Literature

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Please, take our paper!

The course in computer systems the Runestone initiative

- Course in computer systems for advanced computer science students
- Student project: Produce a software system to control a (modified) Brio labyrinth from any Web-browser
- Project-based, six students per group, three at each site
- Collaboration between group members mainly by e-mail and Internet chat
- Developed and taught jointly by Uppsala University, Sweden and Grand Valley State University, MI, USA, since 1998





- Our purpose it to describe the activity, as it is experienced by the participants.
- We associate the categories that describe the students' *experience* of being graded to the nodes in an *activity system.*
- We are analysing ways of experienceing other features of the course in a similar way, in order to understand how the students, who take this course, experience the situation.



An experiential approach: Phenomenography

- *Aims* at analysing and describing variations in how a phenomenon experienced by a particular class of person (here the students involved)
- *Empirical study*. Expressions of the experience of the phenomenon are collected (here through series of semi-structured open interviews)
- Second order perspective. Revealing the variation in ways in which the phenomenon is experienced (here the grading applied to the project course)
- *Outcome*: A description of a limited set of qualitatively distinct ways in which the phenomenon is understood.
- The outcome is the researcher's analytical description of the variation in meaning found in the collective. It is not a categorisation of people or individuals

The question for this paper is:

In what qualitatively different ways is the grading experienced by the students?

We have analysed and described the variation thus:

Category	Description
1.	Getting good grades is a goal in itself
	Getting good grades is an aim in itself. This can be on behalf of the individual or of the group. The grade as a measurement is stressed and the possibility of obtaining good grades is described as important for the work.
2.	Grading is not an important feature of the work
	This category refers to an understanding where the grades are not considered to be important for the work of the group. Instead, other mechanisms and functions that encourage the students to work within their projects are described.
3.	Grading is an obstacle
	Grading is described as a feature that may cause problems and is an obstacle to the work in the group in this category.

This research project:

In what ways do students experience learning in an internationally distributed course in computer science?

We are studying the experience of ...

... content of learning

(computer communication protocols and their application)

... approaches to learning tasks (large project distributed over groups of Swedish and American students)

... context of learning

(the situation constituted of features experienced as relevant to learning, but are other than direct content or task).

"Are you guys really concerned about the grades?"

On the experience of grading as contextual to learning in an internationally distributed computer science project course Work-in-Progress

Denna del av sidan kommer att klippas bort

"Are you guys really concerned about the grades?"

On the experience of grading as contextual to learning in an internationally distributed computer science project course Work-in-Progress

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