



Personal Learning Environments  
and the PLENK Online Course

Stephen Downes

October 20, 2010

# Connectivism

“At its heart, connectivism is the thesis that knowledge is distributed across a network of connections, and therefore that learning consists of the ability to construct and traverse those networks.”

*What Connectivism Is*

<http://halfanhour.blogspot.com/2007/02/what-connectivism-is.html>

# Course Components

- Open Enrollment

<a href="#">24 Final Project</a>
<b>Please <a href="#">enter your email address here</a> if you'd like to be involved (either for free participation or to enroll for credit).</b>
<b><a href="#">Course blog is available here</a></b>
<a href="#">Connectivism Research</a>
<b>Course Details</b>
Delivered in partnership with: Extended Education and Learning Technologies Centre, University of Manitoba
<b>Course Code:</b> 98813- 08-01

- The course was advertised in both of our blogs...

# Course Components

- Readings and outline in the Wiki....



The screenshot shows a Moodle Wiki page titled "Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support Wiki". The page includes a search bar, a "Jump to..." dropdown, and a "Reload this page" button. The main content area contains a welcome message and a list of course components.

**Critical Literacies Online Course**

CL > Wikis > Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support Wiki

Search Wiki:  -- Choose Wiki Links --

Welcome to the [Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support wiki](#).  
Syllabus, weekly schedule, and speaker's list will be posted in May 2010.  
Course tags: CL10

[Reload this page](#)

**Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support Wiki**

1. [Course Details](#)
2. [Weekly Activities](#)
3. [Learner Assignments and Evaluation](#)
4. [Resources and general information](#)
5. [Research in Personal Learning Environments](#)
6. [Week 1: Syntax \(May 31-June 6\)](#)
7. [Week 2: Semantics \(June 7-June 13\)](#)
8. [Week 3: Pragmatics \(June 14-June 20\)](#)
9. [Week 4: Cognition \(June 21-June 27\)](#)
10. [Week 5: Context \(June 28-July 4\)](#)
11. [Week 6: Change \(July 5-July 11\)](#)
12. [Recordings](#)

<http://ple.elg.ca/course/moodle/mod/wiki/view.php?id=2>

# Course Components

- The Blog



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the homepage of the 'Critical Literacies Online Course Blog'. The browser's address bar shows the URL 'http://ple.elg.ca/course/blog/'. The page features a header with the blog title 'Critical Literacies Online Course Blog' and a navigation menu including 'Home Page', 'About', 'The Daily', 'Moodle', 'Wiki', 'Research', and 'Recordings'. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area includes a 'Welcome To Critical Literacies?' section with a post dated April 21st, 2010. The post text discusses the author's realization of the need for a worthwhile online course and the development of 'Stephen's Guide to the Logical Fallacies'. A sidebar on the right contains sections for 'Blogroll', 'Meta', 'Archives', and 'Recent Comments'. The footer includes licensing information for Creative Commons, National Research Council Canada, and the Learning and Collaborative Technologies Group - Pearn Project, along with a note about the WordPress theme.

**Critical Literacies Online Course Blog**

Home Page | About | The Daily | Moodle | Wiki | Research | Recordings

## Welcome To Critical Literacies?

downs April 21st, 2010

About 15 years ago I realized two things. First, I realized I needed to prove that it was possible to offer a worthwhile course online. My colleagues at Assinboine weren't convinced. Second, I realized that people learning online would need a good foundational knowledge of critical thinking.

So what I did was to post something called Stephen's Guide to the Logical Fallacies. Over the years, it has been my most popular work – much more popular than anything I've done in online learning. You can [find it here](#), in its relatively new home. I keep meaning to update it (and, in fact, I've just assembled the **whole thing** into a document).

This course in critical literacies builds on and expands that idea. It is at once a demonstration of a possibility of online learning, this time a connectivism course. And it is an attempt to articulate and demonstrate those critical thinking capacities that are needed in a new electronic multimedia world.

There's a lot more to come...

Category: Uncategorized | Leave a comment | Edit this post

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National Research Council Canada  
[Learning and Collaborative technologies Group - Pearn Project](#)  
Powered by WordPress & the Atahualpa Theme by BytesForAll. Discuss on our WP Forum

<http://ple.elg.ca/course/blog/>

# Course Components

- Course Moodle Forum

The screenshot shows a Moodle course page for 'Critical Literacies Online Course'. The page layout includes a main menu on the left with links to 'CL10 - Blog' and 'CL10 - Wiki', and a 'Courses' section listing 'Critical Literacies Online Course 2010'. The main content area features a central text block with a paragraph about technology and learning, accompanied by icons for 'Blog' (a bunch of colored pencils) and 'Wiki' (a person reading a book). Below the text is a link to 'Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support Wiki'. On the right side, there are three widgets: 'Upcoming Events' (stating no events), 'Calendar' (showing April 2010), and a login status indicator at the top right. The Moodle logo is visible at the bottom center.


**Critical Literacies Online Course** You are not logged in. ([Login](#))  
English (en) ▾


**Main Menu**

- [CL10 - Blog](#)
- [CL10 - Wiki](#)

**Courses**

- [Critical Literacies Online Course 2010](#)  
[All courses ...](#)

 [Blog](#)

 [Wiki](#)

Technology has brought changes to the way people learn and some "critical literacies" are becoming increasingly important. This course is about these critical literacies. Critical, as the course is not just about finding out how to use the latest technologies for learning, but to look critically at the Web and its underlying structures. Literacies, as it is more about capabilities to be developed than about the acquisition of a set of skills. It is all about learning what is needed to develop confidence and competence, and to feel capable of negotiating an ever changing information and media landscape. You can register to receive course information here.

We will open up the course so participants can take the course in any mode, space or direction that they find useful. Our goal is to provide a starting point for participants to build a distributed infrastructure for innovative conversations.

[Critical Literacies Online Course 2010 support Wiki](#)

**Upcoming Events**

There are no upcoming events


[Go to calendar...](#)

**Calendar**

April 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

You are not logged in. ([Login](#))



<http://lrc.umantoba.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=20>

# Course Components

- Pageflakes Site

The screenshot shows a Pageflakes user interface for 'ltc's Pagecast'. The top navigation bar includes 'Create your own page!', 'Pageflakes members: login', 'ltc's Pagecast', 'Watch this Pagecast', 'Copy', 'Send To a Friend', and 'Random Pagecast'. A search bar with 'Google' is on the right. The main content area is divided into several widgets:

- Connectivism & Connective Knowledge (5)**: A widget titled 'Comparing Connectivism' with a sub-header 'I've posted a comparison between different theories of learning. It's not a final word summ...'. It lists items like 'Managing your Moodle Forums', 'Week 1: What is connectivism', 'So, Where are you from?', and 'Introduction to the course...'. It is powered by weather.com.
- Technorati Search for: CCK08 (5)**: A widget titled 'How to filter your CCK08 email (in Gmail)' with a sub-header 'How to filter your CCK08 email (in Gmail) September 9th, 2008 — general How to create a ...'. It lists items like 'Bill Kerr's Challenge to Connectivism', 'Connectivism & Connective Knowledge Course', 'Connectivism: Theory and Application', and 'Connectivism course: nifty (and a little sca...'. It is powered by Technorati.
- Sponsored Content**: A large advertisement for 'AIG Travel Guard' with the text 'Thank goodness for AIG Travel Guard travel insurance.' and the AIG Travel Guard logo.
- Weather**: A widget titled 'Weather' showing a forecast for Toronto, Canada. It displays icons for Tuesday (cloud with rain), Wednesday (sun), Thursday (sun), and Friday (cloud with rain). The temperatures are 17°/9°C, 19°/12°C, 22°/15°C, and 22°/14°C respectively. It includes links for 'Hourly Forecast' and '10-Day Forecast'.
- Winnipeg, Canada**: A widget titled 'Ellis resurfaces in Winnipeg - The Gazette (...)' with a sub-header 'CBC.caEllis resurfaces in WinnipegThe Gazette (Montreal), Canada - 22 hours agoHe was signed on Monday...'. It lists items like 'Winnipeg couple makes pot discovery - Winnip...', 'Rejigged Bombers-Ticats deal a go - Globe an...', 'Three Winnipeg men charged in drug busts - W...', and 'Grandmotherhood inspires Winnipeg publisher ...'. It is powered by Technorati.
- Events in Winnipeg, Canada**: A widget titled 'Events in Winnipeg, Canada'.
- Stephen's Web ~ by Stephen Downes ~**: A widget titled '[CCK08] First Impressions' with a sub-header 'Even if you're not registered in our giant Connectivism course (and most OLDaily readers ar...'. It includes a link 'Does Learning Grow or Is It Built?' and a sub-header 'Interesting post from the Connectivism course looking at whether we "grow" or "build" knowl...'. It is powered by Technorati.

<http://www.pageflakes.com/ltc>

# Course Components

- Elluminate Discussions (Wednesdays)

The screenshot displays the Elluminate Live! software interface. The main window is titled "Elluminate Live!" and contains several components:

- Participants List:** A list of participants on the left side, including names like "HRE 400 Moderator...", "Jennifer Evans Go...", "Jin-Hong Kim (Mo...", "Sandra Williams (...)", "Annatts", "Anthony", "Betty", "Curtis", "Judy", "Kevin", "Lynn", "Melia", "Norma", "Scott", "Stever", "Tara", "Thomas", and "Vernon". There are also "Group 1" through "Group 4" listed. A green box highlights the "Group 1" through "Group 4" entries, with a green arrow pointing to it labeled "Group discussion rooms".
- Main chat window:** A central chat window showing a list of messages. The messages are from various participants, including "Moderator (Jennifer Evans Goode)", "Lynn", "Curtis", "Marta", "Kevin", "Lynn", "Kevin", "Judy", "Norma", "Tara", "Lynn", "Thomas", "Betty", "Vernon", "Kevin", "Arthath", "Curtis", "Norma", "Arthath", "Moderator (Jennifer Evans Goode)", "Norma", and "Marta". A green arrow points to the chat window with the label "Main chat window".
- Whiteboard:** A whiteboard window titled "Whiteboard - Main Room (Scaled 84%)". It displays a slide titled "Opportunities to Develop Human Resources" with a bulleted list:
  - Knowledge or skill needs differ
  - Motivation – meaning of work
  - Change in the environment
  - Change in the organizationThe whiteboard also features the "HRE ONLINE" logo. A green arrow points to the whiteboard with the label "White Board space (Displays PowerPoint slides, notes, drawings, etc)".
- Video Window:** A video window titled "Video - Sandra Williams" showing a woman wearing a headset. A green arrow points to the video window with the label "Live video of the instructor".
- Audio Controls:** At the bottom left, there are audio controls including a microphone icon, a speaker icon, and a volume slider. A green arrow points to the microphone icon with the label "Mic button".
- Participants Window:** At the bottom center, there is a "Participants" window showing "19 Participants". A green arrow points to this window with the label "Participants window".



# Course Components

- Twitter...



The screenshot shows the Twitter profile page for user cck08. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Name or location" and a "search" button, followed by a link to "Login / Join Twitter!". To the right is a "Select Language" dropdown menu. Below this is a yellow banner with the text "Hey there! cck08 is using Twitter." and a "Join today!" button. The main content area features a profile picture of a blue and white abstract image, the name "cck08", and a tweet from @MtnLaurel. The tweet text is "hi - no sign up time, but i think the 11 am CST will be the busier of the two...". To the right of the profile information is an "About" section with fields for Name, Web, and Bio, and a "Stats" section with fields for Following, Followers, and Favorites.

**twitter**

Name or location search or [Login / Join Twitter!](#)

Select Language ..

 Hey there! **cck08** is using Twitter.

Twitter is a free service that lets you keep in touch with people using the web, your phone, or IM. **Join today** to start receiving **cck08**'s updates.

[Join today!](#)

Already using Twitter via SMS or IM? [Finish signing up.](#)

 **cck08**

[@MtnLaurel](#) hi - no sign up time, but i think the 11 am CST will be the busier of the two...

about 7 hours ago from web in reply to [MtnLaurel](#)

**About**

**Name** cck08  
**Web** <http://tlc.umanit...>  
**Bio** a rather large online course

**Stats**

**Following** 0  
**Followers** 141  
**Favorites** 0

<http://twitter.com/cck08>

# Course Components

- The Daily

## Connectivism & Connective Knowledge

[\[Home\]](#) [\[The Daily\]](#) [\[Wiki\]](#) [\[About\]](#) [\[Aggregations\]](#) [\[Readings\]](#)

### *The Daily*

September 9, 2008

#### Highlighted Resources

[Time Change for Wednesday Session](#)  
Important: We've made a change to our Wednesday (in our part of the world) schedule. The illuminate session will be held at 11:00 am CST (see [conversion here](#)). The event will be held in illuminate ([link here](#)). Sorry about this last minute change. If the time doesn't work for those in Australia and Asia, please let me know ([gziemens@elearnspace.org](mailto:gziemens@elearnspace.org)) and we can try and arrange a smaller discussion group at a different time). CCK08, , September 9, 2008 [\[Link\]](#) [\[Tags: none\]](#) [\[Comment\]](#)

[Connections, Learning, and Ptolomeus \(CCK08-W1\)](#)  
Nice post on the question of whether we 'grow' or 'build' new learning. Diego Leal cites John Medina's book *Brain Rules* (I'll have to get that one) on learning: "No defined structure, no progressive storage. Just the creation and recreation of connections between neurons. So, the process seems to be closer to something growing out (or expanding?) than to something being built." Here's the [Brain Rules](#) website, if you want to have a look. [Diego Leal](#), [.Edu.Co.Blog](#), September 9, 2008 [\[Link\]](#) [\[Tags: none\]](#) [\[Comment\]](#)

<http://connect.downes.ca/>

# Course Components

- Managing Content

The screenshot shows the website for 'CONNECTIVISM & CONNECTIVE KNOWLEDGE', described as 'a rather large open online course...'. The navigation menu includes HOME, THE DAILY (selected), WIKI, ABOUT, AGGREGATIONS, READINGS, and SIGNING UP. The main content area is titled 'Site Administration' and contains several sections:

- [ADMIN]**
- Reader**
  - [Viewer](#)
- Mailing List**
  - [Test Newsletter](#) (Sends to Admin Only)... [Send Newsletter](#)
- Harvester**
  - [Harvest Next In Queue](#)
  - [Harvest All Feeds](#)
  - [Calculate Most Cited](#)
- Harvest Results**
  - [Most Recent in EduRSS](#) (RSS Version)
  - Look at the files: [HTML](#), [XML](#), [RSS](#)
- Feeds**
  - [Export OPML File](#)
  - [Import Feed List From OPML](#)

On the left side, there is a list of content types, each with a '[New]' and '[List]' link:

- [New] [List] Author
- [New] [List] Box
- [New] [List] Cite
- [New] [List] Event
- [New] [List] Feed
- [New] [List] File
- [New] [List] Journal
- [New] [List] Link
- [New] [List] Optlist
- [New] [List] Mapping
- [New] [List] Page
- [New] [List] Person
- [New] [List] Post
- [New] [List] Presentation
- [New] [List] Publication
- [New] [List] Project
- [New] [List] Task
- [New] [List] Template
- [New] [List] Theme
- [New] [List] Topic
- [New] [List] View

# Course Components

- Feed Harvesting

## CONNECTIVISM & CONNECTIVE KNOWLEDGE

a rather large open online course...

HOME THE DAILY WIKI ABOUT AGGREGATIONS READINGS SIGNING UP

### List feeds

[ADMIN]


Listing 0 to 1000 of 106 feeds


[New] [List] Author	[Harvest] [Retire] Links: <a href="#">ActionsFLE en formation</a> (category)
[New] [List] Box	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Aggregator Blog</a> (category)
[New] [List] Cite	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Al d'Àa</a> (category)
[New] [List] Event	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Alvin's Educational Technology Blog</a> (category)
[New] [List] Feed	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">An Education and Technology Blog</a> (category)
[New] [List] File	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">An Oxonian's Learning Journey</a> (category)
[New] [List] Journal	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Beespace</a> (category)
[New] [List] Link	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">blog.puntopanto.it, bloggers she wrote</a> (category)
[New] [List] Optlist	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Bradley Shoebottom Blog</a> (category)
[New] [List] Mapping	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Brett Powell CCK</a> (category)
[New] [List] Page	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Buthaina-Connect08</a> (category)
[New] [List] Person	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">CCK-No8</a> (category)
[New] [List] Post	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">cck08 - learning</a> (category)
[New] [List] Presentation	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">CCK08-Viplay Baxi</a> (category)
[New] [List] Publication	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Classroomblogging.com</a> (category)
[New] [List] Project	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Coalesce</a> (category)
[New] [List] Task	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Concetta Gotlieb's Blog</a> (category)
[New] [List] Template	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Connecting Online</a> (category)
[New] [List] Theme	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Connective Knowledge Weblog</a> (category)
[New] [List] Topic	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Connectivism &amp; Connective Knowledge</a> (edubloggers)
[New] [List] View	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Connectivism and Connective Knowledge</a> (category)
	[Approve] Links: <a href="#">Connectivism by the Nile</a> (category)

# Course Components

- Intro...

GettingStarted (00:05 / 00:46) | ATTACHMENTS

 UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

 **George Siemens**  
Associate Director, R & D,  
LTC, U of Manitoba



Email

Outline | Thumbnails | Notes | Search

1. Connectivism and Connective Knowledge: G
2. Slide 2
3. The Hub
4. The Daily
5. Slide 5
6. Each Week
7. Weekly Schedule
8. How to participate
9. Tasks

## Connectivism and Connective Knowledge: Getting Started

Massive Open Online Course

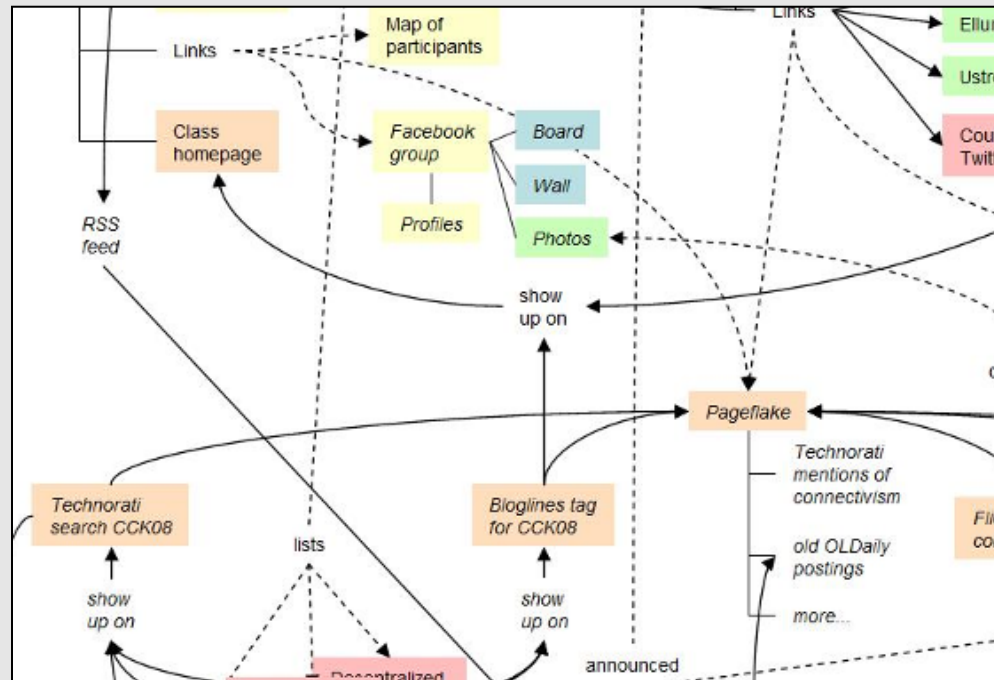
 George Siemens  
Stephen Downes 

articulate  
POWERED PRESENTATION

SLIDE 1 OF 9 | PAUSED | 00:05 / 00:10

# The Students

- The Course Map...



<http://x28newblog.blog.uni-heidelberg.de/2008/09/06/cck08-first-impressions/>

# The Students

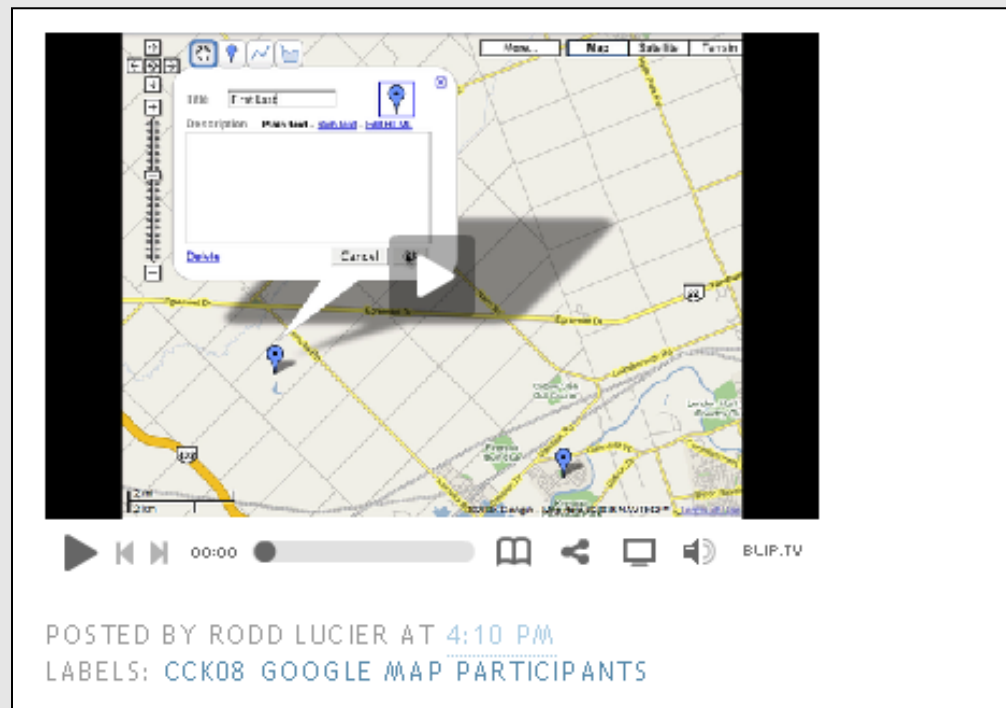
- The *Other* Course Map...



<http://tinyurl.com/cck08map>

# The Students

- Add to the Map - Video



<http://thecleversheep.blogspot.com/2008/09/cck08-is-truly-global.html>



# The Students

- Google Groups

The screenshot shows a Google Groups interface for the group 'Connectivism and Connective Knowledge'. The page title is 'extending access of CCK08'. There are 7 messages in the thread. The first message is from HelenaR, asking if there is a need for regional help desks in Portuguese. The second message is from MariaTeresa, replying to HelenaR and suggesting translation of the course content into Portuguese to engage more participants.

Google Groups stephen.downes.ca@gmail.com | [My Groups](#) | [Favor](#)

**Connectivism and Connective Knowledge**

**extending access of CCK08** [Options](#)

☆ 7 messages - [Collapse all](#)

**HelenaR** [View profile](#) [More options](#) Jun 22, 1:58 am

Is there a need to create a kind of regional help desks, in Portuguese for instance, to easy access to this course ? Can i help translating or co-translating the contents ?

Helena

[Reply to author](#) [Forward](#) Rate this post: ☆☆☆☆☆

**MariaTeresa** [View profile](#) [More options](#) Jun 24, 4:35 pm

Very good idea Helena. Translation is important; even though the language of the course is english, to count with information on how to participante in several languages will help to engage readers in those languages, Maria Teresa

On 22 Jun, 07:58, HelenaR <ramoshelena...@gmail.com> wrote:

- Show quoted text -

[Reply to author](#) [Forward](#) Rate this post: ☆☆☆☆☆

<http://groups.google.com/group/connectivism>

# The Students

- Translations...

The screenshot shows a wiki page for 'Conectivismo - Curso online' on the Learning Technologies Centre (LTC) website. The page features a navigation bar with tabs for 'page', 'discussion', 'view source', and 'history'. The main content area includes a welcome message, a tag 'CCK08', and information about the page's availability in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Chinese, Italian) and a Facebook group. A table of contents is also visible, listing sections like 'Por favor, se quiser participar...', 'Blogue do curso', and 'Detalhes do curso'.

**LTC**  
Learning Technologies Centre

Log in / create account

[page](#) [discussion](#) [view source](#) [history](#)

## Conectivismo - Curso online

Bem-vindo ao wiki de apoio ao **curso online sobre Conectivismo e Conhecimento Conectado**.

Tag do curso: CCK08

Esta página também está disponível em [Inglês](#), em [Espanhol](#) em [Chinês](#) (Versão simplificada de caracteres) e em [Italiano](#).

Esta página também tem um grupo no FaceBook em [CCK08](#)

**Contents** [hide]

- 1 Por favor, se quiser participar, (seja de forma livre ou de uma forma m formal para acreditação) insira o seu e-mail aqui
- 2 Blogue do curso
- 3 Detalhes do curso

[http://ltc.umanitoba.ca/wiki/Conectivismo - Curso online](http://ltc.umanitoba.ca/wiki/Conectivismo_-_Curso_online)

# The Students

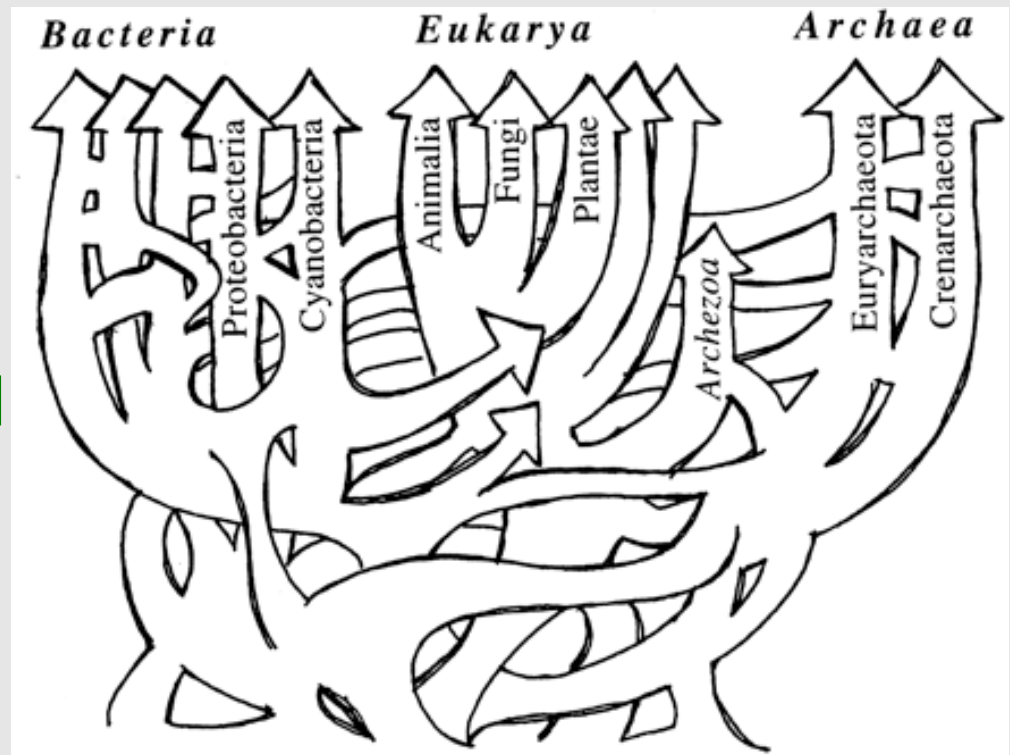
- Second Life...
- Diigo...
- de.l.icio.us
- WordPress...



Blogs about: Ccko8

# Social Construction

- Social construction is *at best* the collaborative creation of social artifacts (such as naming conventions)
- It can be:
  - Process driven
  - Results oriented
  - Consensus-based
  - Deliberative
  - Mechanical



# Personal Knowledge

- Is not 'constructed'
- You do not 'make meaning' for yourself
- It is a matter of organic growth



(Totally *not* what personal knowledge is)

This is important because it means that developing personal knowledge is more like *exercising* than like inputting, absorbing or remembering

(How do I know this? Research on how neural networks grow, develop)

# PLE as Exercise Machine

- A PLE is a tool intended to *immerse yourself* into the workings of a community
- Once immersed, you then *practice* being one of the people characteristic of the community
  - For example, you would learn philosophy by practicing ‘being a philosopher’ in a philosophical community
- Your personal growth develops as a consequence of the interactions with that community

# Constructionism

- “the idea of manipulative materials to the idea that learning is most effective when part of an activity the learner experiences as constructing a meaningful product.”

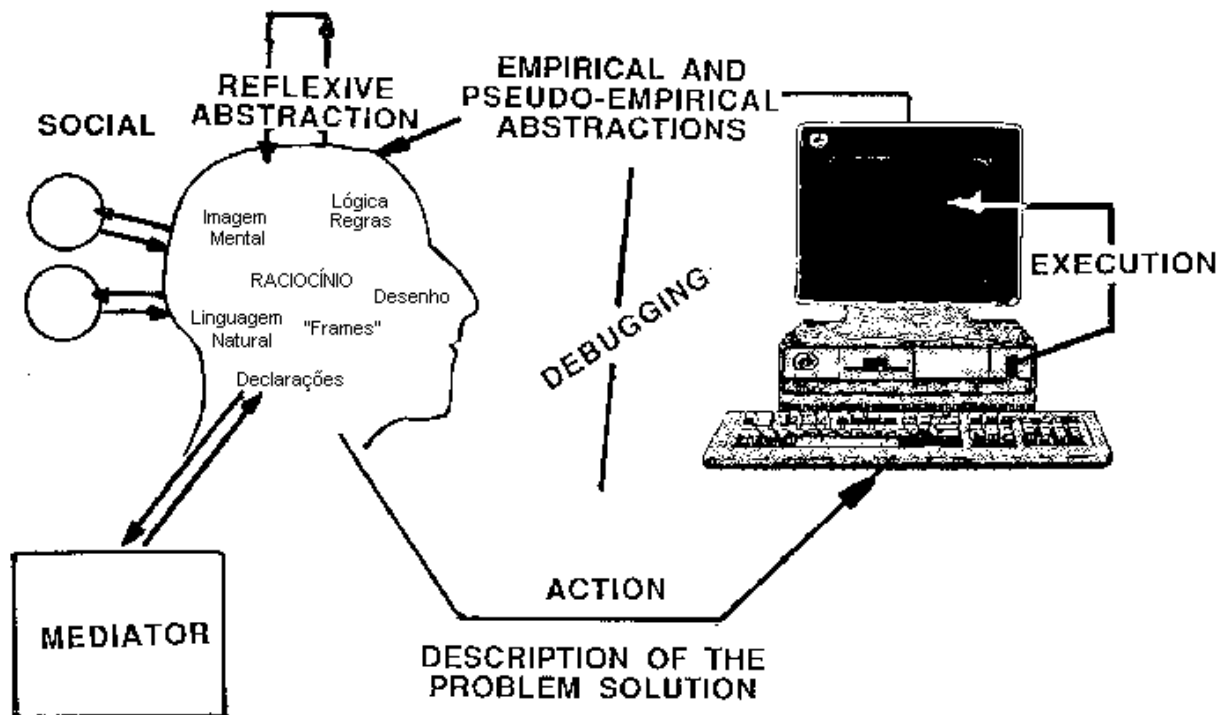
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructionism\\_%28learning\\_theory%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructionism_%28learning_theory%29)

- “a philosophy of education in which children learn by doing and making in a public, guided, collaborative process including feedback from peers, not just from teachers.”

<http://wiki.laptop.org/go/Constructionist>

# Constructionism (2)

## CONSTRUCTIONIST APPROACH





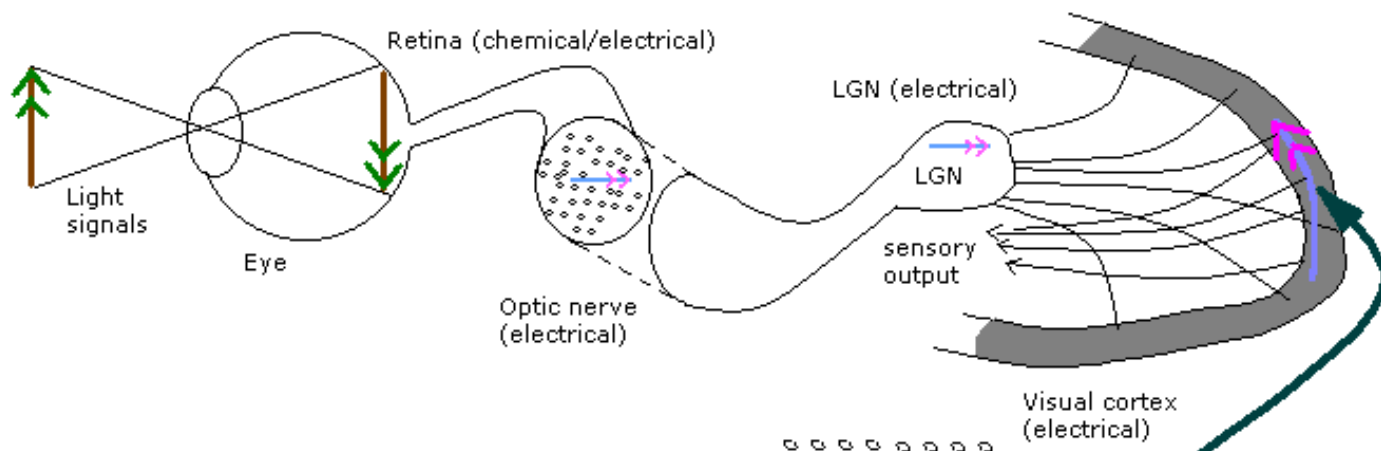
# Freire

- “Students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge... Their response to the challenge evokes new challenges, followed by new understandings; and gradually the students come to regard themselves as committed.”

# The Learning in PLE

- The learning in a PLE is about developing *capacities* (not competencies, skills, etc.)
- The outcome of personal learning is engendered through *empowerment* (vs engagement, etc)

Information transfers in the nervous system



# Stephen Downes



<http://www.downes.ca>