

Techniques For Generating Computer-Based Feedback

Dr Michael Lambiris

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Abstract

When students do tests or assignments, providing them with individual feedback in the usual ways, such as by means of handwritten comments, is time-consuming. To generate and deliver useful and constructive individualised feedback to students by means of a computer-based application would be a major advantage. But how can this be done? In this paper the author describes some of the techniques that have been used to provide business law students with computer-generated feedback based on their individual results in tests. Note: Some of the concepts explained in this paper were first presented at the *International Conference on Virtual Learning*, Bucharest, Romania, 2006.

Tuesday 8 July 3.30pm to 5.00pm

Community of Practice Project

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Abstract

The overall purpose of this project is to address the learning needs of the diverse cohort of students studying law subjects at Victoria University (VU) at different points of entry across this dual-sector institution. While there have been particular projects to address this issue, to date these have been uncoordinated with staff working in isolation from one another. The project provides a systematic and coherent approach in its streamlining of language and learning assistance and through the establishment of a VU wide, cross-disciplinary and sustainable Community of Practice.²⁴ The Community of Practice is an umbrella entity for work on legal discourse in the university, supporting legal projects by providing opportunities for discussion of issues and input from a range of educators, as well as facilitating teamwork between language and learning practitioners and subject lecturers in law. The Community of Practice's central focus is on the issue of the interrelation of disciplinary learning and language learning and on the development of new language pedagogies to equip learners to communicate legal knowledge.

The success of the project is dependent on the quality of the various collaborations and on the ability to create sustainable relationships.

Pedagogical Challenges of Teaching Law to Non Law Students

Jennifer Butler, Kristy Richardson & Eric Holm

Central Queensland University & James Cook University

Abstract

This article discusses some of the key obstacles faced in the pedagogy of teaching legal problem solving skills to non law students. The literature relating to the teaching of law identifies that the approach promoted to solve legal problems needs to be structured and logical. From a pedagogical standpoint the use of a structured approach allows the teacher to provide meaningful explanations of elements of law and relate the importance of these elements to practical situations thereby supporting deductive reasoning in legal problem solving.²⁵

A structured approach to problem solving has two key benefits. Firstly, it allows the student to have clear goals. Secondly it also allows the student to feel comfortable that they have the available resources to complete their task.²⁶ Marzano highlights problem solving as the process of overcoming

²⁴ E Wenger, *Communities of Practice: learning, meaning, and identity* (1998).

²⁵ Donald Cooper & Pamela Schindler, *Business Research Method* (6th ed, 1998).

²⁶ Greg Taylor, 'Structured Problem-Solving: Against the 'step-by-step' Method' (2006) 11 *Deakin Law Review* 1 92.

limits or barriers that are in the way of achieving goals.²⁷ Indeed, the need for a structured approach to legal problem solving is amplified where the students undertaking studies in law are non law students. Within law schools structured problem solving methods have been used for some time.²⁸ These methods differ slightly but commonly take the form of Issues, Rules, Application, Conclusion (IRAC)²⁹ or a similar format. However, in the context of teaching law to non law students within a business faculty, it seemed to the authors that the promotion of a singular structured technique for legal problem solving was not occurring. Indeed, it appeared to the authors that the choice of the methodology for problem solving was occurring in an ad hoc and individualistic manner.

This paper considers the benefits of a singular structured legal problem solving technique being promoted to non law students for legal problem solving.

To further this discussion this paper examines a pilot study that was conducted at Central Queensland University in 2007³⁰ to evaluate the usefulness of different approaches to legal problem solving. Overwhelmingly, the respondents to the pilot study, some 33 students, indicated their appreciation from having some structure to their approach to problem solving in law subjects.

The Application of the Theory of Multiple Intelligences to Business/Commercial Law Courses

Catrina Di Battista
Monash University

Abstract

Monash University is Australia's largest university with a staff and student population of approximately 60,000. The Faculty of Business and Economics is the largest faculty in Monash University with over 16,000 students and a staff of about 1,200.

In their business courses students are required to complete an introductory course in business/commercial law. The structure of business degrees at other universities prescribe that a similar business/commercial law unit be completed as a core requirement. This reflects the growing importance of commercial law as a core element in the practice and study of business.

This paper examines the nature of pedagogy in the first year BTF 1010 commercial law course from the perspective of the theory of multiple intelligences (MI theory). MI theory was formulated by Howard Gardner in 'Frames of Mind' (1983). This theory has not been applied in a first year subject geared to developing in students their analytical problem solving skills through a variety of legal topics.

The unit, BTF 1010 commercial law, covers the law with regard to liability for defective products, liability for misleading advice or information, contract, agency, partnership, company and company officers' duties.

Students are required to identify the legal problems and risks which arise in commercial law scenarios, describe the laws relevant to these scenarios and apply the laws to predict possible legal outcomes. Firstly, I explain the theory of multiple intelligences. Secondly, I examine the commercial law unit's curriculum from the viewpoint of MI theory. Thirdly, I argue that the current course is geared to predominantly only one type of intelligence being linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence. Fourthly, I offer some strategies to improve the unit's curriculum in order to foster a broader range of intelligences in students which will better equip them for the commercial world beyond university.

²⁷ Robert Marzano & Debra Pickering, *Dimensions of Learning* (2nd ed, 1997).

²⁸ Lutz-Christian Wolff, 'Structured Problem Solving: German Methodology from a Comparative Perspective' (2004) 14 *Legal Education Review* 30.

²⁹ Richard Krever, *Mastering Law Studies & Law Exam Techniques* (6th ed, 2006).

³⁰ Central Queensland University teaching grant awarded to Dr Kristy Richardson, Eric Holm and Jenny Butler.