New Zealand, July 6-9. Samuel Mann and Michael Verhaart (Eds).

Ubiquitous Presenter was introduced to students on a trial basis to attempt to inform both the students and tutor what progress was being made in their understanding of key aspects of the subject.

Methodology

Power point slides converted to the Ubiquitous Presenter file format (.csd) and uploaded to the University of Portland file server were accessed by the student body. These power point slides contained either simple 'multi choice' questions or questions of the type 'complete the list'. Each student typed their correct answer on their version of the power point slide and then submitted to the tutor for real time comment, discussion etc.

Results

Minor technical problems involving the configuration of network computers and the use of Firefox as the

internet browser frustrated both students and staff but even with the low data volumes used the quality of the instant feed back was valuable in confirming the progress of the subject matter and allowed reinforcement of course content at the time that it was most relevant.

Conclusion

Where this type of curriculum teaching is suitable for inclusion into course delivery it is an accurate means of promptly confirming course material is being understood by students and is a simple way of involving all students in the group. The author is continuing to develop course material for the original programming paper and also for a second programming paper.