
Gamifying discussion in the virtual computer science classroom

A Data Management Plan created using DMP Assistant

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Project abstract:

The aim of this study is to investigate collaborative discourse during learning of notions in procedural programming with the benefit of an online discussion forum called YellowDig. The forum gamifies collaborative discourse as a means to promote learning and engagement in the context of solving problems of the day and discussing a topic of the week, where students will learn about the Java memory model, coding guidelines and standards, as well as algorithm design processes.

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Data Collection

What types of data will you collect, create, link to, acquire and/or record?

Textual data will be collected in this project. The specific textual data include the interactions logged in the YellowDig online discussion forum, student performance on digital worksheets, responses to surveys, curricular material, as well as information about the study. The data describing student-turn in the online discussion forum is the most extensive of these three data types. It describes discourse moves while students post to the online discussion forum, including time stamps, tags, thread, and associated labels assigned by researchers. The code of the data analysis scripts will be uploaded in the form of a link to a repository that includes all files with open source license that allow them to be freely used, modified, and shared. Screenshots in addition to help documentation for getting started will be included to give additional context and for those files to be understandable.

What file formats will your data be collected in? Will these formats allow for data re-use, sharing and long-term access to the data?

This research project is collecting a variety of types of data stored in non-proprietary file types to ensure ease and flexibility of reuse. Examples of these include Comma Separated Values (.csv), Text (.txt), Joint Photographic Experts Group (.jpeg), and JavaScript Object Notation (.json).

What conventions and procedures will you use to structure, name and version-control your files to help you and others better understand how your data are organized?

Each file will be named with a short description/acronym to reflect its content, date of creation, and an identifier to record different versions. For example, the format below:

FileNm_20210422_v01.docx

Where FileNm denotes the name of the file, 20210422 describes the date (22nd of April, 2021), and v01 refers to the 1st uploaded version of the file separated by the "_" underscore symbol.

A README file will explain naming conventions as well as short descriptors or acronyms used in file names.

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation will be needed for the data to be read and interpreted correctly in the future?

We will describe the study rationale, methods, and findings as well as explain how team members transformed the data, including steps taken to collect the raw data, coding and scoring rubrics applied in extracting features from the raw data, and any issues affecting data quality or any pertinent background information to assist other researchers in understanding the data. All data fields and type will be defined and explained in the data dictionary.

How will you make sure that documentation is created or captured consistently throughout your project?

A log file will be created to document any steps made by team researchers leading to the final results. The log file will be updated on ongoing meetings where any issues/problems that might occur during the research process is discussed; for example, how to deal with interrater disagreements, segmenting units for assigning codes, or incomplete/missing responses. Any decision made will be recorded in the log file to ensure it captures the changes that were agreed upon by research team members.

If you are using a metadata standard and/or tools to document and describe your data, please list here.

The YellowDig API format (<https://api.yellowdig.com/docs>) will be first utilized in preprocessing the data. This log data format provides information about each post to the online discussion forum, including identifiable information related to the user, organization, post content, board, and timestamp.

The final dataset follows a student-turn format where any identifiable information has been removed and the content of each post is removed with labels assigned by the researchers. The conversion to this format is done after course completion, during the data analysis stage in order to ease the usability of the data for the purposes of research within the broader community.

Storage and Backup

What are the anticipated storage requirements for your project, in terms of storage space (in megabytes, gigabytes, terabytes, etc.) and the length of time you will be storing it?

Storage space is anticipated to be approximately 20-50 Megabytes based on the data collected in a previous study.

How and where will your data be stored and backed up during your research project?

The 3-2-1 backup rule will be followed for data storage and backup. Team members will transfer de-identified data stored in the Dalhousie University's institutional Microsoft SharePoint list, a private collection of data stored in secure cloud based storage, onto two encrypted external storage hard drives. SharePoint lists can be easily curating by the neutral third-party leading the consent and data collection efforts who manages access to the list and fields in the dataset. One of the external storage hard drive will be stored offsite, under lock and key.

How will the research team and other collaborators access, modify, and contribute data throughout the project?

Access to the identifiable data will be limited to the neutral third-party who will be responsible for interactions with study participants during the content and data collection stages of this research. This is done in order to distance the lead investigators from study participants due to their dual role as both researchers and instructors. Once the course taught by the lead investigator is concluded, the data will be checked by the researcher to ensure its accuracy and completeness, and will be combined into a master file to be backed up and encrypted.

The Dalhousie University's institutional OneDrive is used to store, share, and work with data. All transformations to the data performed by team members will be uploaded to OneDrive following the file naming convention described above, and subsequently deleted from their local machine.

Preservation

Where will you deposit your data for long-term preservation and access at the end of your research project?

Data collected in this study will be deposited on the Scholars Portal Dalhousie University Dataverse (<https://dataverse.library.dal.ca/>), a database that is free to access/use as well as hosted on servers housed by Canadian universities. Along with the recommendations of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, identifiable information for participants or data deemed sensitive by researchers or the Research Ethics Board involved in the study will be deleted to ensure respect for individuals' right to privacy. The de-identified data and meta data will be preserved and made available for secondary analysis through Dataverse. These data will be stored indefinitely and uploaded within a two year period when the study will be completed.

Indicate how you will ensure your data is preservation ready. Consider preservation-friendly file formats, ensuring file integrity, anonymization and de-identification, inclusion of supporting documentation.

To ease the sharing and reusability of the data, all data files include a description of team members responsible for creating the data, how the data was collected, as well as coding and scoring rubrics and protocols, and a log that identifies any issues affecting data quality to facilitate understanding. Student discourse process data will be converted from the log API provided from the YellowDig platform to the student-turn table format to ease usability by other researchers. Efforts will be made by the research team to ensure that all column names are easily understood by others, and defined in a data library. The steps followed in data analysis will be captured through syntax files to ease replicability and the final results will be documented and saved. No identifying information of participants may be included in data files. The metadata will also include information on how to navigate to the code repository for the software, relevant publications, and the funding agency and grant name.

Sharing and Reuse

What data will you be sharing and in what form? (e.g. raw, processed, analyzed, final).

The analyzed, de-identified datasets will be stored in the Scholars Portal Dalhousie University Dataverse.

Have you considered what type of end-user license to include with your data?

We will have the Creative Commons Attribution CC BY license for the data, which allows others to distribute, reuse, share, and build upon the data as long as the original data creators are credited.

What steps will be taken to help the research community know that your data exists?

Data deposited in Dataverse is assigned a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), a unique and persistent code that can be used to locate and access the data. Attracting researchers to perform secondary analysis on this data set is likely due to Dataverse's existing user base and the presence of publications which cite Dataverse data. Metadata is harvested by the Federated Research Data Repository, a Canada wide research repository, where data can be discovered, and then shared nationally. We also link our dataset in all publications arising from a study.

Responsibilities and Resources

Identify who will be responsible for managing this project's data during and after the project and the major data management tasks for which they will be responsible.

The project lead, Dr. Eric Poitras, is responsible for ensuring that team members as well as undergraduate/graduate research assistants follow this data management plan. If two or more team members are working jointly on a project that involves this dataset, they will determine, at the outset of their work, which member is responsible for implementing the data management plan.

How will responsibilities for managing data activities be handled if substantive changes happen in the personnel overseeing the project's data, including a change of Principal Investigator?

One of the research team members will fulfill the responsibilities of the lead investigator in the unlikely event that substantive changes occur in personnel, including a change of PI.

What resources will you require to implement your data management plan? What do you estimate the overall cost for data management to be?

Dalhousie University libraries offer Dataverse services for the university at no cost to researchers. Storage of data in external drives should cost approximately 300\$.

Ethics and Legal Compliance

If your research project includes sensitive data, how will you ensure that it is securely managed and accessible only to approved members of the project?

Only analyzed, de-identified data will be made available once the project is complete.

If applicable, what strategies will you undertake to address secondary uses of sensitive data?

No sensitive data will be shared; furthermore, all identifiable information will be deleted within the period of study completion or within two years. De-identified and non sensitive data will be made available on Dataverse.

How will you manage legal, ethical, and intellectual property issues?

Approval by the Dalhousie University Research Ethics Board is required to perform the tasks outlined in this study. Participants fill an informed consent agreement and may cease participation in the study voluntarily and without penalty.