SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[005] Technology offers educators new opportunities to create powerful learning tools. For example, multimedia provides new ways to interact with learners, such as interactive online educational environments. In such an environment, mentors can be provided with tools to leverage their experience and knowledge of each learner in order to customize the educational experience. All learners need not experience identical sequences of learning activities. For these reasons, an effective educational environment should provide features and functionality that allow mentors to bring their experience and knowledge of each learner to bear in the design of customized lessons, units, and levels of study.

[006] Despite the potential for customized content and mentor involvement in structuring learning content created by technology, current online educational environments offer little opportunity for customization and just as little opportunity for mentor involvement. Accordingly, we have identified a long-felt and unmet need for an online educational environment that offers a mentor guided learning mode. Such a mode should provide features and functionality to enable mentors to select one or more learners, select learning activities from among a population to create one or more subpopulations of activities, display one or more subpopulations of activities to learners and provide them access to the learning activities. And, in some embodiments, the mode should allow mentors and learners to monitor the progress of learners as they complete activities and subpopulations of activities.

[007] In one aspect, disclosed herein are educational system assembling platforms comprising: a digital processing device comprising a memory and an operating system configured to perform executable instructions; a computer program, provided to the digital processing device, including executable instructions that create an educational environment, the educational environment comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising: a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner; a database of learner data in a computer memory; a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based. In some embodiments, the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners. In further

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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[006] Despite the potential for customized content and mentor involvement in structuring learning content created by technology, current online educational environments offer little opportunity for customization and just as little opportunity for mentor involvement. Accordingly, we have identified a long-felt and unmet need for an online educational environment that offers a mentor guided learning mode. Such a mode should provide features and functionality to enable mentors to select one or more learners, select learning activities from among a population to create one or more subpopulations of activities, display one or more subpopulations of activities to learners and provide them access to the learning activities. And, in some embodiments, the mode should allow mentors and learners to monitor the progress of learners as they complete activities and subpopulations of activities.

[006A] Disclosed herein is an educational system assembling platform comprising:

a. a digital processing device comprising a memory and an operating system configured to perform executable instructions;

b. a computer program, provided to the digital processing device, including executable instructions that create an educational environment, the educational environment comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

i. a software module configured to provide an interface allowing a mentor to select a plurality of learning activities from among the population of activities associated with an area of skill, interest, or expertise to create one or more subpopulations of activities to be completed by a learner,

wherein the interface further allows the mentor to sort subpopulations of activities based on each activity's association with one or more areas of skill, interest, or expertise, and wherein the interface further allows the mentor to sequence, rank, prioritize, and remove activities within subpopulations of activities;

ii. a database of learner data in a computer memory; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

iii. a software module configured to automatically apply pattern analysis to the learner data to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities within the subpopulation of activities; and

iv. a software module configured to provide an interface allowing a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based by indicating, rating, or ranking subjects, skills, educational objectives, and learning activities: and

v. a software module configured to automatically apply pattern analysis to the learner data to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities within the subpopulation of activities to the learner.

[006B] Also disclosed herein is non-transitory computer-readable storage media encoded with a computer program including instructions executable by a processor to create an educational system assembling platform, the platform comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

a. a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner;

b. a database of learner data in a computer memory; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

c. a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and

d. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based.

e. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

[006C] Further disclosed herein is a non-transitory computer-readable storage media encoded with a computer program including instructions executable by a processor to create an educational system assembling platform, the platform comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

a. a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner;

b. a database of learner data in a computer memory; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

c. a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data;

d. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based; and

e. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

[007] In one aspect, disclosed herein are educational system assembling platforms comprising: a digital processing device comprising a memory and an operating system configured to perform executable instructions; a computer program, provided to the digital processing device, including executable instructions that create an educational environment, the educational environment comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising: a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner; a database of learner data in a computer memory; a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based. In some embodiments, the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners. In further

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An educational system assembling platform comprising:

    a. a digital processing device comprising a memory and an operating system configured to perform executable instructions;

    b. a computer program, provided to the digital processing device, including executable instructions that create an educational environment, the educational environment comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

        i. a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner;

        ii. a database of learner data in a computer memory;

        iii. a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and

        iv. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based.

2. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners.

3. The educational system assembling platform of claim 2, wherein the software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

4. The educational system assembling platform of claim 2, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, configured to allow selection of learning activities from among the population of activities to create one or more subpopulations of activities to be completed by a learner.

5. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

6. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.

7. Non-transitory computer-readable storage media encoded with a computer program including instructions executable by a processor to create an educational system assembling platform, the platform comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

   a. a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner;

   b. a database of learner data in a computer memory;

   c. a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and

   d. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based.

8. The media of claim 7, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners.

9. The media of claim 8, wherein the software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

10. The media of claim 8, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, configured to allow selection of learning activities from among the population of activities to create one or more subpopulations of activities to be completed by a learner.

11. The media of claim 7, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

12. The media of claim 7, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.

13. A computer-implemented method of educating a learner in a guided learning mode comprising the steps of:

    a. providing, by a computer, a population of learning activities associated with an area of skill, interest, or expertise;
    b. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to display and provide the learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by the learner;
    c. providing, by the computer, a database of learner data;
    d. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and
    e. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the method further comprises the step of providing, by the computer, a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the method further comprises the step of providing, by the computer, a software module, adapted for a mentor, configured to allow selection of learning activities from among the population of activities to create one or more subpopulations of activities to be completed by a learner.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the method further comprises the step of providing, by the computer, a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.

Claims

1. An educational system assembling platform comprising:

   a. a digital processing device comprising a memory and an operating system configured to perform executable instructions;

   b. a computer program, provided to the digital processing device, including executable instructions that create an educational environment, the educational environment comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

      i. a software module configured to provide an interface allowing a mentor to select a plurality of learning activities from among the population of activities associated with an area of skill, interest, or expertise to create one or more subpopulations of activities to be completed by a learner, wherein the interface further allows the mentor to sort subpopulations of activities based on each activity's association with one or more areas of skill, interest, or expertise, and wherein the interface further allows the mentor to sequence, rank, prioritize, and remove activities within subpopulations of activities;

      ii. a database of learner data in a computer memory; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

      iii. a software module configured to automatically apply pattern analysis to the learner data to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities within the subpopulation of activities; and

      iv. a software module configured to provide an interface allowing a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based by indicating, rating, or ranking subjects, skills, educational objectives, and learning activities: and

v. a software module configured to automatically apply pattern analysis to the learner data to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities within the subpopulation of activities to the learner.

2. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners~~.~~, which is configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

3. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

4. The educational system assembling platform of claim 1, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.

5. Non-transitory computer-readable storage media encoded with a computer program including instructions executable by a processor to create an educational system assembling platform, the platform comprising: at least one area of skill, interest, or expertise; a population of learning activities associated with each area of skill, interest, or expertise; and a guided learning mode comprising:

a. a software module configured to display and provide a learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by a learner;

b. a database of learner data in a computer memory; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

c. a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data; and

d. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based.

e. a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

6. The media of claim 5, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners~~.~~, which is configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

7. The media of claim 5, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

8. The media of claim 5, wherein the guided learning mode further comprises a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.

9. A computer-implemented method of educating a learner in a guided learning mode comprising the steps of:

a. providing, by a computer, a population of learning activities associated with an area of skill, interest, or expertise;

b. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to display and provide the learner access to one or more subpopulations of learning activities to be completed by the learner;

c. providing, by the computer, a database of learner data; the learner data comprising past learner performance data including affinity for particular learning activities, previous completion of learning activities, speed of completion of learning activities, and accuracy of completion of learning activities, learner preferences including configured preference settings, previous selections, and activity repetition, and mastery of educational objectives including learner scores and number of rewards earned associated with learning activities;

d. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities to a learner based on analysis of the learner data;

e. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based; and

f. providing, by the computer, a software module configured to allow a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the method further comprises the step of providing, by the computer, a software module, adapted for a mentor, for selecting one or more learners~~.~~, which is configured to allow a mentor to view and tune learner data on which suggestions or recommendations are based allows a mentor to score, rate, or rank subjects, skills, educational objectives, or learning activities for suggestion or recommendation.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the software module configured to suggest or recommend one or more particular learning activities a learner generates a character-based guide to make suggestions or recommendations.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the method further comprises the step of providing, by the computer, a software module configured to track and store learner data associated with learner interactions with the educational environment.