

Johanna Stirling Interview Summary

(Background to study/funding)

[01:08] A few different hats: NILE on-line academic manager is main job - oversees all on-line courses, MA and non-MA (NILE certificate courses). Also freelance NILE associate trainer – for that a tutor on the Materials Development MA course – face-to-face and on-line. Also other teaching.

[2:47] SM: What are the challenges with the on-line things? JS: Have tried to make the courses more personal and immediate – done this very successfully – somebody last year had said she'd started modules on-line elsewhere and never completed them, but here felt like it was a small course – a community - and tutors cared if she did anything.

[04:17] SM refers to Maria Byrne's film/interview – part of the YL module?

[04:50] *(Demonstrates platform)* Using Moodle, but customised, with tools especially developed for them by INTO. MA courses starting this September are Trainer Development, TYL, Technology Assisted Language Learning, Materials Development, Teaching EAP and Testing, Evaluation and Assessment. *(Briony Beavan – Trainer Development – look at that to see platform.)* Most 8/9 weeks – 8 units with break in the middle. TD and TYL have 9 weeks.

[07:13] Always a little intro by whoever wrote the course. Use grid system – makes it look not too Moodle-y. *(Agree looks nicer.)* Start with orientation, not too interactive, then go into units. Start with introductions (to one another) – important to bring the humans out. A lot of chasing people to participate at the start.

[10:03] Demonstrates community wall – a simpler version of [Padlet](#) etc. Lovely for brainstorming etc. The other two tools: Talkpoint *(Decides to pull up a different course. Discuss some differences between courses here and at Warwick.)*

[13:15] SM: So with Talkpoint you basically upload a comment and can listen to others' comments? JS: two ways: either tutors can upload a video and then participants can comment, choosing to use video, audio or text, or students can upload their own video and everyone else can respond in those three ways. *(Shows example.)* Fairly user friendly – very easy. Can choose from live video or from something pre-recorded. Tend to keep video files on the server. There is another Moodle (NILE Online Tutor Zone), where all videos are kept. Can be some technical problems. Tutors prefer students to use webcams – things can go wrong with file types. 50MB file limit. SM: Could videos be recorded on a phone and directly uploaded? JS *(and colleague)* uncertain, but probably. *(Another colleague enters – pleasantries etc. follow.)*

1 SM: so remind me with talkpoint you basically you
2 upload a comment from yourself to that.
3 JS: let me find one.
4 SM: and then you can listen to all the other people
5 in the group what theyve said about it.

6 JS: yes. there are two ways we can use it. either we
7 can upload a video and the participant can
8 respond. and they can respond using text.
9 SM: oh thats right. its coming back to me now.
10 JS: video so their own webcam or audio.
11 SM: yes. so theyve got a choice.
12 JS: yes.
13 SM: if they dont want to appear on screen they can
14 just do the text. thats nice.
15 JS: or theres another way we can use it which is
16 where they upload their own video which is
17 probably what she was talking about. they upload
18 their own video. and then everybody else can
19 respond in those three ways. just see if i can
20 find a talkpoint. okay so in this one so. sorry i
21 dont have. i havent got speakers on here but
22 there is sound. yes so this is me giving a
23 presentation about aspects of context in
24 materials development. so they can listen to
25 that. and i dont think theyve got specific. i
26 must have given them some kind of task to do. and
27 then you see they can comment text webcam or
28 microphone.
29 SM: yes. so that video is put up through the
30 talkpoint.
31 JS: yes.
32 SM: and then it automatically has that function.
33 JS: yes.
34 SM: underneath. how long does that take. is it fairly
35 user friendly for you.
36 JS: yes it is. i mean its very easy. i mean i could
37 just. i dont know if i can. if i wanted to add
38 another i add talkpoint give it a title.
39 SM: oh and you can choose whether to do it from live
40 or from something youve precooked.
41 JS: yes. the only problem is if you do it live. if as
42 a tutor if i do it live ive got to remember next
43 time i do the course ive got to do it live again
44 and then again and again. whereas if ive recorded
45 it i can just upload it. you see what i mean.

[21:36] The third tool: Video Q and A – JS’s favourite. Tutors upload a video (students can’t) and while video is playing at any point you can just click, the video pauses, you can add question or comment, and when the next person watches, they see those and can add their own comments or questions.

46 JS: so this is the third tool which is called video q
47 and a. okay.
48 SM: oh oh great.
49 JS: this is my favourite i have to say. i think this
50 is really cool. so here we upload a video. they
51 cant. we upload a video. and while the video is
52 playing. again sorry got no sound on here. while

53 the video is playing at any point during the
54 video they can just click here. the video pauses.
55 they can put in a question or a comment okay. and
56 then when the next person watches that comes up
57 under the video. and other people can respond. so
58 because ive just prepared this course ive
59 actually put in some questions myself. so this
60 about different starting points for materials
61 writing. and so ive already asked them to think
62 about a piece of material that theyve written.
63 and then its questions. did you start with an aim
64 a resource or a brief. and so they stop the video
65 and they write their answers in. if i just go to
66 an older course i can show you what that looks
67 like.

[23:55] (*Demonstrates*) You can get quite long, detailed discussions. Very immediate, very much attached to a particular point in the video. Familiar with [Ed Puzzle](#)? Can take a video (say from YouTube) and put questions on it. Thinks this works particularly well on Master's courses because of the level of discussion. About personal experience or beliefs works much better – more of a discussion (than questions with a single answer where everyone just posts that they agree).

26:17] SM: Any other video content other than bits to camera? JS: Yes, bits of classes (mainly at NILE, though don't have any YL). Students from different teaching contexts, e.g. kindergarten; if necessary, can get someone in to do a little video – can do this with these tools.

[27:52] SM: Wish list for other tools? JS: Would like a real Padlet (love it), so that could host videos, pictures, links. Would like drag and drop – times where it's really useful. Do matching, but things can get a bit clunky. Have tried to minimise any third party tools – to keep control and ability to fix things if they go wrong. Even minimised use of YouTube – don't know when things are going to disappear or what pops up at the end, and YouTube not accessible in all parts of the world.

68 SM: is there something in your mind that you think oh
69 id really like to have. if into said to you ooh
70 weve got some money floating about. wed like to
71 design some more tools for you.

72 JS: were in dreamland now are we.

73 SM: yes we are. but im just trying to. is there
74 something that youve thought that would be quite
75 nice.

76 JS: i mean i would like a real padlet because i love
77 padlet. i think its a fantastic tool. so that we
78 could. so they could actually post on there
79 videos and links and pictures and things like
80 that. that would be really nice.

81 SM: that would be nice wouldnt it.

82 JS: yes. funnily enough a really. something everybody
83 sort of sneers about but that wed actually quite
84 like is drag and drop. we havent got anything

85 that does drag and drop. and although you sort of
86 think drag and drop you know that old hat there
87 are times where its really useful you know for
88 categorising and things like that. and we end up
89 having to do things as matching. but then they
90 get a bit clunky. but to be honest it doesnt
91 matter.
92 SM: so doesnt moodle have any drag and drop. is that.
93 JS: no not as such. it has something it calls
94 something like that. but actually its a matching
95 thing.
96 SM: i think its xerte isnt it i think you can. id be
97 quite interested. ill asks someone at work. but i
98 think that there are. i think you can put xerte
99 program into moodle.
100 JS: oh can you. oh right. oh really. yes.
101 SM: so maybe you can do that.
102 JS: weve tried to minimise having any third party
103 tools in just because then we havent got control
104 over them. or things go wrong and it. you know
105 people say to us oh this isnt working. and if we
106 cant fix it then that doesnt look too good.
107 SM: no that is the trouble with all these.

[31:17] Get good feedback from the online courses. Never really hear people saying they didn't feel involved enough – always the big danger. No marks for engagement, but generally for non-MA students to get certificate they have to participate in 80% of the course (*colleague – Simon - says same for MA*). Tutors need to chase students who are not participating. Not really visible through available tools. (*Discussion of techniques/procedures for this.*)
(*Closing/rounding off remarks; discussion of upcoming institutional review; external examining; assignments; Materials Development*)