

THE SDL NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from Research Focus Area Self Directed Learning



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE FOLLOWING SDL EVENTS:

4 - 7 NOV: SDL CONFERENCE

11 NOV: COOPERATIVE LEARNING WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY PROF LYNDA BALOCHE

16 NOV: SDL POSTGRADUATE STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

21 - 22 NOV: SDL WRITING RETREAT

25 - 27 NOV: SDL WRITING SCHOOL

28 NOV: SDL ANNUAL YEAR END FUNCTION

Positive writing carries the message – using the emotional colours of texts for adaptive learning

DISCOURSE PRESENTED BY DR EGON WERLEN

On 18 October dr Egon Werlen from The Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS), presented a discourse using video conferencing technologies to the Research Focus Area, SDL on “Positive writing carries the message – using the emotional colours of texts for adaptive learning”. The Faculty of Education of the NWU has signed an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Swiss Distance University of Applied Sciences (FFHS), and as such the Research Focus Area SDL collaborates with FFHS in research activities and endeavours, under the guidance of Prof Christo van der Westhuizen, subarea leader for Blended Learning to Support SDL.

During his presentation he focused on using Lexical analysis which was used to develop an algorithm in order to analyse texts (for example tweets) to determine whether the text is positive or negative in nature. He elaborated on the value of

determining the emotions of text in order to inform a teacher on which teaching approach would be most suitable to use in the light of the students' emotional status and in doing so fostering a climate of optimal learning.

He further elaborated on the value of positive writing, which may be viewed as part of positive psychology which promotes positive feelings for the writer themselves, using an example of simply writing down 5 positive things per day. This may promote a positive view of life and add to an optimism mind-set.

Referring to SDL, he added that knowing the feelings of students (feedback from students' written text), may help to reflect on the learning of students. This approach has links to metacognition due to the strong link between metacognition and emotions.

