Chapter 5
Experience Evaluation in Virtual Environments on Using an Accessible Prototype

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents the experience evaluation process of the virtual learning environment prototype MooBi accessible to deaf people. In the evaluation elaboration, the authors use the "technology as an experience framework" model of McCarthy and Wright because it approaches the sensorial, emotional, compositional, and space-time aspects. They believe that this model can provide elements for intervention in order to improve the students' experience. The authors applied the evaluation to a postgraduate listener student community from two classes to evaluate the use of MooBi as a support platform for studying. In the evaluation result, they found both positive experience attributes and unwanted experience attributes related to usability and instructional design. The authors noticed that the evaluation can be applied to other contexts since it provides a multidisciplinary view.

INTRODUCTION

Distance Education (DE) has presented significant numbers driven by the evolution of technology and communications. The Brazilian report *Censo EAD.BR* had revealed results of more than 10,000 courses reported by institutions that participated in the research in 2016. In the 2014-2016 triennium, the sum surpassed 12.6 million enrollments in fully distance courses, hybrid and distance disciplines in face-to-face courses. It was also pointed out the use of virtual learning environments (VLEs) as a tool for sharing content with the students, is the option of free software the most recurrent among state and federal public institutions (Associação Brasileira de Educação a Distância (*Brazilian Distance Education Association*), 2017). However, it is worth considering that VLEs go far beyond from only storing content. They are platforms to support face-to-face and distance learning courses that have tools for management, communication and digital repository of educational resources and media. They use an interface that allows the interaction of the participants and content mediation in teaching-learning processes, aiming at the cooperative construction of knowledge (Conti et al., 2016; Ramos, 2010; Behar, 2009). Although the increasing use of VLEs in DE is a decisive factor since it broadens the access to education, among the inclusivists grows the concern with the quality of this access for people with disabilities (PWDs). There are many studies on VLEs concentrated on the fields of Computer Science and Engineering, as well as in Social Sciences with themes related to communication, especially in Pedagogy, Psychopedagogy and Psychology (Conti et al., 2016), though only a few are focused on the accessibility of PWDs. In systematic literature reviews on VLE and accessibility, researchers had showed gaps in this theme and fragmentation of the information found, which indicates a field yet to be explored. (Obregon, Vanzin, & Ulbricht, 2015; Ulbricht, Vanzin, & Villarouco, 2011).

By facing the accessibility gap in VLEs, research groups such as the Digital Accessibility and Assistive Technologies group, the Master's and Doctorate Program in Engineering and Knowledge Management, from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (EGC/UFSC), in the research line Media and Knowledge have developed proposals that can contribute to a more inclusive society. MooBi prototype is one of them. The name is the combination of the words "Moodle" and "Bilingual" (Pivetta, 2016). It is a platform that supports the interaction of deaf and listeners in communities of practice. The participants can interact synchronously or asynchronously, share subjects and perform collaborative activities (Saito, 2016). Pivetta (2016) and Saito (2016) developed the MooBi prototype from the doctoral investigations. They raised a series of functional requirements along with the deaf public (video conference,

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