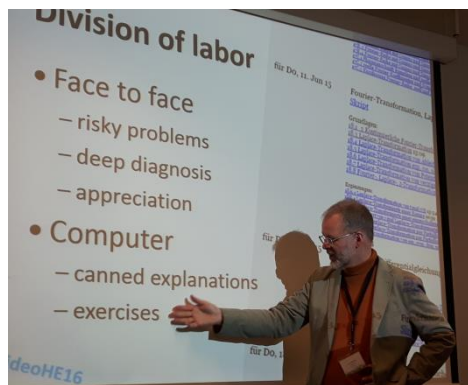**Report on Media and Learning Conference, Brussels, March 9th & 10th, 2016**

Date: March 11th
To: TM/HTRO, Lectoraat Teaching, Learning and Technology
From: Zac Woolfitt

On March 9th and 10th I attend the Media and Learning Conference in Brussels. The programme of this annual conference examines 'developments, services and uses of media in education and training to […] identify policies and initiatives that promote digital and media competence at all levels of education and training as well as to promote best-practice in the take-up and application of media in education and training.'

On Wednesday, **Jos Fransen** of the Inholland Lectorate Teaching Learning and Technology provided one of the keynotes for the pre-conference and presented his ideas on the learning process. The video (26:09) is available here on the blog from colleague Jeroen Botema which is referred to throughout this report (thank you Jeroen!). Jos discussed the complexity of the role of the teacher in collaborative learning and how the use of scripts can be used to stimulate exchange.

Jörn Loviscach of the de Fachhochschule Bielefeld explained his approach to lean video production, using white on black 'khan-style' videos. He has recorded hundreds of

mathematical explanations and developed a relaxed and clear style of delivery. His MOOC and You Tube Channel have received many visitors and positive feedback. Jörn demonstrated the art of simplifying complicated information (replacing unimportant information with a 'red-squiggle' to help students focus on the relevant information on the screen or within an equation). Not all students embrace a flipped classroom but it is clear that Jörn's expert knowledge and clear delivery style are now available to a very large audience. Having delivered the course content in advance he is able to use teaching time for the more complex, messy and less routine teaching, solving complex problems that the students could not solve without his help. Jörn concluded, 'Flipping is not about video, it is about using face to face time as best as possible'.

Eric Boon of the VU explained the steps that the VU are taking to help staff to make video recordings. He
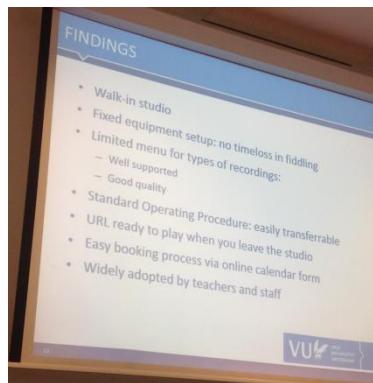
referred to the gap between the professional recording, and the do it yourself version. How can we simplify the recording process to make it 'almost effortless'? Based on a visit to The University of Valencia, the VU has set up spaces where teachers can record video with standard operating procedures, high level of expert support staff with a clear work flow. Teachers have control to record and edit themselves and need to be helped through the steep learning curve of editing on the media site.

Clive Young of University College London discussed the challenges of making changes in a big organization. It has

taken them five years to write their educational strategy, but they have reached agreement. Two provisions specifically address the digital side. Establish an Educational Media Service to support the growing demand for media production and delivery from both staff and students; Expand the Lecture cast service into UCLs largest classrooms, and introduce an opt out policy, responding to student feedback. UCL has some live lecture capture and students who have become used to it find it very hard to do without. Clive described lecture capture as a 'gateway'
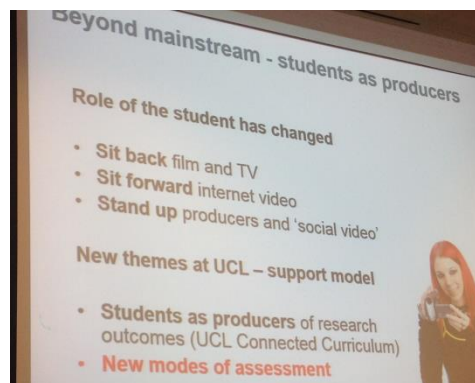
technology. Once you are used to it, it is hard to go back. Recording classes allows for more sophisticated use of class time. They have also built some drop in media rooms to make it easier. They are also getting students actively involved in the production of video.

Sónia Hetzner from the FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg explained the 'Rucksack Approach' to video recording in which
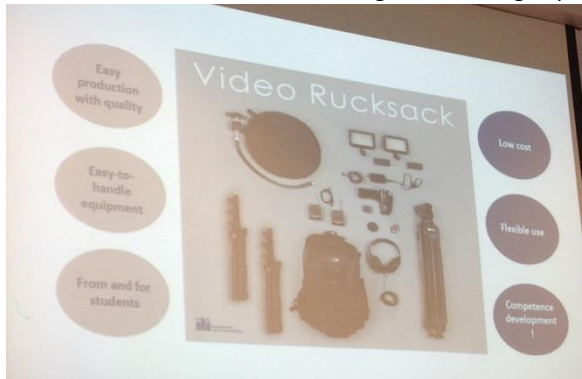
all the equipment to make films and recording can fit into a very portable rucksack (they tested it riding bikes). Their campus is spread over several locations so one video studio would be too far away from most teachers. Providing a portable studio in a rucksack has overcome some of these challenges. There is a how to educational video and an explanation of common mistakes and a two day training course. However, many lecturers continue to have fears of transitioning to video. See Jeroen's [blog](#) for further detail

On Thursday, the main conference kicked off with a key note speech from Roberto Viola who works with media issues in the European Commission and discussed conference themes of media literacy and the importance for this as the basis of every civilized society. But there is a requirement for each citizen to be critical of the media they access and to be media savvy. Citizens not passive but as critical participants.

[Barend van Heusden](#), University College Groningen, gave a very interesting overview of his theory of human
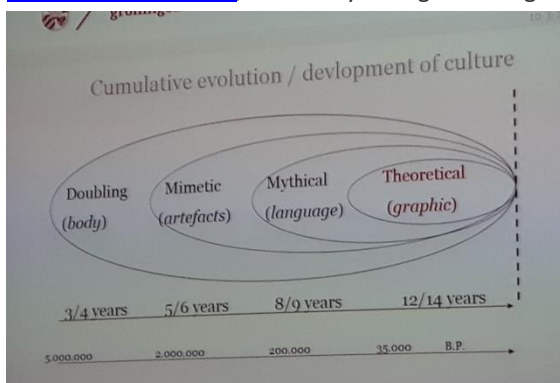
culture which has been developed from a cognitive perspective. He explained the four stages of human development that affected the development of culture. Culture is an accumulation of four types of strategy. 1) Doubling (body) about 5 million years ago, we started to be able to see ourselves from within ourselves! 2) Mimetic (artefacts) in which things are made, 3) Mythical (language) in which language develops, and finally 4) Theoretical (graphical), the creation of the 2d flat surface, in which abstract ideas are finally transferred to a surface. By representing the structures onto a flat surface, we are able to begin the process of developing theories and we can see visual abstractions represented (Lascaux Caves). He referenced [Merlin Donald](#) and his study of human cognition. Theoretical culture has to be learned by our brain's visual cortex which 'hurts' because the brain has to look at these abstract concepts.

[Aidan White](#), Director of the Ethical Journalism Network, discussed the international crisis that Europe is facing with migrants and hate speech and a vanishing 'objective' press. How do we search for information we can trust? The internet has stripped away the elite professionalism of the press and the audience has come into the news room. The role of Journalism is important to help us understand and put complex stories into context. But journalism does not make money. Old market models for selling journalism are under pressure. Cutting costs, and less training, research, less staff employed in good conditions. Once a newspaper is driven by commercial interests, it tends towards the popular. The rush to publish means we lose out on time to think and to be ethical. He called this the open information crisis due to too much free expression. This leads to the worst forms of human behavior being readily available on the internet. The limits of human decency are being tested. We need to invest in the capacity of humans to judge for themselves. Based on Aidan's five point definition, Donald Trump is involved in Hate Speech.

The [EMMA project](#) explained their research into making MOOCs in multiple languages and how the diversity of the content reflected the cultural diversity of the environments in which the courses were created. Different types of video connect to different types of learners. How do we codify videos and de-codify visual cinema

material. We consider something 'good' if it fits the model we are most familiar with . Bollywood challenged Hollywood and we saw there were other approaches. .

Łukasz Kidziński, EPFL, Switzerland, has been involved in the MOOC factory where his organization has produced 60 MOOCs, explained how they were extracting patterns in an un supervised manner from all of the data collected. From his analysis he found that speeding up a video, or slowing it down, were both related to academically strong students. This could be because a strong student has a good understanding of the speed at which they need to receive information. One can imagine that a strong student would speed up video, but it was not expected that they would also slow it down. This also enabled the ability to detect if video content is difficult or not. They make use of the pauses in video viewing to add extra explanations.

I presented in a joint session with **Blair Stevenson**, of Oulu University of Applied Sciences. Blair discussed video pedagogy and the overview of categorization and scripts. I presented the process of transition that our organization, and specifically the HTRO/TM team Diemen, is making with developing video teachings skills, and some of the challenges that flipping the classroom brings to students, lecturers and the organization. The session was well attended and resulted in a good discussion and networking opportunities to share ideas for further research.

There were additional sessions on Friday, including one from **Pedro De Bruyckere**, Arteveldehogeschool, who presented his overview of Urban myths – and some truths – about learning and technology which can be viewed back on the live stream.

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