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The Development of an Interactive e-Dictionary for Local Construction Practices

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Abstract:

Currently, students learn through lectures, text books and lecture notes. However, they always find it hard to figure out the real objects through the traditional type of learning materials. In order to improve students' ability to understand the construction details especially with reference to the local practices, lecturers have to arrange a lot of drawings, photos, video tapes and site visits. Unfortunately, the media available in the market cannot reflect the local practices. Although site visits could close the gaps, it may be inconvenient and may not reveal the concealed details of construction works, which are normally covered up immediately after completion.

Self-motivated and interactive learning will be definitely dominant in the future development of pedagogical techniques. The production of an interactive e-Dictionary is on the right track as it enables students to contribute to the development of learning materials.

The interactive e-Dictionary will initially consist of essential construction details for local practices. Each of the detail will be illustrated by pictures of local projects with explanations. One important feature of the e-Dictionary is the contribution from students in updating the information and enriching the collections of the e-Dictionary. Students attending the construction technology related courses are invited to upload pictures of construction details with a short explanation for at least two terms, which can be either new or selected from the original list in the e-Dictionary. If the information uploaded is found to be adequate for sharing, the student will be admitted as a permanent user in the e-Dictionary system and provide feedback to the other users of the e-Dictionary. A database of the construction detail of local practices will then be built-up gradually, which will become an essential self-learning tool for students. The sustainable development of the database can enable the most up-to-date information to be included in the e-Dictionary.