

Strategies for the effective e-learner of the future

Helen Beetham, June 2007

1. *Information strategies (literacies):*

- search skills – broadening and narrowing focus, recording trails, adapting criteria etc
- navigating through complex information spaces (e.g. hypermedia, online databases)
- gathering information from a wide range of technical and social forms (eg blogs, RSS, podcasts)
- attending to several streams of information simultaneously; also blocking unwanted information, and managing how information is received (e.g. using syndication)
- connecting ideas and sources of information, and remembering those connections
- organising and aggregating information, and remembering those new aggregations (e.g. through file management, tagging, clipping etc)
- evaluating information quality, relevance and trustworthiness; commenting, critiquing and reviewing

2. *Strategies for self-direction* (discovery-based, research-based or experiential learning) – using new technologies and networks to support ‘traditional’ learning-to-learn strategies:

- Time and resource management (e.g. using calendrical tools, project management software, spreadsheets...)
- Action planning, scoping problems and projects (e.g. using project management software, mind-mapping, e-portfolio...)
- Identifying sources of help and support (e.g. using forums, discussion lists, online social networks, contact harvesting...)
- Seeking and responding to feedback (e.g. using annotation and comment facilities, email, chat, collaborative authoring environments, blogs...)
- Integrating learning and living/working/socialising/family commitments
- Picking and mixing from available technologies and learning opportunities (learner-blended learning)
- Reflection (e.g. using mind-mapping tools, e-portfolio...)

3. *New patterns of reasoning:*

- From deductive/abstract reasoning to bricolage (Brown and Duguid 1999)
- From mode1 to mode2 knowledge (Gibbons 1999)
- From comprehension to aggregation
- From content to context – recontextualising and repurposing knowledge in new networks and spaces and for new purposes (Bernstein 1996)
- Solving complex problems and coping with uncertainty/change
- Agile adoption of new technologies, strategies and practices (coping with not-yet-stable versions)

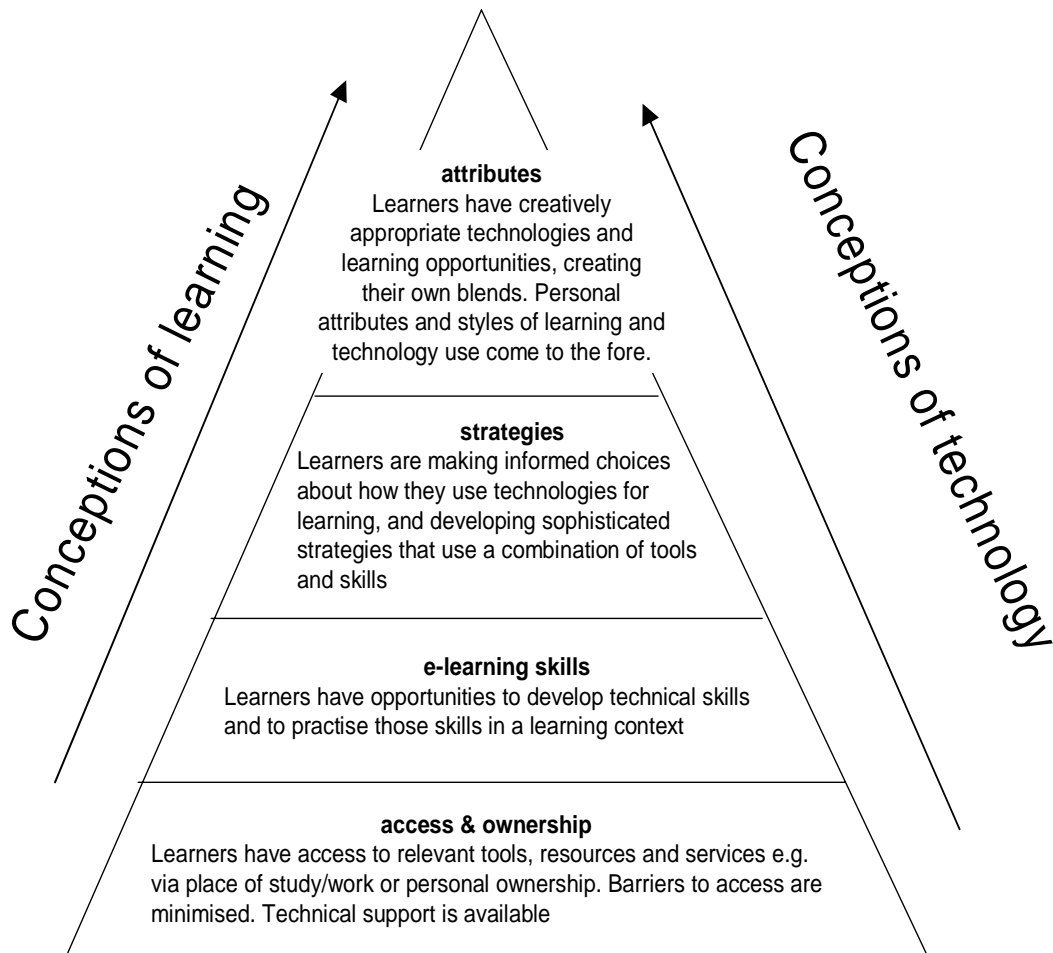
4. *New forms of creativity*

- Readily available tools for cultural production (text, audio, video, mixed media)
- Mass market media increasingly available in forms that can be appropriated, re-mixed, re-shaped, adapted, re-contextualised and repurposed

- Interactive consumption – including commenting/review
- Records of communication become resources for new creative activity (communication becomes information)
- Information aggregates also become resources for new creative activity (bricolage again)
- All tend to blur boundaries between creative consumption and production (see Ito 2005)

5. New modes of collaboration

- Peer-to-peer exchange and user-created content (e.g. blogs/wikis)
- New forms of trust and reputation



**A model for developing effective e-learners
Beetham and Sharpe – Future learners, future learning**