Transforming Design Thinking Through the Translational Design of Learning and Knowledge Environments

Kenn Fisher
University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

Transforming learning environment design thinking from primarily the ‘look’ or form must be accompanied by a renewed focus on functionality. The rapid emergence of broadband wireless means we can access information online anytime anywhere – in a virtual community or place - as the MOOC phenomenon has attested to. Should we now re-engineer our physical learning environments to ensure they are optimal for this form of knowledge construction? Many innovations have been developed to support this virtual/physical hybrid model but do they work? I argue that these innovations - or research projects - must be evaluated and the evidence of their efficacy gained used to translate innovative learning environments into working operational models in a scaled-up system- and campus- wide format. Translational design can be used to evaluate learning and knowledge environments to assist in improving learning outcomes.