LTS101 – Learning Contexts, Styles and Outcomes

OTS1 Reflection

The Observed Teaching Sessions consisted of a two hour lecture for a new Unit being taught within the Telecommunications Engineering degree. This Unit is about introducing students to a new Operating System that many will have never seen before, giving them the opportunity to expand their field of interest. As such most of the teaching is expository, although I believe the techniques and introduction would work better with actual examples in the classroom. As such, I planned the lecture to include presentation of information coupled with real-time examples with access to remote computers as "mini-experiments". I also believe that 2 hours is too long to concentrate and so choose to break the lecture up with a ten minute break. Where information was to be presented where the technique or application was not obviously clear, I intended to ask students to consider how they might deal with or implement such functionality.

The actual teaching session went reasonably well. Thankfully the technology held up for the real-time experiments. Some students have taken to bringing their laptops to class and often attempt to re-run the experiment themselves. I think this technique works well for students who have the technology available to them as it re-enforces what I say and allows them to experience for themselves rather than just see the outcome.

Areas where the presentation could have been better (in my mind) are twofold:
1. **Timing** – this is difficult in this subject (at least for this year) as the lecture material is being developed week by week and I have no time to perform a dry run through the content prior to the lecture, making my timing a little off. Indeed in the actual lecture I had to cut the break to five minutes as I was running a little behind where I intended to be at the half-way point. This problem is a symptom of preparation, while the Unit is well organized, the time required to prepare each weeks material is heavily eating into the time to properly prepare for the actual presentation. I think this problem will be largely rectified on the second run of this Unit (next year) where the bulk of the teaching material will already be prepared.
2. **Student Interaction** – While questions were asked to the students, not all students participated in any in-class discussion. I think that this is largely caused by students individual learning styles and willingness to participate. I would like to explore different techniques that could be used to encourage greater participation by these students during the lecture