Web 2.0 Technology: Future Interfaces for Technology Enhanced Learning?

Martin Ebner¹, Andreas Holzinger², Hermann Maurer³

¹Graz University of Technology, A-8010 Graz, Austria
WG Social Learning
martin.ebner@tugraz.at

²Medical University Graz, A-8036 Graz, Austria
Institute for Medical Informatics, Statistics & Documentation (IMI)
Research Unit HCI4MED
andreas.holzinger@meduni-graz.at

³Graz University of Technology, A-8010 Graz, Austria
Institute for Information Systems and Computer Media (IICM)
hmaurer@iicm.edu

Abstract. Web 2.0 is an emerging catch phrase and the applications associated with it shocked the traditional eLearning world. However, is this really all new and can it be considered suitable for future interfaces for technology enhanced learning? In this paper, we present some experiences with *LearnLand*. This is an application designed and developed at Graz University of Technology and which has been running there since October 2006. It is based on the open-source software ELGG, which is a social software offering a high degree of choice, flexibility and openness and is considered as a system that places people at the hub of the activities. Our experimental research demonstrated that exactly this *ease of use* aspect is an absolute necessity for successful Web 2.0 learning applications. The tools of Web 2.0 have crossed Moore's chasm and reached the early majority, where they are evolving rapidly. However, the idea of *social software* itself, especially in learning scenarios, is not as far developed as we may imagine. It is necessary to take into account the fact that too few innovators and early adopters are actually using Web 2.0 technology to enhance existing learning behaviors. Insufficient educational concepts with Web 2.0 technologies require much future work.