

Information technology and toolkit for competence based learning



Rodin Gondolkodó című szobrának Lego-változata Andrew Lipson alkotása:
<http://www.andrewlipson.com/thinker/>.
A róla készült képet az "élethelyzethez igazított tanulás" (Life-Tailored Learning) módszertan jogtulajdonosa az alkotó engedélyével használja.

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INTRODUCTION

The aim, structure and timing of the subject (Project)

You are now holding the lecture notes accompanying the subject entitled "Information technology and toolkit for competency-based learning" accomplished in the scope of TÁMOP project registered as TÁMOP-4.1.2.A/1-11/1-2011-0091. Although the lecture notes have been made for a specific program it does not mean that we have to exclude its applicability for other cases. Our aim is exactly the opposite, we would rather hand over the dear Reader a toolkit which provides a sound basis for those who are open for learning and for acquiring the basics of a kind of learning the methods of which - in our country - are so far less-known. This introductory chapter has a double aim. On the one hand - due to the aims of the above mentioned project - we try to introduce the purpose of the subject, the schedule of the semester, the way of the course assessment and clarify some of the basic principles and concepts which govern the course. On the other hand, we try to present a training plan that - thanks to methods tried and tested - results in real-competence growth for those who are involved and who will acquire in a less scientific and more casual, readable format the foundations of a so far less accepted teaching and learning methodology.

The course entitled "Information technology and toolkit for competency-based learning" follows a kind of learning and teaching methodology, which results in knowledge expansion in a new, unusual way. The planned 15-week long course is designed to provide participants having completed the course the ability to compile the curriculum and study materials for courses, trainings, to comment on them and to be able to add proposals to such programs to suit the principles of life-tailored learning. Moreover within the scheduled time, it is possible for those who are interested, who want to gain new knowledge on personal impulse to adapt reading and attaining the learning material to their own life situations. This is the essence of the method this study is all about. Every individual is in their own and unique life situation, in the "embrace" of which they must meet the expectations of lifelong learning. These lecture notes - and the associated Internet, e-learning interfaces - provide an opportunity for everyone to become familiar at their own, individual pace to acquire the fundamentals of the method.



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The course using the lecture notes is scheduled for 2x2 hours per week. The students are expected to get acquainted with and acquire the basic concepts and principles of life-tailored learning in the time frame of 2 lessons – that is 2X45 minutes – a week. Despite the generally accepted methods applied in higher education in our country these lessons do not require the students to be physically present all the time. The method to be acquired as well as the fundamental purpose of the project is supported by the use of information and technology tools that will allow access to virtual classroom learning growth and enhancing competences. 2x45 - minute seminar sessions are related to the subject, which are meant to be practical hands-on computer-assisted lessons. In the course of the seminars, armed with the acquired theoretical knowledge the participants will apply their theoretical knowledge to learning materials – real and applied - tailor made according to the methodology of life-tailored learning. As a result, the students' understanding of the theoretical basis of the method will be completed by knowledge gained through experience, adventures and success. Thus, the participants of the program will participate in a process that goes beyond the traditional school-based learning method that is the students within their training – in a "sterile" environment – will immediately be given the opportunity to test the acquired knowledge in practice. The most important task of the course is therefore not to increase the theoretical knowledge – since most students have completely forgotten it by the end of the exam period – but the fact that the participants will be able to independently and confidently apply the proven methods and procedures by which curricula and trainings leading to knowledge and real capacity growth can be designed and accomplished. Those who will get acquainted with the method not in the framework of the project will not be bound to this schedule. In their case, they themselves decide when and how much they are learning. The only thing that can be guaranteed: observing the instructions and recommendations in the lecture notes they will reach the learning goal to be mentioned later.

The significance of the subject and its methodology is increased by the fact that the students' will work on such “sample or test pieces of work” which are both real and applied parts of a given training syllabus. Due to this their knowledge can immediately – in a fashionable term – in real time practice be used and they will be able to gain such experience, which in the course of conventional training participation – in most cases – would not be possible. Those participants who are not completing their studies within the framework of the project can also work with real materials. In their case the learning process is accompanied by ample addition of practical exercises so they might have the added advantage of



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working with materials related to their own field, with the end result of a complete and complex curriculum to be compiled¹.

Responsibilities; performance, evaluation criteria. Distribution of the questionnaires (Description of download ability)

During the course accomplished in the scope of TÁMOP project registered as TÁMOP-4.1.2.A/1-11/1-2011-0091 students will apply their acquired theoretical knowledge in five social informatics related subjects (tailor made according to the methodology of life-tailored learning methodology) in 2x45- minute lessons per week.. Practically, this means the work of student groups in which each group will analyze, adapt, and extend a chosen topic, so basically a user's supervision will take.

During the course schedule the students, groups of students will review and revise the subject based on specified criteria and timetable on a weekly basis. During the semester the students are essentially equal partners in the development of curricula, respecting the “regulations” of the methodology they will have the right to define the structure of subjects and the application of methods and techniques used.

The semester concludes with a practical mark for the students. It is based on fulfilling the commitments agreed at the beginning of the semester and the students will also have to complete successfully two assessments related to the subject matter of the course. The final assessments are indicated beforehand in the curriculum with a previously defined aim and role. The essential topic of the final measurements will be limited solely to the lecture notes and to the materials discussed at the practical seminars, so the requirements of the assessments can be met by all participants. Corresponding to the nature of the course the final measurements will be electronically completed tests based on questions related to the subject matter of the course to be filled in with the use of a database through information technology tools². The framework of these assessments will be designed in a manner that provides the same and equal conditions for all participants to prove the completion of the skills and competences acquired during the course. .

¹ Supposedly the majority of those acquiring the new methodology will come from public education consequently they will have to set up the curriculum of a field of their own choice according to the requirements of life-tailored learning



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The primary objective of the final assessments, however, is not to deter the course participants or to boast with their level of knowledge but rather to give an acknowledgment of how and to what extent were the necessary skills learnt, what are the material parts that are absolutely necessary to be revised and re-learned in order to be able to apply their acquired knowledge independently and safely.

Other Policies (free software, equality, accessibility, environmental sustainability).

When describing the requirements of the subject we have already touched upon superficially some basic principles the fulfillment and compliance of which should be observed when applying the IT systems and hardware software applications.

Included in the introduction we have discussed several times that the course relies heavily on the practical use of computer tools and technologies. For the participants not to face any difficulties in having access to any of these devices during the course we try to use so called free software applications as often as possible.

What can be considered to be free software?

When defining a free software application the emphasis is on free applications and on the openness and not on the cost-free access to the software. *To clarify the concept we would prefer to teach the methodology of brewing beer instead of distributing free beer.*

By the concept of free computer software all software and any documentation is meant that meets the following conditions:

- software which can be used for any purpose

² The training takes place in multiple locations, personal presence is not a mandatory requirement (in many cases it is not feasible)



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- the developers provide opportunity for anybody to study how the software works, to modify and to distribute it
- further development does not require any royalties.
- there is an open access to further software developments and their distributions

The indispensable prerequisite for the development of free software applications is the free access to their source code.

A free software is not in any way be confused with freeware or shareware programs. The source code of these programs is sealed and can not be modified. They are intended to be made public, and to be tried out. They operate for a given probationary period, after the expiration of which they will have to be purchased, or they can further be used with the disappearance of certain features or with restrictions.

Equal Opportunities

The equality of opportunities is among the basic human rights both in the international and domestic legal systems. The definition is that every person - in this case all users - can thrive in their lives the same chance, must not suffer any disadvantage because of their diversity of mainstream society. In our course, this principle can be applied, as we strive for every material to be available and accessible for each individual from their place of residence, regardless of the time used for learning.

Usability and Accessibility

Usability and accessibility are very important concepts and principles in the world of Information technology and the Internet.

Usability is a relative term. All operating hardware, software and websites as appropriate - in some way and to an extent - are to be used. The concept can be described by two features: these are the velocity and the required use of mental load. The definition of velocity is very simple: the better the usability of the program or a web site is, the faster you can install, run, or work on it or in the



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case of a Web page the faster the required piece of information can be found on it. Think about it: what kind of emotions would you use a program or web page with if its features were too complex and ambiguous and would often result in a function not linked to the function's name? The need for the required mental load is difficult to measure³, and it can be described as the amount of stress the use of a given website (page) causes in the user's body. *Is it a familiar phenomenon for you that you should find an important letter urgently in your e-mail system, or the option you are looking for can be found in a sub-menu within a program (website)? Or can you imagine yourself trying to find your wallet in the numerous pockets of your coat at the checkout while a long queue of customers is waiting behind you? Has it ever happened to you?*

This is the same case when you, as the user lost in the functions fumbles through the various menu options (pockets). These are the tiring and stressful moments which in many cases are overlooked by the developers causing a lot of annoyance to users

In contrast to usability accessibility can be measured in absolute terms. A user is either able to use a web program or not. Digital accessibility is all about, whether the user can access his objective after removing the barrier that limits or prevents the use of the surface. In most cases, the concept is encountered in connection with the disabled. This social group is in a real disadvantage compared to the majority, because - if you just look at the information barriers - their eyesight or hearing is limited, they face physical disabilities that prevent them from using the computer hardware. *To understand the "experience" try to navigate on a website or to revive the frequently used functions of a well-known program using only one eye and manipulating with your "dumb" hand!* However, we must keep in mind that those are disadvantaged, too whose information technology assets are obsolete and no longer allow the use of certain software and Web sites. *Try to run the latest games on a computer not older than 4-5 years! The lack of enjoyment is guaranteed!* Solving the problems of the disadvantaged groups is therefore a real need, in their case the question is not how quickly they can solve the tasks but whether they are able to solve them at all.

³ The Dept. of Ergonomics and Psychology of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics researches and measures it with tools



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Basic concepts (competence, 4 assumptions).

Competence

It is the key word of life-tailored learning which denotes the knowledge of an "entrenched" curriculum knowledge but also the acquired knowledge and skills. The word "competence" in the methodological guide (and in the teaching materials based on it) denotes **the ability to carry out an activity independently**. Here are some examples of competency:

- *an individual is competent in making soda water if he can produce a liter of soda within 1 ½ minutes with the use of a soda bottle, ten cartridges of CO2 and a water tap, in a moderately lit room 9 times out of 10. (Gero Peter, Life Tailored Learning, 2008).*
- *the person may be competent for painting Easter eggs who over an hour can paint at least 25 eggs out of 30 without breaking them using the available three colors and two brushes.*
- *a person may be competent at doing jigsaw puzzles who can fit together within three hours any 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle the same way as the sample image shows.*

What is the difference between knowledge and competence?

Knowledge:

*Having studied the present methodology instructions **you will know** how to produce a curriculum that will not only transfer knowledge but will also enable the person having acquired its subject matter to put his knowledge in practice.*

Competency:

*Having studied the present methodology instructions **you will be able to** produce a curriculum that will not only transfer knowledge but will also enable the person having acquired its subject matter to put his knowledge in practice. Do you see difference?*

While the concept of knowledge denotes the possession of factual knowledge competence is a broader much more life-like expression. A skill that can be used



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effectively and successfully in the "real world". *One may have a global knowledge of how to iron his best shirts and yet may not be able with the use of an iron to iron the shirt in front of him to be worn at the theatrical performance in the evening. A transplanted into practice competence denotes knowledge which can be measured and used.*

Basic principles of life-tailored learning

Four assumptions serve as a basis for the methodology of life-tailored learning, all of which denote the basic ideas of learning, on which its methodology is greatly based on. We do not say that these axioms are true in all circumstances. We would rather say, the methodology of life-tailored learning forms the process which in the existence of these assumptions will function and can be applied successfully.

The first basic assumption is that **learning is the student's activity**. It is true that many people are present in the process, but it cannot be denied that to learn something is exclusively the student's responsibility. To learn and to acquire the learning material is solely his responsibility. It is actually up to the learner whether he acquires the desired ability, whether his competences develop to such an extent as it is expected by the end of the learning process.

The second initial assumption is that **a mentally healthy human's learning ability is unlimited**. At first sight, this statement may seem exaggerated as it may lead to the conclusion that anyone can learn anything. Certainly it is not what we meant. Rather, it must be understood, that there are no such barriers or walls that would prevent the individual to learn something. In addition to the mental abilities age and the level of education can not be considered as an obstacle either. The whole life is a learning process through which we acquire various skills and the ability to learn a lot. Since we - almost entirely - acquire these things we indeed can say that **learning - by its nature - is successful**.

Third and fourth basic assumptions of life-tailored learning methodology compared to the first assumptions are much less controversial and it can even be said that as general statements they can be accepted. **During the learning process the student's living situation (options, limitations) may change in many aspects.** *Dear reader, consider, whether in your lifetime there was a*



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half-year or a three-year long period when everything was the same and no change occurred in any respect. You do not remember such a thing, do you?

During the learning process, the ups and downs and standstills are inevitable. We cannot deny the truth of this statement either because we have all encountered a learning material which we found more difficult than the others, we have not passed all our exams at the previously expected level, consequently - temporarily - lost our drive or motivation.



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Having clarified the basic objective, concepts and principles of the methodology of life-tailored learning let us now get onto the real curriculum.

This methodology has a very specific structure, thus the procedure is difficult to fit into the "traditional" educational structure. But this course and its participants are not designed to understand the whole methodology – like the maker of soda water is not expected to know the production process of the carbon dioxide cartridge – but they are expected to know the key cornerstones, which make them capable of editing materials with the help of life-tailored learning methodology.

The objective of the chapter

After getting to know and learn the subject matter of this chapter you will be able to define precisely and measurably what the conditions are for starting and ending a learning process. You will be able to define these conditions so as they will be motivating for the individual – that is for the student – using the curriculum.

Learning vs. life-tailored learning

What is learning? Many – especially active learners – would answer this question without thinking as something that makes our lives more difficult. However, this is not true, but rather it is something that facilitates and develops our lives. Various disciplines have studied and examine even today this ability, accordingly we can recognize many scientific definitions. In everyday sense it is the mastery of a previously unknown knowledge. Pedagogy defines it as skills acquired through education, whereas the institutionalization of Pedagogy – school – sees it as a process to acquire knowledge which can be recalled in different life situations. The science of psychology gives a complex type of definition for the phenomenon: accordingly all change (in performance, behavior and knowledge), which takes place through experience and practice is learning. *Consequently learning is when a child acquires the abilities to walk, eat with the use of a knife or a fork when we get familiarity with the ways of solving quadratic equations.*



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Thus, the "traditional" formulation of learning is a phenomenon of knowledge, the acquisition of a certain skill or knowledge. That is: something is missing.

According to the interpretation of life-tailored learning, learning is not only aimed at the acquisition of knowledge, but much more than that, it is the ability of the application of the knowledge gained.

But what is the adaptation to a life situation? Each individual lives in some kind of life situation. Each individual is constantly learning. This study may be due to external (*enrolling in some training in order to keep the job*) or intrinsic motivation (*someone wants to be a professional napkin folder for her own amusement*). Most people at this time enroll in some training where on a weekly basis they are told something, and at the end of the training in some way they are assessed on the knowledge gained. Ideally, in compliance with the expectations of a diploma or a certificate of knowledge goes a certified training. However, we can ask: does he really know what he has learned in the training or has he just met the closing requirements? **The cornerstone of life-tailored learning is: the final measurements are closely fitted to the goals of the training (that is learning) making clear both for the user and the manager of the training whether he has successfully enriched his knowledge (competencies) or failed to do so.** (adapted from Peter Gerő):

- *the soda maker course is successful if afterwards the student gets a soda bottle, ten cartridges and a water tap and using these in a moderately lit room, he is able to make 1 liter of soda water 9 times out of 10 trials within 1 ½ minutes, although so far he has been able to do it fewer times or more slowly.*
- *a Maths lesson teaching to solve quadratic equations is successful if afterwards the student manages to solve at least four out of five problems correctly over three quarters of an hour (or he can demonstrate that the problem is unsolvable) although he previously could not do so;*
- *the training for aggressive drivers is successful if afterwards a student with good self-control will not demonstrate neither aggressive manifestations, and even his aggressive intentions will be at an 'acceptable' level in average traffic conditions, although they had been more frequent and more intense previously.*

The aim of all learning is to be able to do something that you previously could not do or to be able to do it better than we had been able to do



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before the learning process. Thus learning cannot be considered successful if the final exam is successfully completed. It is more accurate to state that you have learned effectively if you are able to perform a task, which you could not perform at all or could not perform properly.

The objectives of learning, learning objectives

Based on the above ideas it can clearly be seen that in the context of learning it is only partially true that the aim is to achieve at the exam (reports, assessments) successful and effective performance. It is much more important that the subject matter which we learnt by mobilizing our energies, can be truly understood and therefore the learner can apply the acquired knowledge in practice. As it can be seen from the examples mentioned at the interpretation of competence: it is not enough to know the method, we need to be able to apply it in practice. In other words, we should at any given time among any conditions to produce efficiently

How can a student's ability and competence be checked? To resolve the issue the answer is in a one-word term: measurability. The best indicator to any process or ability is to define it in an objective and specific way, to determine when the level of knowledge and competence is satisfactory. In the model of life-tailored learning the learning objective in each case is a well-defined and measurable indicator. For the lack of it the success of learning (and thus the knowledge of the trainee, the increase of his competences) is not really determinable, the result will not be objective, measurable. In the textbooks and lecture notes as well as in training curricula and in courses the learning objectives are often stated only in a vague, more general way. In many cases it is not the learning goal but a previously designed hard-to-measure goal is defined. If one reads such goals in any kind of curriculum, one can be sure that they do not correspond to the methodology of life-tailored learning.

Some additional examples less relevant to methodological principles to define what the learning objective is:

- *through reading this chapter the student will get an insight into the process of making cappuccino*
- *after getting to know the content of the book the student will get an insight into the technology of sharpening skates.*



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- *having mastered the lesson the reader will get knowledge about the ways of sharpening pencils*
- *by reading the chapter the learner will get to know the main differences between Microsoft Word and Excel programs*
- *with the acquisition of the material in the study notes the learner will learn the steps of baking a cookie called Mézes Zserbó*
- *after studying the workbook the reader will get information on filling in his own tax form electronically*

Some additional examples more relevant to methodological principles to define what the learning objective is:

- *through reading this chapter in less than 10 minutes the student will be able to make 2 times out of 3 trials cappuccino which corresponds to the requirements described at the end of the chapter.*
- *after the consideration of the contents of the book the reader can sharpen 6 skate blades so that the thickness of the edge will be between 5-8 mm.*
- *with the mastery of the lesson the reader will acquire the skill to sharpen 8 out of 10 blunt pencils in 15 minutes so that the tip will not to draw a line thicker than 2mm*
- *after getting acquainted with the material of the chapter the reader will be able to distinguish between Microsoft Word and Excel programs, will be able to perform basic editing and counting, and will be able to import and export images from one application to another*
- *by the acquisition of the study notes the reader will be able within 3-hours to bake a five layer cookie called Mézes Zserbó using 50 g flour, 30 g butter, 360 g + 3 tablespoons powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon baking soda 2 eggs + 3 egg yolks, 4 tablespoons of melted honey, ca. 2-3 tablespoons sour cream, 1 packet of vanilla sugar, 3 tablespoons of flour 5-6 dl of milk 3-4 tablespoons of rum.*
- *having studied the workbook with the use of the internet, a computer, and an electronic form-filling program and accompanying supplement installed on the PC the reader can prepare his own tax form within two hours for the current year.*

Other examples are proposed to formulate learning objectives:



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- Having completed the requirements of the chapters you will acquire the necessary competencies needed for the world of work relevant ICT tools and you will be able to design them constantly developing system-oriented, demand-driven employment programs. (ICT in the working world)
- The lesson is designed to define the concept of virtual space to be able to distinguish between the virtual space and real space should be able to delimit virtual space from real space, should be able to define the relationship or possible “passage” between virtual space and real space (Social work organizations and in cyberspace)
- A lesson is designed to get you to be able to list / describe the conceptual approaches of social administration, to be able to describe the advantages and disadvantages of paper-based records management, to be able to describe the advantages and disadvantages of electronic records management. (The administration process and the effect of digitization on the administration)

Motivation as a learning goal

The word motivation is of Latin origin meaning to move, get moving. The term has its main importance in psychology, in this discipline it means action, an internal factor promoting attitude. Motivation determines the extent of the human body's activity and has an impact on the effectiveness of the activities carried out as well.

As we could see it in connection with life-tailored learning the individuals taking part in or wishing to study are in different life situations which always - in fact, in most cases, are not - are the best conditions for learning. *Think over how much strive and energy a mother with young children or a student working at a supermarket can have after fulfilling their primary tasks to acquire the curriculum of a course either of their choice or mandatory.* This is related to a person's motivation. If the student feels compelled despite several hours of wakefulness at 11 pm. to revise a certain matter then there are two options to talk about. The student's interest is so immense that by pushing the limits of his own sometimes he is able to mobilize energies to study beyond his own capacity. Another option - which in our view is much more important - is that the student is faced by a curriculum mastering of which conveys so much joy and arouses such interest every minute that makes the learner put aside his own needs so as to master the learning material. *Have you ever read a book you could not put it*



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down and took it with you even to the dining table? Our main goal is the preparation of such curriculum. Efforts should be made to make the learning goal not only to increase the competence (to meet the final measurement standards) but learning itself should be the aim to float in front of the student. The student should stay motivated any time to take to the lecture notes to read and study. The student should feel it important to expand their knowledge with the use of the material on his own accord and not just because he has to learn. As a final step to define the learning objective think over if it is achievable during the curriculum. Do not spare the time and energy in this step, since the correlation⁴ between these two points is essential for the further steps in the preparation of the teaching material. Our main goal is to lead the participants where they want to get and not to a stage where they would gain completely different knowledge and competence.

The reality of the learning objective

In connection with the learning goal reality is definitely to be mentioned. Think about it: *Would you consider a goal for a few week long course to be realistic if the same goal can be achieved over a number of years with a high level of international participation in a training? Would you believe, that completing a car wheel exchangers' course you will be capable of assembling a Formula 1 racing car to win the Grand Prix easily?* When stating the learning objectives it is very important for the prospective students to believe that they will really be able to perform the activity at the end of the course, which they were promised, on the other hand, not to lose their motivation to master the curriculum - in fact if it is possible we should maintain a state of motivation continually by the well defined learning objective.

Summary

Learning is always a process aimed to get to some new knowledge. One learns throughout their life, acquires information, and modes of action. However, one does it based on different motivation at the different stages of life based on a different motivation. While in childhood, adolescence and young adulthood education is "forced", part of compulsory education, as well as due to different

⁴ relationship, connection



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intrinsic motivation, while later in many cases it is our job (or the lack of it) that is external motivation that makes us chose learning again.

Competence is nothing more than knowledge practice and operable, usable that activates five motivational backgrounds. The aim of learning is to increase competency. It is difficult or sometimes impossible to define it based on the general education and training programs. The emphasis is rather on the enhancement of knowledge not on the application of the knowledge gained. Consequently the practical applicability of the learned material is questionable. In life-tailored learning needs are considered to be the starting point. It determines the student's motivation and goals. The learning objective should always be available for the student to achieve it should represent a value motivating the learner to complete the learning process efficiently and successfully.



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The learning objective must be formulated so that it could be measured in an exact manner. It is both the student's and the instructor's aim to get an insight into the student's knowledge, to see precisely what level of learning he has reached. Due to the characteristics of life-tailored methodology - a chance for self-learning - we should strive to make the students measure their knowledge independently. Thus, the control system must be designed to assess the level of student's competency unambiguously without outside intervention.

Review questions

1. How different is the methodology of life-tailored learning from "traditional" learning methods?
 2. Determine when a learning process can be considered to be successful!
 3. Can a student be considered competent if he solves a task using other methods than the ones he should have learnt during the course?
 4. Why can't the method of life-tailored learning be used in the case of someone who wants to be a world famous footballer?
 5. If the student does not know what kind of situations he will face how can he be prepared for them in advance?
 6. What should be the condition to clarify if a person can cook goulash soup?
 7. Formulate learning objectives for the following activities so that they would conform to the methodology of life-tailored learning.
- hammer-making
 - replacing a tire of a passenger car
 - Easter egg decoration
 - Creating a Santa pack
 - completing a tax form
 - loading staples in a stapler



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-
8. Formulate a learning process and its learning goal! (Please have in mind when defining it as you will have more tasks linked to this one later.)



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THE SYSTEM FOR ENTRY AND FINAL TERMS

By the end of the previous chapter you have become competent to draft the learning objective of a given learning material so that the student would understand that his competencies will expand - he will be able to do something that he has not been able to do, or he will be able to do it better than before the acquisition of the learning material. You can define this expansion of competences so that they can be measured in an exact and clearly understandable way for everybody (student, teacher) moreover the learning objective will be a motivator for the user of the learning material throughout the learning process.

After that, we will look at the possibilities of fitting the closing conditions to the learning objective.

The aim of the chapter

The aim of the second chapter is to enable you to define the closing conditions for a curriculum, to fit its learning objective, to be able to compile a closing assessment (final measurement) to measure competence expansion achieved by the course.

Defining the entry criteria

Anyone who has participated in some training - that is a great chance to everyone - knows how important the connection of the parts to one another in this area. *(For educational levels: nursery, kindergarten, primary school, secondary school, college, university, for subjects: foundation courses, theme or region-specific subjects, the order of different chapters within the subjects)* As life-tailored learning is a kind of training methodology, therefore, we must obey a certain sequence of parts

Has it ever happened to you that while studying one subject you realized a lack of some previous knowledge? Perhaps you faced the fact that you are expected to have such knowledge which you have not acquired during your previous studies. These problems may have been appeared because you were involved in a training, which did not define clearly what knowledge, skills and competences a student should have. This is why so



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much emphasis is given to the entry criteria in life-tailored learning methodology.

It should be therefore appropriate to define all the conditions necessary to begin the process of learning. What are these criteria?

- pre-knowledge, prior skills Training time constraints, because the time available is usually minimal, the group of participants should include such students whose drive (motivation) is to get to know the basic concepts related to the subject (Of course, we can base a curriculum on this but that's another process. Not to mention the fact that there once again we have to face this dilemma)
- Motivation: The importance of this phenomenon has been described in the previous section. In this case, we have to concentrate on defining the motivation connected to the curriculum for the student to identify with, to have the eureka experience. In other words: This curriculum or course has been made for me!

When formulating the **starting** (in life-tailored learning methodology **entry**) **conditions** the basic rule is **to provide all the information necessary for learning, but we should not frighten off the potential participants with anything that is not necessary for the participation.**

The curriculum, as a jigsaw puzzle

You must have faced a book, some compulsory reading or perhaps even a training “the end of which you could not see”. In this case, all “good hearted” people have dozens of doubts whether they will be able to read or finish it without giving up. However, after flipping through that particular book he was somewhat reassured that it is not certain that the immense amounts of text should be read or see through at one sitting. Surely there is someone among you, Dear Readers who has been a fan of the weekday evening soap operas for years. Presumably, he is waiting eagerly for the minute to come to hear the well-known signal and to immerse in the actual events. However, let’s stop for a moment. Would he be so enthusiastic if it weren’t for only 20-30 minutes to see an episode but he should watch the weekly amount in one sitting? Certainly he wouldn’t.

The secret of the series or the curriculum lies in the division of the chapters. In both cases the authors’ - the talented authors’ - purpose is to split up the whole matter in parts with consistent contents (inner) and that are interconnected (outside criteria) We can ask the question, what the difference is between the division of materials made according to the methodology of traditional and



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according to that of life-tailored learning? While in the traditional curricula the emphasis is on content cohesion in our case it is an essential element for the chapters to be the size which can be learnt at one sitting - because we know that our students are in a special position, their primary task is not learning.

The students can not be expected to have constantly long-term goals in mind. It is much more useful if the entire curriculum is broken down into smaller "digestible" parts that can be processed independently. In our methodology **the smallest unit for which we can set an understandable motivating, competence enlarging, measurable goal is a lesson.**

In this interpretation, however, a lesson is not content but learning unit based. These lessons should not be approached as the ones in traditional curricula. By lesson we do not mean a complete topic of the textbook but a unit for which we can set (measurable) learning objectives for the student. This is one of the difficulties of this method. The task is not the re-drafting or rearranging of previously learnt materials - because by using the same methodology, the same result would be achieved - but the division of the previous material for the students in order to achieve competence expansion which is measurable for the student as well as for the teacher.

Corresponding to the characteristics of our methodology - **breaking down the learning material into units means that we have to set a learning objective and naturally the entry criteria for each lesson.**

The curriculum as a jigsaw puzzle II

Imagine a pitcher that is filled to the brim with a liter of water it can hold. If all the water is poured out of the pitcher into smaller glasses and then we pour the content of these back into the pitcher how much water do you think there is in it again? The answer is of course, the same amount that is a liter. (Of course, aside from the accidental loss). The same applies for the learning materials produced by the methodology of life-tailored learning. **The amount of the learning objectives set in each chapter (lesson) should be the same as the learning objective of the total curriculum.** Though this correlation seems clear, the practical implementation is more difficult. When dividing the curriculum into smaller sections we may fall into two major traps. However, in both cases, with proper attention, (self-) control we can prevent the greater correction of the material - we thought to be ready - afterwards. It is possible that something is



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left out and we only notice that a specific topic is not mentioned at the end of the process. In this case, it is evident that the principle "the amount of the parts equals with the whole" is not obeyed. Therefore special care must be taken **when breaking the curriculum into lessons that assembling the parts they should form the entire original curriculum.** The opposite extreme can be a problem. The enthusiastic and dynamic teaching material author can run into the error of putting so much information into each lesson that at the end of the process, the parts contain much more. He will face an amount of information - may not be required in the given case - than was originally planned. In this case, again the principle "the amount of the parts equals with the whole" is not obeyed (it is exceeded).

The relationship between each lesson

When clarifying the relationship between each lesson the following basic assumptions are taken into consideration: (Peter Gerő, 2008):

- **the lesson allows a single sub-goal to be achieved**
- **the sub-goal to be achieved by the lessons is given so the lesson should be closed with a final assessment corresponding to the given sub-goal.**
- **the entry conditions are given so the lesson must begin with a measurement certifying the presence of the entry conditions.**

It is visible from the above that **every single lesson possesses only one entry and one exit opportunity.** When forming the curriculum the possibility for the student to enter or exit a lesson in the course of the studies should not be allowed. In this case, the principle that the entry conditions and the achievement of the learning objective is to be met will not be obeyed.

We've already touched the question that the learning objectives of each lesson equal with the objective of the full curriculum. Consequently, from entering the curriculum (course) - in theory - the student can reach the final learning objective by more than one way. In practice, of course, we cannot forget the knowledge contained in each lesson is built on one another and that previous competences are needed for forming each new individual competence. It is inevitable that while setting up - developing - the curriculum the author should alter, restructure some lessons. But what happens if in one lesson there is a reference to the content of another lesson? *Suppose that during the preparation of the curriculum it occurs to us that we would like to modify a definition of a material in a previous lesson or we want to add something or only simplify it. In this case, we should re-*



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read the entire curriculum to check where exactly the given lesson (definition) is referred to. In a large-scale material it is evident that the final result would be a sudden stop in the structure, logical breakups, and problems with clarity similar complications. How can we handle this real problem? An obvious solution would be repeatedly to mention the needed definitions and knowledge in every lesson. Think over what could happen in this case. In the individual lessons – regardless of their length and entry criteria – we should display more or less previous knowledge, which would unnecessarily increase the size of the lesson. Moreover, in case of a change each lesson should be looked through to display the necessary changes. It is evident that this solution is not correct, or at least not energy efficient and sustainable. A much more useful and logical way is to display **each important piece of knowledge at one place and only where the given piece of knowledge is necessary**. In this case we can avoid the significant amount of correction and the redefinition due to the modifications, or logical errors arising as a result of revisions. You may ask whether this kind of editing mode results in an unrealistically small-scale lesson, to which it is difficult to formulate learning objectives. The answer is yes, of course, but there is no need to panic. The learning objective in this case is the following: "After processing this short module, you will be able to start processing five more modules" (Peter Gero, 2008)

Summary

Great emphasis is laid on the system of entry and closing conditions in the methodology of life-tailored learning. In the methodology each lesson and sections fit together in a manner that not the content of the parts but the interfaces are "standardized".

Once you have determined the objectives of the curriculum and the entry conditions you have to formulate measurement criteria for the achievement of the goals and entry into the learning process. The entire curriculum has to be divided into parts the basic unit of which is the lesson. The learning objectives of the individual lessons should correspond to the learning objective of the whole curriculum. If we have divided the curriculum into smaller, learnable units we can begin to formulate the final measurements at the end of each lesson. Of course, we must have in mind the principle that the assessment of each lesson should formulate the final assessment of the whole language material. The entry conditions of each lesson should be formed similarly.



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When defining the entry conditions for the first lesson we must keep in mind the fact that it is the entry to the entire learning process. When defining the entry conditions for the further lessons we must obey the principle that those cannot contain anything else than what is defined in the entry conditions of the first lesson and in the closing conditions of the so far completed lessons.



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Review questions

1. How can we formulate the entry conditions for the course, if the individual students have different pre-knowledge?
2. What factors should be kept in mind when dividing the curriculum into smaller units?
3. What kind of mistakes can we make when we divide the curriculum into parts?
4. What are the dangers of the inaccurate (too lenient) determination of the entry criteria?
5. How should we place the recycling pieces of information in the curriculum?
6. Determine the conditions for the entry for the learning process you selected in the
previous chapter.
7. Divide a learning material (syllabus section) into lessons.
8. Determine the conditions of entry and exit for each lesson according to the principles of life-tailored learning methodology!



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FINAL MEASURING SYSTEM

It is evident that at the end of every process in some way we have to determine its success and examine where the energy invested can get us. This measuring process is an important step for all participants involved in the activity - or should be - as it the way to qualify the work completed. This activity is called by different names in the learning process as an exam, an essay, an oral assessment, etc. This phase of the learning process in the methodology of life-tailored learning - due to the alterations from traditional training it is not surprising - is called by a name different from the generally known expressions. In the phrase closing measurement the emphasis is placed on the word “measurement” because in our methodology we strive to check the acquisition of the curriculum in an exact, indubitable manner. This condition can be met not by an opinion based but by a measurable assessment.

The aim of the chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to enable you of the creation of final measurements and methods that fit the various educational materials and can measure the competence expansion acquired while mastering the learning material.

The role of measurement in the methodology of life-tailored learning

In life-tailored learning methodology great importance is given to the measurement of the skills acquired. This is necessary because our **aim is learning methodology** not useless pastime - participants of traditional education trainings should forgive me as I respect the values of the method - **it's real-world knowledge and skills increase, results of which can be useful in everyday practice.**

As shown in the previous chapters, **measurements play important roles at two places in the methodology. Firstly, it is important at defining the entry conditions of each lesson, secondly at the end of the lessons when determining competence growth.**

For each lesson you need to specify the entry criteria, which must be met by each participant. Due to the specificity of the methodology only exception is possible when the student can demonstrate he fulfils the current conditions. *Such*



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an exception may be if the student holds successful final test results, which are equivalent to the entry conditions.

We're in an interesting situation at the beginning of the whole learning process because at this stage we cannot relate, it is much more difficult to figure out the conditions that are necessary



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for entering the learning process. However, we must never be lenient in the respect of the requirements needed as it is a lot more embarrassing if it turns out in the learning process that the participant lacks certain competences. It is also clear that the entry conditions for the whole process of learning are the same as those of the first lesson.

The job is somewhat simpler for the adjoining lessons. Determining the conditions of entry of these parts our possibilities will only extend as the amount of knowledge from the beginning of the study to the beginning of the next lesson do (proved by each successful final measurement).



The above discussion shows the importance of being able to the define learning goal for the entire process and for the individual learning units. In this context, it should be kept in mind the requirement that the learning goals met must be measured in an exact manner.

About measurements in general

Measurement as a content concept has long been present in the different measurement systems. In a general sense the term can be defined as follows: **measurement of the knowledge about the phenomena of nature is a fundamental method, it is the amount of hands-on activities implemented according to a plan, with the help of which we get a value expressed in a selected unit which defines the amount of a quantity.** It



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can be seen that this approach is very scientific and technical and thus we try to determine measurement based on the concept of educational assessment. In this respect it is nothing more than a

Knowledge which can be considered at defining the entry conditions
considered at entry conditions

learning material which cannot be

Beginning of the learning process

planned measurement point

end of unit

frequent evaluation of students' development and knowledge. The definition suiting the methodology of life-tailored learning includes the definition containing technical elements however it is more lenient, resembling the pedagogical interpretation. **Therefore measurement can be any method with the help of which numbers are connected to things, phenomena, and properties.** Measurements may vary according to various criteria. (Peter Gerő, 2008.)

For measuring the achievement of the learning objectives many different measurement methods can be used. The material compilers are completely free to decide which method to choose, there are no generally accepted rules. However, when choosing the appropriate measurement method it is essential to pay attention to the fact that it should be appropriate for measuring the relevant knowledge. The method of measurement should be selected to be the most appropriate for what we want to measure, it should express the approach of the learning goal in the best way. *If we return to the former example of producing soda water the final assessment should not be a multiple choice test, as it wouldn't measure the real knowledge gained, its result would never demonstrate if the student would be able to make soda water in the given circumstances. In this case it is more efficient and better to check the growth of knowledge in some practical end measurement, in which the student must demonstrate that he really acquired the competency required for making soda water, he has become competent in this field.*

Measurement methods, facilities

Hopefully you also have a few years of schooling, training experience. During your education you must have met a number of different measurement methods



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which did not reflect real learning and knowledge. This is not just a sensation, not only the complaint of the dissatisfied student but can be a real problem because some evaluation methods really cannot objectively measure the knowledge. *In the case of oral assessments, exams and presentations there is a risk that the subjective opinion of the evaluator appears in the evaluation.*

Examining the evaluation methods from another perspective we find ourselves facing new dilemmas. A very important issue - which is partly affected by the evaluation methodology of the life-tailored learning - is what the student's performance should be compared to. In this regard, we distinguish between two possible ways:

- **Criterion-oriented:** Those evaluations are included, **which evaluate students' performance according to a previously defined and published system of criteria.** It is an objective measurement method the students are given measurement based on a previously set scale of scores. Typically indicates the percentage or the maximum obtainable score indicating the level of knowledge with the amount of points obtained. (Example: 0-60% - fail 61-70% - passed 71-80% - average 81-90% - good, 91-100% excellent)
- **norm-oriented:** A **certain ratio of the students** participating in the evaluation **will be a placed in a category.** (For example, the top 20% of the group gets an "Excellent", the second best 20% a "Good" and so on.)

Both methods are present in the training, we often do not even think about which one we are dealing with. The use of the *criterion-oriented evaluation* is more frequent as in most cases to achieve success we must fulfill some requirements. *For example such are the NTR final tests, the Highway exam, academic midterm exams or in public education (primary and secondary) tests and written assessments. The norm-oriented evaluations are applied at the admissions process in higher education.* In these cases, it is determined based on some reasons what percentage of candidates can enter the institution. In the latter case, the objective is distorted as it may happen that a person with weaker abilities in comparison with a weaker reference group achieves better results than compared to a higher ability group.

The results of the study can not be evaluated only on the basis of what the student's knowledge is compared to but can also be classified according to the purpose of learning. It is meant to evaluate the overall learning process (typically giving a *half-year or year-end grade, the end of course grade*) or in the learning process, which reflects the level of knowledge at a given



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stage giving feedback (oral assessment). In this approach, we also distinguish between two types of assessment:

- **Summative assessment: The evaluation of the whole learning process, with a closing grade**
- **Normative assessment: feedback on the level of actual knowledge.**

The use of the above evaluation methods can indeed indicate for the student the level of his knowledge. Of course, you can not deny the correct operation and application of these methodologies, but at the same time, we must ask the question whether these are the most appropriate suiting the spirit of life-tailored learning methodology. The characteristic of the process is that it aims to measure the learning process, the completion of the learning objective in a measurable way. To meet this aim we need a kind of measurement which gives the best possible feedback whether the competence expansion is sufficient for the student to close a learning unit and start another one. For this purpose we need **an evaluation which assesses the whole learning procedure - even in the case of part of the curriculum or a lesson. It should point out the knowledge and competences which the student acquired at the expected level and the ones as well which still need to be developed for further progress in learning. This method is called the diagnostic evaluation.**

Summary

At the end of the learning process we clearly need some kind of control to examine what stages the student has reached, what knowledge he has managed to acquire, to what extent his competences expanded compared to the starting state of his knowledge. In the course of these measurements, it can also be defined what areas of his knowledge still need to deepen, expanded.

The assessments and final measurements are particularly important in the life-tailored learning methodology. Compared to the methods of measurements used in the traditional learning processes, knowledge assessment methods should be developed to produce more exact measurable results as the focus is not on lexical knowledge but rather on practical applications, on visible and measurable skills. To measure the student's existing knowledge and competence at the moment we can choose from multiple assessment methods (criterion-oriented, rule-oriented, normative and summative evaluation). When choosing from these we must be sure to select the most suitable method which gives correct reliable results. When applying not the most suitable measurement type many errors can occur (not measuring what we intend to, we won't get an exact result of the



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measurement, the results are ambiguous, which means that we do not get a fair and accurate picture of the student's achievement in the learning process.



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Review questions

1. Why should the students measure fulfilling the learning objectives concerning themselves? Is it not the teacher's role?
2. Do we have to measure whether the final conditions are met in the case of each module?
3. Do we have to measure whether the entry conditions are met in the case of each module?
4. What must be taken into consideration when selecting the type of measurement?
5. What are the differences between the criterion-oriented and norm-oriented evaluations? Mention examples of the application of each method.
6. What is the difference between the normative and summative assessment?
7. Describe the features of diagnostic evaluation method! When and why should we choose this method?
8. Who can be exempt from the final measurement of a lesson or module?
9. Determine the final measurements for your chosen curriculum (learning material).



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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MATERIALS IN THE METHODOLOGY OF LIFE-TAILORED LEARNING

During the learning process an increase of knowledge and knowledge acquisition takes place in all cases. This knowledge may be diverse (theoretical, practical, etc) but in all cases a kind of knowledge - typically professional - is transferred. This learning process shows great diversity both in the capacity, and the quantity of knowledge which are dependent on the material to be transferred, the mode of teaching and learning (knowledge transfer), and of the composer's personality, etc. In many cases, the participant of the course has to face that certain parts of the training are not necessary parts of the knowledge to be acquired. In the methodology of life-tailored learning the parts of knowledge which are highly required for competence expansion (the necessary knowledge and the motives related to its acquisition) can be clearly separated from the illustrative, complementary material parts. The former is considered to be professional learning material in our methodology.

The aim of the chapter

The purpose is to enable you to assess a learning material produced by an expert and to evaluate it based on the methodological principles of life-tailored learning.

A “stop” for professional learning materials

Before we start defining the term professional learning material and the related concepts let's survey how we got to this point. During the previous lessons we learnt the notion of competence and the basic principles of measurable goal formulation. On this basis, we have become able to develop ways of measuring the competences acquired and the determination of the conditions existence of which is required for the start of each learning phase. If all these steps have been taken, we can see the starting position (initial entry condition) the learning objectives and competencies to be acquired as well. Parts between the two endpoints must be uploaded with the knowledge to be acquired. In the methodology we have reached the point where we can start the preparation of the professional learning material.



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The difference between the starting and ending point of the learning process has to be seen as a complete unit, which is only about the existing competencies and the ones to be acquired, which are independent of the participants of the learning process, the location, the means and methods used. This unit is the professional part of the knowledge to be acquired, which having defined and recorded the conditions of use will form the professional learning material of the life-tailored learning methodology

The content criteria of the professional learning material

Because of its complexity the definition of the professional learning material is not an easy task. The professional learning material is not the same as the curriculum, but it is closely related to it and basically defines it. *The professional learning material is the same as the plan and the building design of the house at house construction. It includes all the parts that are absolutely essential to the process (during the process) and sets out the conditions and instructions that are needed to build a house (for knowledge and competence expansion).*

The professional learning material is a brief, correct list of the future curriculum without being pedagogically defined. (Peter Geró, 2008) The professional learning material is a "special species" can easily be confused with other concepts. The professional learning material - though it resembles it - is neither a table of contents nor a part of a textbook or lecture note. The professional learning material precedes the lecture notes (textbook) it is made prior to them. Although it is short, concise and down to the point it is much more than a brief description or a table of contents. It contains the essence, but it is far more, has far more importance than a contents page. The professional learning material records both the knowledge and the instructions that are necessary for its effective competence expansion.

I'm sure that the concept is still not clear for many people. Using our study notes as an example, however, in the following lines we will attempt to clarify the concept of professional learning material The list will contain the essence of the earlier chapters, which are the cornerstones of the methodology of life-tailored learning described so far.

1. Learning objective: to get someone to do something they previously could not do, or to be able to do it better than previously.



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2. This knowledge can be used in practice
3. For the application of knowledge in practice the individual needs the right motivational background.
4. Competence: knowledge that can be used in practice linked with the motivational background.
5. The learning objectives comprises competency (knowledge) expansion, enhancement.
6. The competences reachable by the learning process have to be set.
7. Competences have to be set so as:
 - to be measurable
 - to be motivating
 - to be understandable for the user of the learning material
8. It is essential to set the entry conditions clearly (entry conditions, measurement for entry)
9. We have to consider whether the target of at the starting position is available for the intended learning process.
10. Now will have the objective and the conditions of entry and we have decided whether competency expansion is achievable with the learning process. It is an essential point as we can connect the starting point and exit point of the study here, check our plans to be well thought throughout the whole learning process.
11. The whole learning process is divided into lessons. A lesson is the smallest unit of study for which we can formulate measurable, understandable and motivating objectives.
12. We need to check whether the sum of the individual lessons, parts of learning materials actually serve the purpose of the learning objective.
13. We must develop the final measurements to be met at the end of each lesson.



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14. We must develop the measurement for the entry criteria to be met at the beginning of each lesson.⁵
15. It must be noted that the final measurements of each lesson should be equal to the closing measurement of the entire learning process. That is to say that all curricula provided for each lesson should cover the learning material of the entire course.

The list above lists and summarizes the contents of the previous chapters in a way that it lists and completes with instructions those parts the knowledge of which covers the essence of the so far learned material. If someone says that these points are familiar with them, and can apply them in practice they can tell that they have succeeded to pass the obstacles and have

really (!) mastered the so far described elements of life-tailored learning methodology. If we examine our study note from the perspective of the methodology, we can say **that the above list forms the professional learning material, any other example, explanation, illustration is only for clarity.** These explanations, additions are needed for the so far inexperienced reader to interpret and process the knowledge and instructions in the list. However, to be able to meet the requirements of the closing measurements of the individual chapters the learner needs to know the professional learning material. **In life-tailored learning methodology we call all knowledge to be acquired to be professional learning material from the entry conditions to the learning objectives, and all the skills, motives and instructions which assist learning. These elements appear in the professional learning material without any special forward in the most possible structured form.** The exclusion of forward references is important to prevent the user from being confronted with a concept, content elements, that are unknown from him, for which he has no immediate

⁵ Points 13 and the 14 are closely related, the lessons are linked together through these points. These points are essential in the methodology of life-tailored learning, because the “parts” in between (the ways to learn the lessons) may be different, it is our duty only to standardize the interfaces. In other words, we need to achieve that by selecting a variety of learning techniques we have to achieve the same results.



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explanation. In this case there is a risk of loss of motivation, which causes the user to suspend or terminate the learning process.

Except for the items listed above there are no formal requirements for professional learning materials. However, it is recommended that it should contain linearity and consequences. This means that the essential elements should follow a logical way (to help readability and forming professional learning material into learning material), and in all cases the definitions and conceptual explanations should be formulated in the same way as before. This eliminates the user's confusion, a definition to be associated with two contents or irrelevant elements attached to a definition.

Criteria for the good professional learning material

The criteria for quality evaluation can be derived from the definition of the good professional learning material.

Each point of the good professional learning material contains only one claim. As a result, the essence of the learning material appears in the most articulate and easiest possible way with its supplements and instructions.

In a well structured professional learning material there are no further references. New materials only emerge when they are really needed. This prevents participants in the learning process from the loss of motivation and also while structuring the learning material we do not need to revise several chapters or lessons we have to make changes only till the first appearance of the new concept.

If such statement packages are used which can exclusively be interpreted together, they have to be found in one place. Thus, the user does not need a long search, with a doubtful result which may once again cause loss of motivation turning away from the learning process.

The most important feature of a good professional learning material is that it contains all the knowledge, instructions and explanation, which connect the very beginning (entry conditions) with the successful conclusion of the learning process (the final conditions are met). In other words, we must strive to make sure that the participants of the learning process should not have to obtain information from other sources during the learning process, thus risking the suspension or termination of the learning process.



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It can be seen from the above that the professional learning material does not necessarily speak to the students. You can even say that the substance of the knowledge to be acquired is neither a "student-friendly" nor a user-friendly version. It is more directed towards the curriculum author, who will transform it to be pedagogically applicable. As the initial skeleton (which only contains the essence of knowledge) is filled with explanations, illustrative figures it is transformed into a curriculum that can independently be learnt.

Summary

Professional learning material is one of the starting points of the learning process in life-tailored learning. In connection with it four criteria can be defined, which determine the content of the statements and help readability. However, you must note that the professional learning material is not the same as the curriculum. The professional learning material does not contain the pedagogical elements suggestions and instructions assisting learning. It is the brief professional documentation of the knowledge to be acquired.

It is preferred if the elements of the professional learning material follow each other in a logical order. It should not include any forward reference and it is not advisable if a concept is mentioned well after its use and definition



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Review questions

1. Why can not the professional learning material contain forward references?
2. Which of the supposed knowledge and entry conditions should the professional learning material contain?
3. Which parts of the leaning objectives and closing conditions should the professional learning material contain?
4. What drafting rules should professional learning material suit?
5. Can the professional learning material be prepared by the future curriculum author?
6. Can the professional learning material be prepared by an expert who knows nothing of life-tailored learning?
7. How to proceed if we have to prepare a professional learning material based on the principles of life-tailored learning from a material which does not correspond to the rules described in this chapter?
8. There may be students who are familiar with certain parts of the curriculum (in such case they can be exempted from the completion of certain modules). Can these parts of the professional learning material be left out?
9. The standard textbooks typically contain many parts which are less needed for the competent practice: for example, the historical introduction. Are these unnecessary parts in the professional learning material?
10. The standard textbooks typically contain many parts which are less needed for the competent practice: for example, illustrative examples. Are these unnecessary parts in the professional learning material?
11. Define the professional learning material for the topic you chose.



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THE ROLE OF MULTIMEDIA AND ITS ASSETS IN THE METHODOLOGY OF LIFE TAILORED LEARNING

The traditional tools of education and training are also traditional, can be called orthodox. In public education, higher education and even in non-formal courses the curriculums are mastered from textbooks, study notes or from the students' notes of what was said in class. This learning mode definitely requires the student's regular and personal consultations with the instructors and from time to time visits to places where they can complement their skills with other aids, which make it easier for them to understand the curriculum. These sites are in most cases libraries, bookstores and rarely archives. In today's fast-moving world, where the majority of people are forced to continually increase their knowledge only few have the opportunity to browse in libraries, bookstores to find the relevant knowledge. It is more typical for them to seek information from home using the Internet. However for the use of the Internet they need a device that allows access to the information superhighway. Computers, smart phones, smart TVs are devices capable to influence all are senses with sound effects and still and moving images. Such tools, equipment are called multimedia assets. As explained above, these devices are having a greater emphasis on education and training as well.

The aim of the chapter

The purpose is to introduce you into the use of multimedia assets, the methods to use them and to enable you to choose the most appropriate ones that will suit your curriculum.

The multimedia and the media impact

Multimedia is the defining "invention" of the 20th century, it has become part of our everyday life. It is an information processing system, which unlike the traditional ones uses multiple communication channels to be used simultaneously (text, audio, video, animation) to entertain the users – or in our case to inform them and to expand their knowledge. The information that is displayed in several ways that is multimedia **enhances the user's experience** and hence makes the decoding and the assimilation (awareness) of information filled with experiences, makes the acquisition of knowledge easier and faster. **Multimedia assets transform the user to be an active participant of the flow of**



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information instead of being a passive participant. In other words **multimedia creates an emotional impact, which promotes attention and understanding connected with emotions thus reducing other effects against these processes.** (Peter Gerő, 2008)

The concept of multimedia can be interpreted simply by just a totality of assets that can simultaneously transmit multiple channels of information. However, it is not appropriate to interpret multimedia only as hardware. In this approach, their significance is only to make contents easily available in great quantity.

According to technocratic approach multimedia is nothing more than devices, equipment and systems, which with dedicated and professional use can produce products affecting multiple senses creating awareness and long term attention with both visual and sound effects.

In a more useful interpretation for us multimedia is an approach. On this basis, the emphasis is not on the device and the content but rather on what its use can be and what goals can be achieved by the use of multimedia in learning processes.

It is evident that multimedia as a concept is accessible in many ways⁶ for us, the most important aspect of the application is in the learning, teaching processes accordingly we have to define its use in a specific way. In our sense, **multimedia is a set of assets and means which is capable of eliciting a motivating emotional impression that is the multimedia effect to promote learning.**

The benefits of multimedia learning

Multimedia has undeniable advantages over conventional methods in education. The "required settling" as a result from the different formats of textbooks in the case of a multi-media learning it is negligible thanks to the unified platforms⁷. On the other hand, because **data storage, processing and display of a variety of materials are based on digital technology joining them, updating and replacing certain parts takes no time, consequently keeping the**

⁶ Our list and interpretation does not strive for completeness it only indicates the variety of possibilities

⁷ to display surfaces



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curriculum updated continuously needs very little time and energy⁸.

Another benefit of digitalization is that the parts are not sequentially recalled⁹ the desired part can be found immediately. In the case of interactive multimedia content **an interactive relationship is formed between the carrier and the user¹⁰**. In life-tailored learning this feature greatly facilitates the spread of multimedia learning materials in the course of individual learning. These can serve the needs to use free time for studying especially at one's own pace which varies from student to student. **Multimedia course materials can create and serve the possibilities for self-paced, self-directed, self-controlled learning opportunities which are not dependent on time. The interactive programs with the teaching materials, smart textbooks offer for students a wide range of learning opportunities which significantly increase the amount of learning experience obtained during the learning process.**

Several international studies show that the knowledge obtained through the use of multi-media teaching and learning is internalized at a much higher level - that is real competence expansion is achieved - while the learning time is considerably shortened. In contrast to traditional learning - where the selection of pace heavily depends on the teacher¹¹ - in the case of computer-assisted learning it is the user who chooses the pace of progress. The efficiency increases because communication is not one-sided¹² the students are actively involved in making progress and by using multi-sensory learning motivation can be maintained.

When can the curriculum be called multimedia curriculum?

⁸ considerably smaller those needed for traditional textbooks

⁹ the learner doesn't have to revise the whole content to reach their goals

¹⁰ the computer acts only when the user gives an order

¹¹ the teacher has to use an average pace, consequently sharp learners are "wasting their time" while weaker learners are lagging behind

¹² in black and white: it is not only the teacher who speaks



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The majority of multimedia materials with a variety of skills are available as electronic guides for users. However, they cannot be fully considered to be multimedia teaching materials, they are rather electronic manuals.

The characteristics of electronic manuals: (based on Peter Gerő):

- **in terms of content:** text, drawings, diagrams, photos, hierarchical table of contents, figure. A list arranged in different orders, glossary, index, footnotes, annotation, dictionary, literature, and resource lists;
- **basic options:** choice in contents, navigation up and down on the page, printing pages, chapters, going forward and backward, back and forth scrolling in the main text to the illustration lists, glossary, index, footnotes, annotation, dictionary, literature, and resource lists;
- **additional options:** viewer (Image viewer, pdf-file reader, etc.), software provision, and last exit point marker, bookmark(s), placed / deleted by the user, password protection, placement of their own records, all these connected to a given computer or connected via user name, use the logging of the user name or computer connected;
- **accessories** (supposed to be) operating regulations that enlists in a detailed way that can be checked (ticked) the minimal conditions for a mechanical background and those (such as computer management) skills and knowledge that are needed for sufficient use (for the purchaser to see **before the** purchase or subscription whether his computer is sufficient, he is prepared to use the multimedia material).

Electronic manuals corresponding to these criteria can be obtained from an almost infinite variety of sources, some of them are used and recommended in different learning processes. However, do not fall into the trap of these to be considered multimedia curriculum.

In addition to the above list an electronic learning material can be called multimedia learning material if the following criteria are met:

- the structure and layout follow the order and logic of learning
- its style is adapted to the target group of students;
- as part of the operating instructions it includes learning management guidelines under which the student through the learning process is in control of



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his own progress, including constant self-monitoring;

- total: the learning process should not require a source that is not have available in the "study-pack" and finally,
- at no point should it require more or different pre-knowledge and skills as defined in the operating instructions and learning management guide (among them: the entry conditions) or any other skills, competences than the ones acquired from the acquisition of the former parts (self-inspection in a verifiable way)

To sum up **the multimedia curriculum follows the order and logic of learning adapted to the style suited to the target groups. Apart from the professional learning material it contains instructions for use. Neither its use nor its understanding requires more or any other knowledge than that required by the entry conditions**

It is not enough for the material to be able to affect multiple senses it really needs to do so. In other words, it must include sound effects, animation, movies, and it must allow browsing and searching among these. In addition, it must give the user the opportunity to freely stop and restart the multimedia content and to ensure that they can view it as many times as they wish. However, this is still just enough to be called a multimedia curriculum. Our main goal, however, is the production of a **multimedia material**. This material **can motivate the targeted user, awake his interest and keep it constantly maintained so that the multimedia content available could evoke pedagogical effects to achieve the desired learning goals adequately.**

Interactivity and intelligence of the teaching materials

We have seen which of the teaching materials used for life-tailored learning should be described as multi-media teaching material. However, in addition to meeting the criteria listed above we should mention that for keeping better handling, usability and motivation the study materials should not only be multimedia but also to be intelligent materials.

Interactivity in classical interpretation means that the user of the application is active does not only take advantage of the outputs¹³ but will have the opportunity to influence running the application that is can

¹³ the results available or generated by running the application



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intervene in the events, according to his will can change the running of the "program". Of course, a specific interpretation of interactivity is needed in the methodology of life-tailored learning. We have already discussed that due to individual situations, it should be possible for the user to process according to their own needs and possibilities in the curriculum. **The interactive curriculum provides an opportunity fully because instead of a hierarchical structure it is formed for the learner to choose from different proceeding alternatives¹⁴.** Choosing one's own process will help the user to adopt the acquisition of the curriculum to their own timing and ideas. However, it should be ensured that any knowledge would be bypassed – including the final measurement of the chapters – by selecting different paths. So **every possible path should include all the necessary knowledge for competence expansion.** *Do you all know the board game called Who's laughing last? The end of the game and the learning process is similar. All the counters in the game have to be delivered to the target area, in the learning process all the final measurements of each chapter should be met in order to pass final measurement of the entire learning process.*

In addition to interactivity let's talk briefly about intelligence as well. *This concept is most likely to be connected to living creatures for most readers and now they are amazed how a curriculum can be interpreted in relation to this phenomenon. Thanks to multimedia and interactivity our curriculum is almost alive, as it "talks", "plays music", is "colourful" and we can communicate with it.* As a "living creature" of course, this material reacts to the environment and to the circumstances surrounding it. **If a teaching material is intelligent or smart, then it reacts differently to the same situation according to the conditions independent of the antecedents or in a broad sense of the environment.** *In practice, this means that a greater preference is given to the parts, issues, topics that are more frequently searched for or revised than to those we do not pay as much attention to. Intelligence is manifested in the*

¹⁴ It is necessary to provide a user's manual the material which explains possibilities available for the user



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assessment tests, when based on the incorrect answers the program provides a learning route by which the weaker competencies can be better improved.

Summary

With the increasing use of technology in education the approach that greater and more lasting effects can be elicited from the students when the curriculum is accompanied by audio or video effects is spreading. The multimedia assets apply multiple communication channels to inform the user - in our case. These devices cause an emotional impact, which promotes care and understanding of information, connect these to emotions, and reduce anti-learning effects. A student who has not experienced something with the help of the multimedia effect acquires a "curriculum" by the media effect as if it were his own experience. In the methodology of life-tailored learning the different parts of the curriculum have "standardized" interfaces between them. Because of these the intrinsic content of each part can be fully different, even if the subject matter is the same. The appearance of multimedia curriculum uses this opportunity in a great extent. Since they are made with the use of digital technology compatibility and fast adjustment possibilities can ensure quick replacement, modification or supplementation of certain curriculum sections.

In order to be called a multimedia curriculum it has to meet different criteria. It has to depict the professional learning material in a way to highly affect the senses and also has to support the students with instructions. The multimedia curriculum can motivate the user.

An interactive relationship develops between the multimedia materials and the user during the learning process. Interactivity provides the student different paths, thus helping to adapt the learning process to life. Interactive and intelligent books, programs and videos containing educational materials further extend the learning opportunities, the obtainable multimedia experience and knowledge contribute to a deeper, more long-term fixation.



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Review questions

1. What does the wording of the curriculum mean?
2. What does it mean that we have to adapt to the style of the targeted student group?
3. If the professional learning material includes everything from the entry conditions till the closing conditions - why is this not enough to be handed to the learner?
4. What is the relationship between learning and the student's feelings?
5. How many of our senses are influenced by really good multimedia?
6. What does "intelligent or smart material" mean?
7. What does it mean that we can find the best triggering (multimedia) solution fitting all the desired effects?
8. Explain what multimedia elements you would apply in preparing the curriculum of your chosen topic.



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THE BASICS OF THE CREATION OF A CURRICULUM FOR COMPUTER ASSISTED STUDIES

Nowadays computers, computer assisted training programs are becoming more involved in education. This process is both inevitable - the graduates 'employers' expect a high level of computer knowledge from their prospective employees - on the other hand, these can be considered as a step in the natural evolution of education - similarly to how the teachings of the experienced elders in a community were replaced by codices and books. Luckily for the participants of the learning, teaching processes have a growing openness for the use of these - not necessarily new - assets and methods.

As the previous chapters have clearly demonstrated the methodology of life-tailored learning is no exception to this trend - in fact it is rather a pioneer - it relies heavily on the use of information assets. In our case, however, computing is not only a simple tool for knowledge transfer but rather a partner for both the teacher and the student.

The aim of the chapter

After studying this chapter you will be able to set up study packets to meet the basic criteria and principles of the methodology of life-tailored learning.

Form in the content that is what should be included in the student packet

Do you often recall memories from your school years, when you were sitting bored or interested listening to your teacher? The aspect of learning and teaching is a one-way communication: the teacher was speaking, you were listening. The teacher mediated the knowledge- the student (that is you) had relatively little opportunity to supplement what was being said. The possibility to check exclusively belonged to the teacher. The characteristic tool of this teaching - learning model is the textbook, which in many cases - used to be - the exclusive source for information. With the use of computers and the Internet in the education this situation has changed somewhat, the students



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often have to search the internet for hours in order to complete the majority of the teaching materials. But slowly we have to mention this in past tense, as the trends suggest that learning is increasingly feasible remotely and autonomously, adapted to the student's living situation.

In cases where a student, a person involved in a process of self-training course curriculum it is much more expedient to use a tool (tool kit) directly developed for this purpose. *What do we consider such a tool? The classic option is called a "student package". These packages contain all those substances which can be independently processed, studied at home.*¹⁵¹⁶

Despite its absolute advantages the self-study process is very delicate and mysterious, surrounded by pitfalls. As long as at trainings with students attendance the participants can ask the tutor personally at any time, the process takes place in quasi controlled conditions, **the self-study process is in fact uncontrolled in the case of each student it is different.** Consequently it is a much more responsible process to set up and publish a course material for individual studies and courses.

A student package is used by many people living in different life situations. Consequently, it cannot be set up to be most optimal for all users. Basically it has to correspond to one, but a very important criteria: **the student's package should be sufficient for the whole learning process.** This criterion only applies as a student package is suitable for knowledge acquisition and its (self-) check, contacts (with helpers and peers), internet use, the use of virtual classrooms, etc.

In one of the earlier chapters we have discussed the importance of maintaining motivation. In connection with this topic we should also mention the risk of developing disinterest. **If during the home use of the student's package the student encounters any obstacle - typically engineering - there is a high risk to pause or suspend the learning process**¹⁷. These risks materialize in a variety of ways: *the user's computer hard drive capacity is not big enough to store the material, the user has limited Internet access (limited speed or traffic, has internet access only at his work place) does not*

¹⁵ <http://fenntarthato.hu/epites/Members/kiralyzs/eghajlatvaltozas>

¹⁶ <http://www.eszperanto.hu/konyvrendeles/csomag.htm>

¹⁷ experience has shown definitively



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take into account the cost of phone contact with peers. Of course, as organizers and instructors of courses, we are not in a position to sanction these shortcomings (it is not our goal and it is not an expedient solution), so the only thing we can do is to provide exact information and to transfer all materials that we can - and what is expected from us - to the user of the material. As Peter Gerő writes it (2008.) “**we can only be sure of the existence of the material that we**



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ourselves provided as part of the student’s package. In other words, we can refer to "recommended literature" obtainable at a library or to other recommended supplements but what's really essential in order to achieve the learning objective must be included in the student package!"

What should we observe while structuring the student’s package?

In one of the earlier chapters we have talked about the importance of determining the length of each lesson. Now, at the stage of the implementation of the curriculum it is worth examining the issue – from a slightly different point of view. We know that the length of each lesson can vary widely from one another. The reason is that these are not defined by uniform boundary considerations but by the learning objectives of the current chapter. *Our basic starting situation is to assume that the student can easily be in a situation where out of their own accord they suspend their studies. This situation may be the result of some external effect or of internal mental processes that “reduce” the learner’s motivation.* **Consequently each part or chapter should be the size that the student would not consider it a failure if he did not manage to master it and he would not “flee” from revising the given material.** However, based on the experience of applying the methodology we can determine a maximum time frame, which should not be exceeded in most cases. This in a case of a lesson is about thirty minutes learning time. The longer sections should be dismantled into two or more parts. The separation points should be defined as any closed area could be checked (series of data, questions related to the topic, etc). It is also apparent that **the questions at the end of each section should clearly relate to the final measurement of the given lesson.** At forming the final measurements it is advisable to form a step showing which parts should be revised in case of failure.

Summary

The expansion of the role of computing in education is undeniable. However, while in most forms of education computers appear only as tools for knowledge transfer in the methodology of life-tailored learning this achievement of modern technology can be interpreted as the partner of both the students and the teachers.



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In the learning process supported by our methodology - in most cases - the learning material is transferred in non-attendance training. Self-study is more typical, in the course of which the learner expands his competencies adapted to his schedule according to his own life situation. The acquisition of skills like this is helped by a so called learning package that includes the curriculum needed to complete the learning process independently. Of course, due to the number of users, the number of life situations and attitudes to learning optimizing the learning package is essentially an impossible task, but we must strive for a universal solution that gives maximum satisfaction to the maximum number of users.



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Review questions

1. How to find out what the “expected average student”, the user of our student’s package is like?
2. What are the dangers of self-study?
3. How do these dangers modify the quality of the student’s package?
4. Is it worth limiting the student’s package to only the necessary knowledge and exclude instructions for use? Explain your answer!
5. Is it necessary to supplement the knowledge of the student’s package to achieve the learning objectives? If so, why?
6. To what points should we call the user’s attention while usage?
7. If a module acquires longer time than thirty minutes why should we divide it into half-hour long parts?
8. Design a student’s package for your chosen learning process! What components do you include? What aspects do you keep in mind in the package compilation?



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LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, THE BASES OF MOODLE

In the previous chapters we have established the important role of computer technology in education. In addition to the fact that this technology makes access possible for study materials anywhere, anytime thus being portable for the students to deal with studying when they wish they take another great job supply off the shoulders of the human crew. Registration, education and organizational assessment activities usually require a lot of care and administration. The learning management system – apart from ensuring access to learning materials - assists the trainees to follow they progress in a variety of learning activities.

The aim of the chapter

After studying the lesson you will be able to select the most appropriate educational framework for you. You will be able to distinguish between the framework user's privileges, you will be able to decide which colleagues to endow with different rights. Having studied the practical examples you will be able to add users to the Moodle system, to create courses and to upload course curricula.

What is a teaching and learning framework?

A teaching and learning framework is **a complex, two-way service that can be automated, standardized and that can speed up the process of knowledge transfer**. This is a browser framework for running applications (that requires no installation, installation knowledge of the user) that can manage the users can keep track of their progress in the curriculum, it allows you to measure the level of their knowledge.

The functions of the framework:

- **record keeping and handling users' database**
- **establishment and storage of users' permissions** (e.g. Who are entitled to upload a curriculum who can view the test results, etc.)



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- **registration and tracking the students' learning process and results** (e.g. how completed which course, which material parts have been completed, etc.).
- **manages the advancement of students** (follows them in the learning process, filters, and offers opportunities for further progress)
- **electronic course materials storage and playback of media elements**
- **provides a communication channel for the teachers and students involved in the training** (e.g., email, chat, message boards, forums, etc.).

As other information technology applications for education, learning management systems have several kinds. We can talk about paying, for purchase, free and open-source systems as well. These are certainly not the same and we can not clearly state which ones are the best and the least good. Each performs better or weakly at a different area. However, as the framework is the spirit of e-learning, it is very important to choose with great care the most suitable one for ourselves, for our course or training. Before the decision it is definitely worth considering, designing, what conditions the system must fulfill in the future, what load it will have to bear.

What can be called a good education framework?

This question has no clear answer as these applications by their nature are used by multiple users. **Users can basically be divided into two groups: users in the classical sense and the system operators.** For classic users - who may be faculty and / or students - it is important that the system should be **fast and easy to use, as well as meet the transparency criteria** as well as there's nothing worse than when a menu, options, and controls cannot be found. The language of the framework is of great importance also as it is an important retention factor when the user is able to use the system in their mother tongue. **An important aspect of the operation point of view is personalization. The system should meet the expectations, as specified by the customer on the system. Complementarity and modularity are useful due to sustainability and upgradeability.** This way you can respond to the constant changes.



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Moodle as a learning management system

Life-tailored learning, courses using self-study methodology and curricula in most cases are available in electronic frameworks (except for educational materials distributed on CD's, DVD's, however in their case it can also be possible to establish a framework for internet connection). As we have mentioned many of these systems operate, of which we will outline for you the use of Moodle.

Moodle is distributed under an open source license, and free e-learning framework. The name is derived from the Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. This definition or name sufficiently describes and summarizes the essence of the system as well. The project is made up of three separate parts. The first element is the software itself, which is the main Moodle platform. Probably, Moodle community, which has more than one million users worldwide has the largest role of the three pillars. This community provides free support and assistance to each other on the system pages, they share ideas and information and send feedback to the developers of the system. The third major component of the system is Moodle Partner Network, which provides the presence of trade and the market that provides the funding and operation of the development company.

Who's who, or users in Moodle

We can distinguish the users of Moodle based on a variety of privileges.

The highest level are the administrators. Such power users are responsible for the system-wide settings of Moodle. In addition, they are able to create and edit courses. Administrators can define the teachers, the course administrators¹⁸ and manage the registered identifiers - create edit and delete new identifiers. In addition, they carry out traditional administrative tasks (system maintenance archive and backup, development, etc). Typically, a single administrator user status is found in a system, but Moodle gives the opportunity for multiple users to work simultaneously as administrators.

The administrators are followed by course making level users. In most cases, these individuals are trainers but they have additional opportunities than the general faculty-level users. Only this group has the privilege to define courses. The course creator can see all the courses he created and can edit them as well. He has the option to assign lecturers for each course and he converts the

¹⁸ people responsible for the courses, ones that create them, leaders



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rights of teachers in these courses. If necessary, he can delete them. The course creator can also be a lecturer, he may also act in this capacity.

The most common user of Moodle is the lecturer. Anyone can be such a person who is assigned by the person with the appropriate user status (administrator, course creator, teacher). They represent the user groups who manage and maintain the courses. The lecturer has the option of uploading learning materials and / or material elements, he regulates their accessibility and usability as well – with accordance of their classical lecturer status – they organize different activities and assign duties to the students.

Tutors are those lecturers who do not have editing powers within a course. This means that they cannot upload teaching materials, elements of curriculum and cannot assign tasks for students. Their role is linked to course administration. Their power is rating student activities, assessing the uploaded tasks. In this context, they have the possibility of viewing students' assessment.

The next level Moodle user is the student. They are the ones who are involved in student activities in the system. They have the option to access the shared teaching materials and tasks.

Moodle provides an opportunity for non-registered users to view certain courses.

These users are considered visitors in the system. These individuals are not regular participants in the courses, most often we have to interpret them as an external reviewer person. Their involvement in the system is determined by the administrator or owner of the course by setting the rules that apply to them.

In each case, the system administrator (administrator) role belongs to a Moodle user. They often do not participate in the educational process to ensure the sole responsibility of the system. The largest user group in Moodle is that of the students.

Basic operations in Moodle

Adding users

To start using the Moodle system first you need to register the user. This is done in two ways: the person interested in use can register himself, or the system administrator has the option to add a user.

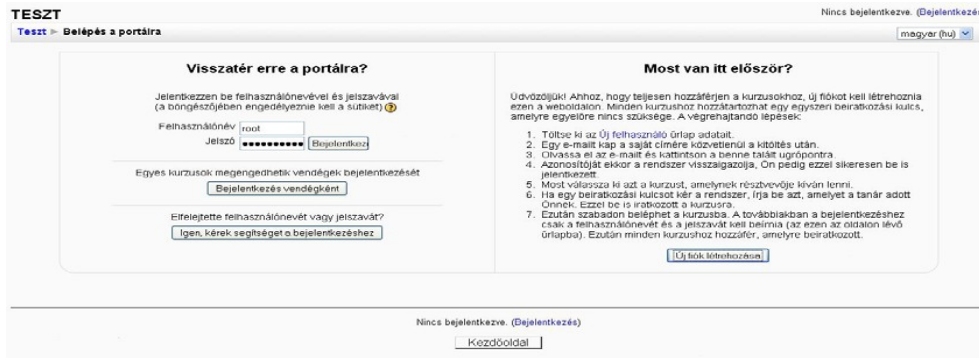


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TEST

Logging to the site

**Will you return to this site?
here?**

Log in with your user name and password.
courses you need to create

(The cookies should be enabled in the browser)
a new account for this site. Each
course may have

User name:
need at

Password:

Certain courses allow visitors' log in

Log in as visitor
after filling in the

Have you forgotten your user name or password?

Yes, I would like to get help for logging in
jump-to link in it.

**Is it the first time you are
here?**

Welcome. For full access to

a new account for this site. Each

a one-time enrolment key which you do not

the moment. Steps to be taken:

1. Fill in the data in the new user's form.

2. An e-mail will be sent to your address

form.

3. Read the e-mail and click on the



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successfully

4. Your ID will then be confirmed and you

logged in.

5. Now choose the course you want to attend.

6. If the system asks for a log-in key, give the lecturer gave you. Now you successfully

one your enrolled in the

course.

7. Now you can enter the course. For further only need to write in your user's

enters you will name and password

(in the appropriate place). Then you will have

access to all courses you enrolled in.

Create a new account

After opening the the Moodle page, the user can see the login interface.

Clicking on the Create new account sign the registration form will open. Having filled in the mandatory parts the registration is completed.



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Új fiók Nincs bejelentkezve. (Bejelentkezés)

Teszt ▶ Bejelentkezés ▶ Új fiók magyar (hu) ▼

Új felhasználónév és jelszó megadása

Felhasználónév*

A jelszó kötelező eleme: legalább 8 karakter, legalább 1 számjegy, legalább 1 kisbetű, legalább 1 nagybetű, legalább 1 nem alfanumerikus karakter

Jelszó* Megmutat

További részletek

E-mail cím*

E-mail (ismét)*

Vezetéknév*

Keresztnév*

Város/falu*

Ország* ▼

Az űrlapon * jelzésű kitöltendő mezők vannak.

New account

Test Log in New account

Giving new user name and password

User name*:

It has to contain at least 8 characters, 1 lowercase letter, 1 uppercase letter and at least one alphanumeric character

Password* Show

Other details

E-mail address*

E-mail address (again)*

Surname*

First name*

City/village*

Country* Choose a country



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Create a new user name Cancel

The parts with * must be filled in.

The Moodle system tries to guarantee a fairly high level of security for users. To satisfy this the password should meet the following criteria.

The password:

- **has to contain at least eight characters in length**
- **has to contain at least one lowercase and one uppercase letter**
- **has to contain at least one number**

For creating an account it is important for the user to enter an existing email address as after they register they will receive messages from the system in the use of Moodle.

If the opening of the Moodle system does not offer you adding a new user you should not be surprised. **The self-registration function only works if the administrator enables this feature.**

The other way to add users is to register manually. For this you definitely need eligibility higher than that of the user. *Dear Reader! As an author of the learning material, or course creator or lecturer you may be in the position to do these steps!* Adding users manually can be done individually or as a group. The addition of the individual is recommended when a small number of participants must be registered to the system. The data required are those of the ones described above at self registration. The difference between the two procedures is that at the manual registration the user will not receive an e-mail confirmation immediately but will

become full-fledged user of the system. If you need to register a large amount of users into Moodle¹⁹ for the first time it is advisable to create a file (spreadsheet, database), which contains the information necessary to register in the same way for all users²⁰.

¹⁹ This usually happens in the occasion of starting or restarting a new course



Felhasználók feltöltése 

Feltöltés

Állomány (max. méret: 2 MB)*

CSV-határoló

Kódolás

Sorok előnézete

Az űrlapon * jelzésű kitöltendő mezők vannak.

Uploading users

Uploading

File (max. 2 MB)

Browsing

CSV delimitter

Encoding UTF-8

Preview of lines

Uploading users

Lines with * are mandatory

The final database can be uploaded to the system in the Browse menu and this done the users are registered. Of course, in that case, we do not need an e-mail confirmation. **For group registration we need administrator's permissions.**

Creating courses

We can create courses for different trainings or academic units in the Moodle system, which are basic education units of the system. Such a course is actually

²⁰ Moodle Help option contains exactly the required structure



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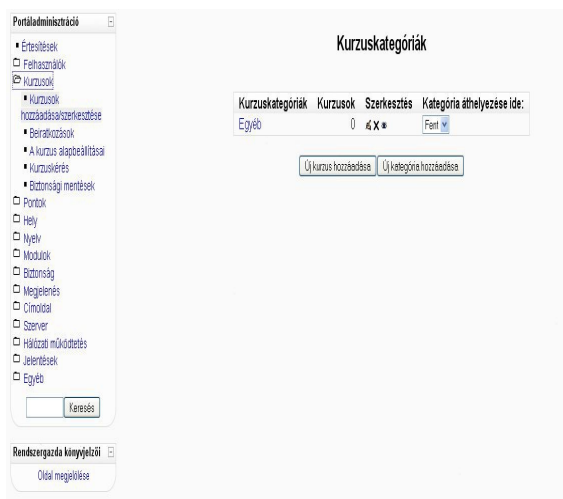


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nothing more than a digital- accessible by anyone, anytime, from anywhere - version of a subject.

As the first step in creating courses we should create so called **course categories**. They as the library indexes greatly facilitate orientation and search for students and teachers.

You can create Course category with *Courses* menu option, with *Add / Edit Courses* button. Once you have a detailed description of a new category and title you can finalize your plans with clicking on the *Create Category* button and the new course category is created.



Portal administration
Adding new category

Notifications
up

Courses
Name of category

Parent category

Course categories



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Add new course			
Description			
Enrolment	Course categories	Courses	Edit Move category
here			
Basic settings for courses			
Course request	Adding new course		Adding new category
Backup			
Points			Create category
Cancel			
Place			
Language			
Modules			
Security			
Visualisation			
Home page			
Server			
Network operation			
Reports			
Other			

Administrator's bookmarks

Page

Parent category should be left in up option, as this way we really create a new category and do not edit a new within an already existing one. When we have created the category we can create a new course (Add a new course button). Selecting the option in a long line of menu opens, with the help of which we can configure the details of future courses.



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At fine-tuning our course we have the chance to add a *Course ID number* entered. This step is important when our subject is situated in a complex training system where each academic unit

has a unique identification number. (Courses such as Neptun or the ETR system²¹)

In Description item, you should describe the course in a detailed way to make the course topic easier to understand for visitors and participants. It is also easier for the participants if we give when our course begins, how much time the entire course material needs to master, and - if the training requires students' presence - what time the consultations will be held. .

It's like a blog or feed, we can state in Moodle in what order and how much of the materials should be displayed. Also, you can set whether or not the course activity (Activity Reports) should appear which makes use easier so that in a separate window it reports the last group activities.

Because in Moodle the participants (students and lecturers alike) can upload files sooner or later we are confronted with the problem that the available space is filled. To limit and delay it we can maximize the file size uploaded. (Maximum upload size menu)

In all education systems the issue of course openness and closeness occurs. Both have their pros and cons, everyone can decide and choose about their course according to their own beliefs. Moodle also has the potential to adjust course accesses and parameters. We can decide whether to allow course visibility and active appearance in Moodle (enroll for course in Menu) In the menu in Course set, under Enrollments we can add how long they can enroll - or we can set up an unlimited enrollment as well.

²¹ Currently most frequently used electronic record systems in higher educational institutions



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Kurzusbeállítások szerkesztése


Általános








Kategória  9. Évfolyam Informatika 




















Teljes név*  Az elemi kurzus teljes neve


Rövid név*  Elemi



A kurzus azonosítószáma 



Leírás 





Trebuchet  1 (8 pt)  Nyelv  **B** **I** **U** **S**    



                  



Útvonal: 



Forma  Héti forma 



Hetek/témák száma  10 



A kurzus kezdésének dátuma  14  július  2010 



Rejtett részek  A rejtett részek tömör formában jelennek meg 

Megjelenítendő hírek száma  5 

Pontok megjelenítése  Igen 

Tevékenységmentés megjelenítése  Nem 

Maximális feltöltési méret  2 MB 

Ez metakurzus?  Nem 

Beiratkozások

Beiratkozási segédprogramok  Portál alapbeállítása (Belső beiratkozás) 

Alapszerep  Portál alapbeállítása (Tanuló) 

A kurzus felvehető  Nem Igen Időköz

Kezdési időpont  13  július  2010  Kikapcsolás

Befejezési időpont  13  július  2010  Kikapcsolás

Beiratkozási időszak  Korlátlan 

Editing course setting

General



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Category 9th year Informatics
Full name Full name of the basic course
Short name Basic
ID number of the course
Description

Trebuchet Language

Route

Form Weekly
Number of weeks/topics 10
Date of course start 14 July 2010
Hidden parts Hidden parts appear in a brief form
Number of news to appear 5
Points to appear Yes
Activity report showing No
Maximum upload size 2 MB
Metacourse No

Enrolment

Enrolments utilities Portal's default Internal enrolment
Basic role Portal default Student
Availability Yes No Pause



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Time of start	13 July 2010	Off
Time of finish	13 July 2010	Off
Time of enrolment	unlimited	

In connection with the creation of courses two important things have to be examined in more detail. Moodle allows a new security feature that can restrict the course availability. We can choose from a pull-down menu (Course availability) to determine whether the course is available for students and to select whether the system should ask for an **Enrolment key** for registration. In order for a student to be able to sign up for the course they must possess this key or a password. With this we can increase the control over which students have access to course content.

In the case of the courses the previously discussed roles and permissions can also be set. Teachers can be assigned to the courses - who is in charge of the course material, compiles them - or an editing lecturer - who does not have such powers, he typically "teaches" the content of the course.



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Beiratkozás lejártáról szóló értesítés	
Értesítés ?	Nem ▼
Tanulók értesítése ?	Nem ▼
Lejárat ?	10 nap ▼
Csoportok	
Csoportos részvétel ?	Nincs csoport ▼
Csoportos részvétel előírása ?	Nem ▼
Felvehetőség	
Felvehetőség ?	A kurzus tanulók számára elérhető ▼
Beiratkozási kulcs ?	<input type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Megmutat
Vendégek bekapcsolódása ?	Vendégek nem léphetnek be ▼
Nyelv	
Nyelv előírása	Ne írja elő ▼
Szerep átnevezése ?	
Rendszergazda	<input type="text"/>
Kurzuskészítő	<input type="text"/>
Tanár	<input type="text"/>
Nem szerkesztő tanár	<input type="text"/>
Tanuló	<input type="text"/>
Vendég	<input type="text"/>
Hitelesített felhasználó	<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Módosítások mentése"/> <input type="button" value="Mégse"/>	

Az űrlapon * jelzésű kitöltendő mezők vannak.

Notice of the expiry or subscription

Notice	No
Send notice to students	No
Expiry	10 days

Groups

Group participation	No group
Group participation requirements	No

Availability

Availability	The course is available for students
Enrolment key	show
Available for visitors	No visitors are allowed

Language

Language required	Is not required
-------------------	-----------------

Rename role



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System administrator
Course maker
Lecturer
Lecturer who does not edit
Student
Visitor
Not certified user
Editing changes Cancel

Adding syllabus to a course

Our existing course in the Moodle system is not much worth without content. This content can be formed by uploading different curriculums. Moodle distinguishes between different course materials which are outlined below.

Perhaps the simplest form of material is a **Link or an URL module**. With this tool we can specify the training course material as an online link. The reference can refer to anything that is freely available on the web (documents, pictures, music, videos). The reference is a simple *copy paste* operation in the reference field of the web browser, or editing and *inserting* in Moodle curriculum editor. The resulting material can be displayed (embedded or in a new window etc) in different ways.

The knowledge to be acquired by the students can be displayed in the form of a **file**. With the help of document editing applications (such as Microsoft Office, Open Office) spreadsheets, presentations, slide show related to the course can be uploaded and then they will be available for the students. Where possible, the uploaded files will automatically appear on the surface of the course while in other cases, the system offers the material to be downloaded. These materials are, of course, not only useful for learning but also for practice. The students can edit, or alter the downloaded files or part of an assignment which can be loaded back into the system. To enable them to do so, the students must be presented the applications to open and edit these files and it is essential to provide them with these programs.

To improve transparency the lecturer can arrange the files linked to one another in folders, can upload compressed folders, uncompress folders, can create an



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empty folder and upload files to it. Apart from using their own portfolio management the folder can be used as a shared repository with limited access for visibility for the lecturers.

In the courses teachers have the opportunity to create an internet based learning material with a word processing program in the **Page** module of Moodle. This interface is similar to a traditional website it can display text, images, audio, video, web links, etc. The advantage of this is the fact that the course content can be directly accessed by opening, while in the case of files the user first has to download the files and open them on his own computer - assuming the proper applications exists as well. Thanks to the online interface, the resultant curricula - in theory - are available on the use of platform-independent, multiple devices (computer, tablet, smart phone).

A **book** is a simple multi-page curriculum divided into chapters and subchapters. Media and text can be included as well. Reading material can be placed in it as well as a faculty handbook or a portfolio containing student work.

Summary

Learning management systems are complex services that help automate and standardize the teaching and learning processes. The system allows users to be added, recording students' learning processes and assessment results ensures storing electronic materials and enables access to them

In our approach we present learning management systems in Moodle as public and free source software. The system allows users to be created. Users can have different privileges that determine those activities which are carried out within the system.

In this chapter three basic Moodle operations are described in detail. Adding users, creating courses and teaching materials for courses are operations which can build up the educational background of knowledge of an information based learning process at general (basic) level.



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Review questions

1. What are the key features of learning management systems?
2. Can a computer based management system (and its means of communication), substitute personal communication and relationship?
3. Explain the functions of learning management systems.
4. Where can one buy the Moodle system, how can one get help on how to use it?
5. What is the best way to stay in control of the learning activity?
6. Who and what does the success of the learning process depend on?
7. Explain what privileges of the Moodle system administrators have?
8. Describe the course maker level user permissions.
9. Describe the permissions of lecturers.
10. What is the potential of the tutor in Moodle system?
11. What is the difference between a student and a visitor user?
12. List the types of learning materials in Moodle! Describe two in detail!
13. Describe how you would create a Moodle interface for your chosen curriculum! Describe your plan!



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HELPERS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE METHODOLOGY OF LEARNING LIFE-TAILORED LEARNING

We have to define studying as one fundamental concept of life-tailored learning methodology as exclusively a student's activity. Besides accepting this argument, of course, we cannot forget about the people who - using the known chemistry concept - help in the learning process as catalysts for students to learn the skills. For these individuals, helpers are not closely limited to the learning process they include family members, friends or even the unknown librarian. Of course, we can not individually introduce this wide range of supporters we are trying to focus solely on those who directly help the student in expanding his competencies.

The objective of the chapter

The purpose is to enable you to define the participants and their roles in supporting the learning process and to be able to develop these participants' duties.

If not, then what and how?

*Dear Reader! Please do not take the next question too inquisitive and hurting! Did you go to school? Think back to the teachers whose lessons you attended with joy, who you most want to remember? Now think over why you like to remember those teachers the most? What was outstanding in them, why they were different from other teachers? A good teacher **does not only to strive to transfer knowledge**. In addition to trying **to pass on knowledge** he considers it to be his prime task to **convert pupils thinking**, shape it so that they would be able to understand more and more of the world. A good teacher does not just teach. A good teacher helps students to navigate in their environment, will guide and assist them.*

Today, the nature of teaching is changing. New inventions, new knowledge, new views are born in the accelerated world every day, to transfer all these is almost impossible. The role of Internet as a knowledge base accessible by all, is highly appreciated, in many cases, it is not only a complement to the learning process but also a specific scene for the acquisition of knowledge.



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We have to accept the emergence of technology in teaching whether we like it or not. In fact, we would rather see it as a partner. The teacher will gradually have an additional role in the learning process, which will be to enable students to succeed in the world. Instead of transferring specific skills his task will be to show the students where to find answers to their questions.

In this context, the teacher's roles are re-evaluated and in the learning process four types of personalities can be described.

The supporters of the learning process

When we talk about supporting the learning process the question that arises is what kind of help the learner needs during the learning process. If we remember one of the basic assumptions of life-tailored learning methodology that is of mentally healthy student's learning ability is not limited then we can see that **no help is required for learning**. Rather, the question when it is necessary "to intervene" in learning should be examined. This is required if the student is stuck for some reason and cannot continue on the course material.

Although technology gets more and more involved in education, the primary facilitator of the learning, training process is still **the teacher**. The majority of us has the classic image of teachers as a powerful person standing on a platform in a classroom passing on knowledge to the students. Naturally, in the 21st century this picture is still alive but the question arises: *must the teacher always - days, weeks - repeatedly be present in the training?* The answer often is "of course", since it is such a personal touch to teaching. *Can a video recording of a good lecture, or series of lecture - which is available at any time for the interested student at home - result in the same effect as personal presence at such an event?* The answer is very likely "yes". In other words, we can say that the teacher is not only a teacher, when he is giving a lecture standing on the platform. The same knowledge can "migrate" even if we see it on a recording that we watch or hear. **The essence of the role of the teacher is to pass on knowledge in properly divided parts pointing out the focal points adjusted clearly and logically for the presumed student. The teacher therefore is the deliverer of knowledge, a mediator.**



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Is the saying „The one who knows it does it the one who does not understand it teaches it.”²²

familiar to you? Those who go to the wood of teaching may not know and understand its flora, fauna and harmony. In other words, the fact that someone teaches something does not always mean that he can understand the material and the entire interface related to his area of expertise. In the learning process - especially when it comes to the life-tailored learning process - we need people who are experts in a certain field. They are called **consultants**. **The students turn to consultants to get clear and precise answers to technical questions.** He does not have to own pedagogical skills, does not need to be familiar with the student and his life situation. One thing he **has to know and understand is his area of expertise**. Of course, the consultant does not always need physical presence in the learning process.

In contrast, there is a helper, whose presence is absolutely necessary in a learning process. He is **a tutor, learning facilitator**. During the learning process - and it is not necessarily restricted to this area - it can occur at any time that someone will come to a deadlock. These are usually hard to get through, to keep the long-term goals rather than the present problems in mind. In such situations an external observer can be very helpful, who can support and motivate them properly, he draws attention to the results that have been achieved and to the areas where there is room for improvement. The tutor does not have to be an expert in a particular field. This person is familiar with the learning process. The tutor develops a confidential relationship with the student. If a student encounters an obstacle, someone impedes or degrades his abilities, he becomes uncertain of the meaning of learning, the tutor is the person who reminds him of his motivations, helps him arrange schedules to study or even convinces the student's family - of course, through the student, focusing on him - that he is able to perform the course and pass the obstacles in front of him successfully. The tutor shows in what areas the student's learning methods can be developed, how he can compensate for a weakness with his strengths in other areas.

The fourth person to support the learning process is the **mentor**. He is the person from whom the practical application of the skills learned may be acquired.

²² Naturally I do not mean to hurt any of my lecturer colleagues. I apologise to the ones who feel hurt.



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A mentor is a person who analyzes the situation well and then can make a decision quickly. They can manage others, make them enthusiastic get them moving. He has a key role in making the students successful. **A mentor is a person who is able to influence certain people, groups, who defines rules, norms, makes decisions in critical situations, provides a model and offers encouragement to others.**

Opportunities of promoting learning

Each individual who is engaged in a learning process has a kind of past, socialization, memories, experiences, which he recalls in the current learning process remembers - even subconsciously - previously learned habits, recalls roles. They are so ingrained attitudes that changing them is not possible or can only be done with large energy input. In the methodology of life-tailored learning the helpers - especially the tutor and the mentor - can provide great help in replacing these entrenched forms of behavior. In the process of learning the mentor brings new environment, new events into the student's life while the tutor has the opportunity to influence people. The lecturer and the consultant have equally important roles as well. The teacher builds the way he provides the student with knowledge, as supervisor if necessary, improves expands and complements.

For the methodology and helpers involved the focus is primarily not on the "outside world". The transfer of knowledge, knowledge development - as we all know is unlimited that is not restricted - it is more important to transform the student's view of the world, so that he would not only know things but would be able to understand and apply them. A good teacher, consultant, tutor or mentor can really have a positive effect on learning efficiency, but they can also do the opposite. It is therefore necessary that the workers should work together to fulfill the duties of an assistant in life-tailored learning. Such assistance, however, can not be against the principles of the methodology that is they cannot take over the responsibility for the success of the learning from the student. Forming the helper roles professionally and their effective use supported by the technical potential makes it possible for the student depending on his individual learning goals and position to benefit from the assistance (concentrated and preserved by



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technical tools) of the best teachers, consultants, tutors and mentors – and all this in bulk at a reasonable cost (Peter Gerő, 2008.)

The role of learning management systems in facilitating the learning process

The learning management systems - as Moodle presented in the previous chapter - are not the same from the point of views of helpers and users. While users considered these systems mainly as areas making the learning materials available for them, from the facilitators' point of view they provide technological background for implementing and establishing contacts. Of course, however well-designed these systems are they cannot fully substitute personal contacts. They are more aimed at the function to develop and to maintain connections with the students and other helpers.

This communication has apparent functions and potentials. These are the following:

- sending and receiving messages
- orientation about the events related to the learning process
- creating, advertising tasks
- sending out evaluation

Summary

The methodology of life-tailored learning is a highly automated process and provides an opportunity for self-study and learning process. Although self-study is feasible in many cases, of course, we can not completely rule out the human factor. In the students' - involved in the learning process- life situation at any time a change can occur which can result in reduced motivation or the students may consider a part of the curriculum as a barrier which they can overcome with great difficulties. In such cases, it is useful to have a helper in the system, who can give him support in such hard times. Based on their attitudes the helpers can belong to four types according to the support they can provide to the student. Naturally they have to obey the basic consumption that studying is basically a student's activity.

In addition to the human workers, of course, we can talk about technical assistance as well. This is carried out by the educational framework and its



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supporting and contacting possibilities.

Review questions

1. Isn't it an exaggeration to say that the student is solely responsible for the success of learning?
2. Isn't it a strange way of thinking to consider what might prevent learning instead of finding out what might assist it?
3. Why is a teacher required if the knowledge is embedded in the curriculum?
4. Why do we need an educational institution if the student studies alone, on his own?
5. Explain the roles of helpers!
6. The consultant's role is (just like the lecturer's) to inform the student. What's the difference?
7. Should the tutor apart from being a helper in the learning process be an expert of a specific field?

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING

Dear Reader,

Now that we have reached the end of our curriculum it is time to find out whether your learning process was successful, whether you increased your competences in the field of life-tailored learning methodology. The final task of this lecture, the final measurement of the learning process is no different than designing a complex learning process.

Please, think of a topic of your choice and develop it as a learning process that is fully consistent with the methodology of life-tailored



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**learning and apply the tools and techniques with the help of which
you can successfully increase the students' ability to acquire it.**

**I wish you the best of work and much success in the application of
the methodology of life-tailored learning.**



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