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**Message from the
International President**

Dear SIEC-ISBE Friends,

Welcome to the 154th edition of *The International Journal for Business Education*, formerly known as *The Review*. Our journal is a peer-reviewed publication for global business educators by global business educators. The journal is published once per year. ISBE members provide in-depth research articles that can be helpful in the classroom or with administrative responsibilities. Each article, based upon research conducted by our members, adds to the body of knowledge in global business education. As in the past, a brochure for the upcoming conference will be included. Additionally, a call for nominations for the office of Professional Development Chair is included as required by our constitution.

I want to thank Tamra Davis, Ph.D., of the USA Chapter for taking on the task of editor. I also want to take a moment to thank our reviewers. We had multiple manuscripts submitted this year and required 20 reviewers. Thank you to our reviewers. Donna Anderson, Marcia Anderson, Valentina Chappell, Anna Dubel, Maria Evans, Sandy Fidance, Bettina Fuhrmann, Anthony Grady, Leslie Ratliff, Bernadette Robins, Christopher Roe, Michaela Stock, Katharina Stottinger, Piro Takanen-Korperich, Judee Timm, Jessica Tucker, Hely Westerholm, Gregg Whyte, and Kathy Willis. Your expertise was beneficial in helping improve the quality of the accepted manuscripts and offering guidance for improvement to those authors whose work was not accepted this year. I would also like to thank Sam Peters, a business and English education major for proofreading and editing the final manuscripts.

Our international conference will be located in Helsinki, Finland. The conference theme, Service Design, is an exciting theme that is very appropriate as our organization celebrates 113 years of excellence in Business Education. I hope to see you at the 2014 conference and our future conferences as well. Future conferences are planned in the following locations: 2015—Poland and 2016—Austria. We are seeking proposals for conferences in 2017 and beyond.

With warmest SIEC-ISBE regards until we meet again,

Petra Bragadottir
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**NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF SIEC-ISBE'S
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON***

SIEC-ISBE is accepting applications for the position of Professional Development Committee (PDC) Chairperson. The PDC Chair will be appointed by resolution of the Assembly of Delegates at the International Conference. The individual is appointed for a maximum term of three (3) years and may be re-nominated by the Executive Committee to serve one additional three-year term, subject to approval by the Assembly of Delegates.

Candidates for the SIEC-ISBE PDC Chairperson must have the following qualifications:

- a) must be an individual member of SIEC-ISBE and a member in good standing of his/her National Chapter
- b) must be knowledgeable about SIEC-ISBE's structure, objectives and activities
- c) must have actively participated in SIEC-ISBE activities, including having attended three of the last six international conferences prior to appointment
- d) must commit to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee and all meetings of the Board and the Assembly of Delegates at the yearly International Conference

Candidates for the SIEC-ISBE PDC Chairperson must have the ability to:

- a) Develop and facilitate a Committee structure to accommodate the various responsibilities and activities of the Committee
- b) Communicate with Committee members throughout the year to provide direction and assistance in meeting the Committee's responsibilities
- c) Compile a schedule of professional development activities to be held during the Annual Conference
- d) Coordinate and implement, with Committee members, activities approved and sponsored by the Committee during the year and at the Annual Conference

All applications (no longer than two pages) must be sent to the General Secretary by 30 April 2014. Profiles of the candidates should cover the above-mentioned points. Additional background information or experiences regarding qualifications for the position may be included. Candidates will be interviewed by the Election Committee at the International Conference; the nomination will be presented to the Assembly of Delegates for approval.

Email applications to: Dr. Judith Olson-Sutton, General Secretary: jsutton@madisoncollege.edu

Please note: *This appointment is contingent upon the approval of the restructuring of SIEC-ISBE Committees and the establishment of the Professional Development Committee at the International Conference in Helsinki, Finland, in August 2014.

Contents

Message from the International President.....	3
Membership Information	5
SIEC Journal Editor	5
Preface	6
SIEC Executive Committee: 2013-2014.....	6
Personalized Learning Instruction in Vocational Education and Training: A Design-Based Case Study on Challenges and Approaches.....	7
Financial Literacy – A Traditional, Yet New Field for Business Educators	21
Students’ Competency - The Intersection of Didactics and Organisation of Higher Education	29
The Story as a Cultural Transmitter: Applications for Business Education	38
Call for Papers	47

Membership Information

Membership in SIEC-ISBE is open to everyone with an interest in Business Education. SIEC-ISBE has many national chapters.

Visit <http://www.siecisbe.org> to find out if a chapter exists in your country. You can contact the national chapter from this website. If a chapter does not exist, contact the General Secretary for information to join as an international member. Contact information: Dr. Judith Olson-Sutton, secretary@siec-isbe.org.

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Preface

I would like to thank the wonderful professionals who filled the role of reviewers for this year's journal. Due to the number of manuscripts received, multiple reviewers were needed. Without their assistance, the job of editor would have been much more difficult. Thank you to all 20 reviewers who are SIEC-ISBE members and volunteered to help when asked. Thank you. I would also like to thank my student, Sam Peters, for providing proofreading and editing expertise. Your help was invaluable.

We hope that you find the articles included in this year's *The International Journal for Business Education* interesting. Thank you to everyone who submitted a manuscript for consideration. Without your submissions, we would not have had a journal.

Tamra S. Davis, Ph.D.

SIEC-ISBE Editor 2014

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**Personalized Learning Instruction in Vocational Education and Training:
A Design-Based Case Study on Challenges and Approaches**



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Abstract

There are many calls for personalized learning (instruction) (in Germany 'Individuelle Förderung'), especially for persons with special educational needs in the transition to vocational training or retraining. Teachers can find a variety of concepts and instruments to construct personalized learning. The challenge is to combine and to connect several concepts and instruments (e.g. for competence diagnosis or for transferring results of the competence diagnosis to support competence development) as we do not have the one unique instrument that guarantees personalized learning instruction. Furthermore, teachers and students have problems with the implementation of some concepts and instruments, considering the conditions, resources, and goals in their practical field. Against this background, the contribution looks at the question of how teachers in these courses with usually heterogeneous groups design personalized learning instruction. A focus will be on the reception, adaption, and design of concepts and instruments. Described is the research design of the case study in a practical field of vocational rehabilitation according to design-based research. Several instruments (e.g. a curriculum with learning situations of vocational orientation, a learning diary, and an individualized education plan) were designed, implemented, evaluated, and re-designed in a cooperative process between actors of practice and actors of science. Based on problem-centered interviews and group discussions during the whole design process with teachers and learners, qualitative data were collected to reconstruct the personalized learning (instruction) in this practical field. Main findings with reference to the implementation of concepts and instruments are stated. The contribution ends with a short conclusion.

Introduction – Definitions, Instruments and Problems of Personalized Learning Instruction

There is a demand for personalized learning instruction in all educational sectors in Germany. We find it e.g. in school laws (e.g. § 1 SchulG NRW) and in standards for teacher education (KMK, 2004). It is relevant for all students. Moreover, there is a special demand for personalized learning instruction for

students and adults with special educational needs in Vocational Education and Training (VET). Personalized learning instruction is quality criteria for supporting disadvantaged people (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit, 50/99) and an aspect of the reform of vocational rehabilitation (RehaFutur, 2009). Main characteristics of the group are that they are called disadvantaged (e.g. they have no or only bad school graduation and grades; they are slow learners). They have problems on pathways to worksites (e.g. do not get an apprenticeship in the dual system, do not know what occupation they could take up) (Euler, 2011, Enggruber, 2005, BfA, 2006). Summarizing, they do have special educational needs and in addition, they need a vocational orientation to pass from general school or unemployment into a vocational training or retraining. Furthermore, there are very heterogeneous groups in the sector of VET; students do have very different special needs and interests, so that individualization of instructions is necessary to address the needs and requirements of each individual.

For a first definition of personalized learning or 'Individuelle Förderung' we can follow Kunze (2009). She defines 'Individuelle Förderung' as all actions of teachers and students that aim at supporting the learning of each individual learner, with respect to his/her specific learning requirements, ways, objectives, and possibilities or that implicate this (p. 19).

Having a closer look, we can divide two perspectives: personalized learning instruction as the perspective of teaching and instruction and competence development as the perspective of learning of the student (Kremer & Zoyke, 2010). Competence development in this contribution means to develop a vocational competence of action ('berufliche Handlungskompetenz') according to the curricula of the German Dual System (KMK, 2011). This is a holistic understanding of competence that includes domain, social, and personal competences that are required to cope with problems and to perform responsibly in different situations of action.

To realize personalized learning instruction in the educational practice, we can find a variety of instruments (see

Table 1). On the one hand, there are instruments for competence diagnosis, as personalized learning instruction is based on the competences respective to the (learning) background of the student. For this, we can do tests and observations, implement learning diaries, interview parents, and so on. On the other hand, there are instruments and approaches for supporting the competence development of the student based on the results of the competence diagnosis. To this end, we can do counseling interviews or differentiation in a course by individualized learning tasks, as well as install weekly schedules or free work, etc. (Kunze, 2009; Gericke & Sommer, 2008; Buschmeyer 2007; BMBF, 2005).

Table 1. Instruments for personalized learning instruction.

Competence diagnosis	Supporting competence development
– tests	– counseling interview
– assessment center	– differentiation within a course
– observation	– weekly schedule
– portfolio	– free work
– learning diary	– special classes
– (self-)reflection	– individualized education plan
– interview with parents	– ...
– ...	

Although we do have an idea of personalized learning instruction and possible instruments, there are some challenges left, especially for teachers and trainers in practical fields. At first, we can state that we cannot identify the one and only instrument for personalized learning instruction. Teachers have to select instruments under consideration of complex conditions (e.g. personnel resources, availability of instruments, time) and aim (e.g. competence focus, curricula and individual aims). To diagnose and to develop a holistic competence of action, it seems to be necessary to choose more than one instrument. Then, the combination and matching of these single instruments have to be considered. Moreover, these instruments usually have to be adapted to the complex conditions of the practical fields (e.g. to cope with special needs and interests of students, with available resources and competences of teachers). These decisions have to be taken within one of these categories of instruments (diagnosis or development) (e.g. how to coordinate counseling interviews and weekly schedules) as well as between them (e.g. how to use portfolios to accompany and regulate free work, which tests are needed to design special classes).

Problem Analysis in a Practical Field of VET

Besides this literature review-based analysis, a problem analysis in a practical field of VET was done, namely in a course of vocational or occupational rehabilitation (in German: Rehavorbereitungslehrgang für besondere Zielgruppen – RVL-fbZ). This is a preparatory course for vocational retraining in a Vocational Training Center for People with Disabilities (in German: Berufsförderungswerk – BFW). These people are adults that are not able to keep on working in their occupation due to mental or physical disability (Biermann, 2008, pp. 69 ff.). They have to do a vocational retraining to get a new job in a new occupational field (e.g. a geriatric nurse suffering from back pain can do a retraining course for a position in an office of a health insurance). In this specific course, training for rehabilitants with very special educational needs is provided (e.g. to improve writing skills, social behavior, self-confidence, concentration and cognitive learning and working in general).

In the analysis at the beginning of the project, the following main approaches of personalized learning instruction have been found: Flexible beginning and endings of this course as well as flexible schedules

and relative high personnel resources to support personalized learning to individualize the learning processes in the course and to take care of everyone. On the other hand, some problems and challenges for teachers in this course have been identified:

1. Heterogeneity of students and their needs, as well as of sought vocational retraining (e.g. sector of IT, health, and electrical engineering). Some of the students only had vague ideas of interesting and manageable occupations.
2. Subject-oriented curriculum (German grammar and orthography, mathematical rules etc.). No information about competence and action orientation. It was unclear what students were able to do after having successfully completed this course.
3. Transfer problem: Many of the results of the competence diagnosis of previous courses and tests of vocational education have not been transferred to the vocational rehabilitation course. Even during the course, teachers, trainers and social staff were challenged to discuss and handle various results of each student.

Research Question

Based on the literature review and the empirical analysis, the following research question can be formulated:

How can personalized learning instruction in transition courses be designed to provide a pathway to vocational (re)training?

Hereafter, we will focus on instruments for personalized learning, on these two challenges:

1. Selection, adaption, and matching (during development and implementation)
2. Usability in practice (by teachers and students)

The focus will be on the teachers' perspective. In addition to this, the students' perspective will be considered.

Research Design – Development of Prototypes and Data Generation and Analysis

The research design of this study is an adaption of design-based research (Edelson, 2002; DBR Collective, 2003; Plomp, 2010; Reinmann, 2005; Euler 2011; Sloane, 2007), that means research in a development context in a field of practice (Kremer, 2007a). One of the main characteristics is the design process in cooperation with stakeholders of the practical field – teachers, trainers, and social workers of the preparatory vocational courses – and stakeholders in the field of science. During this design process, several instruments for personalized learning instruction (so-called 'prototypes' or 'interventions') have been designed, implemented, evaluated, and redesigned in view of theory as well as of practice.

Development of Prototypes for Personalized Learning Instruction

There are three main prototypes for personalized learning instruction that have been developed in the design process:

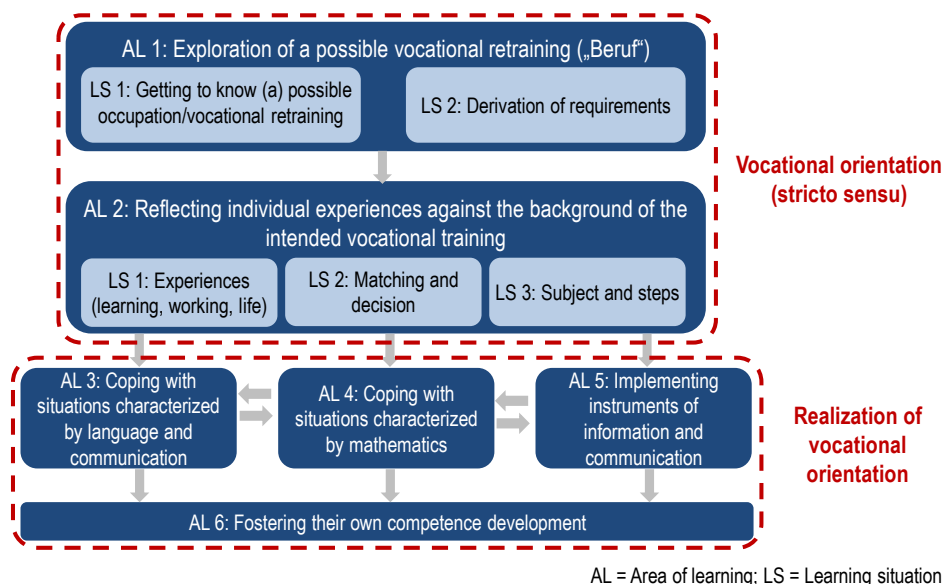
1. a reformed curriculum – a competence and action-oriented framework for the whole course.

To accompany this and to individualize the learning process

2. a learning diary and
3. an individualized education plan. To foster the connection and the matching of these instruments, a uniform understanding of competence of action according to Kremer (2007b; 2010) is used.

1. First, a reformed competence and action-oriented **curriculum** has been developed. According to the German 'Lernfeldkonzept', it is structured along areas of learning that are differentiated by several learning situations (KMK, 2011; Sloane 2005; 2010; Buschfeld 2003; Kremer 2007b; see Figure 1). There are six areas of learning that should foster individualization and the vocational orientation of each student (Kremer & Wilde 2006; Kremer 2010). For the first two areas of learning, the associated learning situations are exemplarily elaborated and material for students and teachers is developed (e.g. work sheets, didactical hints). In these areas of learning, the focus is on fostering students' vocational orientation *stricto sensu*, i.e. the students collect information about one or more possible occupations (e.g. requirements, income, and career opportunities). Then, they reflect their own interests, strengths and weaknesses, match the requirements, and make an occupational decision. This orientation and decision is the basis for the following areas of learning. In these areas of learning and the accompanying learning situations, the students work on realizing their occupational perspective.

Figure 1. Reformed curriculum.



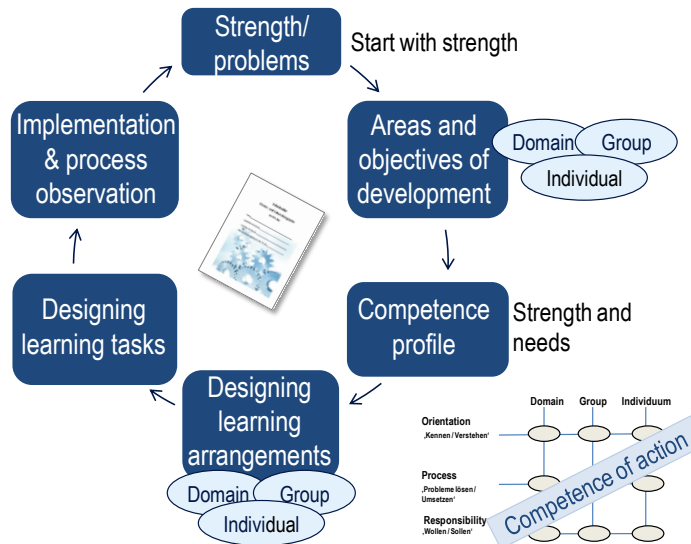
2. Within this framework of the course, a **learning diary** for the students has been developed to accompany and to support the individual learning process during the whole course by self-reflection (Brouër & Gläser-Zikuda, 2010; Renkl et al., 2004; Zeder, 2006). The learning diary consists of two components:

- A. List of questions for self-reflection concerning subjects of the course as well as problems, aims, and planning of the further learning process.
- B. Table of self and external assessment of specific competences that are needed in the learning situation.

The first component is relatively fixed, but students as well as teachers can select questions considering e.g. the learning process and level, structural needs, and interests. The second component, the table of assessment, has been exemplarily examined for a learning situation of the first area of learning. Subsequently, it should be changed from one learning situation to another as the situations and the competences, which should be developed in these situations, change. In addition, it can be individualized for students to consider the learners' needs (e.g. focus on media competence for the collection of information about an occupation or focus on communication with others while preparing a presentation about the requirements of an occupation). In addition to this material, a guide for students and trainers with hints for individualization (e.g. how or when one could select questions and change the focus of the table of assessment) has been developed.

3. Furthermore, to match the various results of competence diagnosis, to support the connection of diagnosis, and competence development concerning the students, an **individualized education plan** has been developed (Lippegaus, 2000; Eggert, 2000; Hüttenhölcher, Koch & Kortenbusch 2007; 2009). This is a form to plan, to evaluate, and to regulate the learning process of each student in the course. The first part deals with the competence diagnosis respective to the collection and the merger of results of different competence diagnoses. Based on this, the (occupational) goal is formulated and the planning of supporting steps and learning tasks is done. In addition to the planning and the documentation, the idea is to do counseling interviews between teachers and students and, if possible, with social staff, to foster students' cooperation and participation. The form can be used to structure, to regulate, and to document the whole process (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Process of individualized education planning.

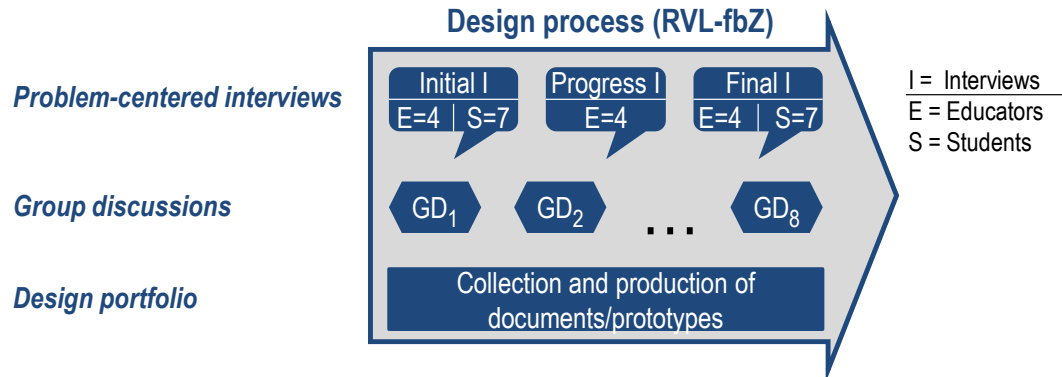


Data Generation and Analysis

Mainly qualitative data have been collected during the whole design process (three years) during the development of these main prototypes for personalized learning instruction. There are mainly three types (see Figure 3):

1. Group discussions with the teachers, trainers, and social workers of the course (Lamnek 2005; Bohnsack 2008). In summary, there were eight group discussions along the whole design process, from the beginning to the end. With this kind of data collection accompanying the process of construction and reflection of instruments, it was aimed to get a deeper understanding of personalized learning instruction, its challenges, and approaches.
2. Problem-centered interviews (Witzel 1985; 2000) with teachers and students. They have been done at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the design process. Regarding the respective status of the development process, they vary according to their focus.
3. Design Portfolio (Gerholz, 2009) to collect documents of the practical field (e.g. learning tasks) and texts that have been produced in connection with the prototypes (e.g. concept of the individualized education plan and filled-in form).

Figure 3. Generation of Data.



For the data analysis, an approach of reconstruction by generating categories of personalized learning instruction has been developed. It is derived from qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000), thematic coding (Hopf/Schmidt, 1993), and theoretical coding (grounded theory) (Glaser/Strauss, 2009; Strauss/Corbin, 1990).

Results

In this chapter, main results of the study concerning the three main prototypes and an overall view on personalized learning instruction are described.

1. Regarding the reformed **curriculum** and the exemplarily examined **learning situations for the vocational orientation**, it can be stated that vocational orientation is a very important topic for teachers as well as for students. Having or getting an occupation idea or vision is important for the students' motivation. They need learning situations and possibilities to take a reasoned decision or to review it. Moreover, being vocationally oriented can frame a reference for subsequent decisions on subjects and methods that could be supportive for the individual's competence development and the preparation for a vocational retraining. Nevertheless, it seems to be difficult to realize this kind of strict individualization by taking into account each individual occupational decision and related requirements in the following areas of learning and learning situations. Beyond that, the newly introduced concept of areas of learning and the forms to plan and to document learning situations were difficult for the teachers to work with. They need support, especially in the first phase. In addition to this, restrictions on time for this extensive documentation may be a problem. In case of negative experiences of the students in the past, the self-reflection should be handled very carefully. It seems to be important to focus on and to start with the strengths and positive experiences.
2. Concerning the **learning diary**, it can be assumed that besides documentation and self-reflection especially, teachers see a potential to foster writing skills and, if students show their diary to teachers, to use it for competence diagnosis. This seems to be different from the students' point of

view. Some students agree, but some do not and wonder why they should do this. The students' as well as the trainers' data indicate that this may also be a problem of introducing the learning diary (e.g. how to explain the reasons and potentials of the learning diary). Furthermore, it seems to be important to individualize the learning diary, i.e. to adjust to the students' individual needs and interests regarding the form of the diary, but also the use of it and accompanying instructions. The data also show that this individual adaptation is very time-consuming for the teachers and they could not do this for all students. Furthermore, the teachers said that the table for the assessment of specific competences in a learning situation is a good idea for more individualization, but it is the same problem with time consumption.

3. Regarding the **individualized education plan and planning**, we can state that trainers see several useful functions by using this instrument, e.g. to get a very deep insight in each student's competences, seen from multiple perspectives of different teachers, social staff, and so on. They point out the form supports knowing the strengths of the students and that it supports focusing on these strengths and not only on weaknesses and deficits. In particular, the documentation in this form and its structure, with the transfer from competence diagnosis to individual support, combined with the conversation about each student between the teacher's team is very helpful; however, this procedure is also time-consuming, so they made up the documentation with only a few students. Regarding the counseling interviews, the students said that they are not that important for them. They explained that there are enough situations in lessons and beyond in which they can talk to the teachers, discuss problems, and get (positive) feedback.

In an overall view, independently of specific instruments, the main findings on personalized learning instruction can be summarized as followed:

- the learner is central!
- vocational orientation is important;
- participation of the students is important as well as communication between teachers and students;
- cooperation and communication in a team of teachers is necessary;
- instruments for students (e.g. learning diary) as well as for teachers (e.g. form for competence diagnosis, individualized education plan) are required;
- implementation requires the adjustment of instruments by teachers (and students);
- increased efforts by teachers (and students) in terms of planning, documentation, reflection, and time (complex requirements) are required (further education, training on the job).

Conclusion

This case study delivers only first hints on how instruments for personalized learning instruction can be designed. It is limited on the German context. For proven results, more tests must be done. The transfer of research data and experiences of advanced other countries should be examined, too. But, despite the

limitations of this case study, we can state that the construction of instruments for personalized learning is only one side of the coin. In addition to this, it will be a never-ending repeated challenge to adjust instruments to the individual requirements of each student as well as to the context conditions. In this regard, the useful combination of several instruments must be considered as well.

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Financial Literacy – A Traditional, Yet New Field for Business Educators



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Abstract

It is the objective of this paper to explore the definitions of financial education, as well as of financial literacy, in order to reveal the many dimensions that these terms comprise. Furthermore, the paper is intended to present, analyze, and discuss recent empirical research findings on various dimensions of financial literacy in an international context. The paper is concluded by summarizing the most important implications for future work and future research and development in this field.

Problem Statement

In 2012, UN General Secretary Ban-Ki Moon wrote in his letter to the Child & Youth Finance International organization, “I strongly support helping young people gain greater financial literacy as well as access to better services that will lead the way to employment, entrepreneurship and investing opportunity.” About one year later, on March 19, 2013, EU-Commissioner Tonio Borg held a speech at a conference on financial education at the European Savings Bank Group and stated “from surveys run by the European Commission we found that 45% of Europeans could not calculate 6% of a 50,000 Euro loan. (...) There is therefore a need to build up awareness and empowerment of consumers, to enable them to make the choices best suited to their needs and circumstances. Financial education is one way towards achieving this.”

Citations like these show that financial literacy has become a central issue in politics as well as in research. In modern economies, people find themselves in an increasingly globalized, complex, and risky marketplace. Consequently, it has become more and more important for everyone to be able to deal reasonably with money and to make sound decisions in financial matters. Unfortunately, recent research has shown that all around the world there is a considerable number of people who have difficulties to meet these requirements (Atkinson & Messy, 2012; Lusardi & Mitchell, 2011).

The financial crisis has made the problem evident and drawn the attention of politicians and researchers to the issues of financial literacy and financial education (definitions are given in section 3 of this paper). Financial education is considered to contribute to a person's financial literacy. It seems plausible to assume that the more a person knows about money and investments, interest and compound interest, and savings and loans, the more likely it will be that this person will make well-informed and reasonable decisions. As finance is an important part of business, financial education is a major field of business education. Financial education, teaching how to deal with money competently and how to make reasonable decisions in financial matters, is (and has always been) a field for business educators. Recent research suggests that this field needs much more attention and renewed interest of business educators in order to enhance people's knowledge and support them to become much more financially literate.

What does financial literacy mean; which dimensions of financial literacy are there? What have researchers found out about various dimensions of financial literacy and what can be learned from these findings? Which are the next steps to be taken by business educators who want to work in this field?

Defining Financial Literacy and Financial Education

As with many other complex terms and concepts, there is also no single generally accepted definition of financial literacy. Different researchers and organizations have defined financial literacy in many ways (Hung et al. 2009; Holzmann 2010). Some definitions focus on what people do to manage their financial resources while others – like the definition used by the OECD (2005a, 2005b; OECD/INFE, 2012) – find that financial literacy comprises more than just behavioral aspects. They integrate financial knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behavior, as well as their mutual relationships. This approach is based on the consideration that financial knowledge represents a particularly basic form of financial literacy. Financial knowledge, in turn, is reflected in perceived financial knowledge and influences financial skills that depend on knowledge. Actual financial behavior, in turn, depends on all three (actual knowledge, perceived knowledge, and skills). Finally, the experience gained through financial behavior feeds back to both actual and perceived financial knowledge. Still, the relationships are likely to be imperfect, as each also depends on other factors, internal and external to the individual, like his or her attitudes and resources (Hung et al., 2009).

The idea of considering not only knowledge and behavior but also a person's attitudes is supported by the empirical results of the work of Barry & Breuer (2013). They have shown that there are significant differences in the attitudes of indebted young adults in Germany in comparison to persons of the same age group who are not indebted. Therefore, attitudes complete the picture of a person's financial literacy and need to be assessed when measuring financial literacy (Barry et al., 2013).

Financial literacy is considered to be the result of financial education, as the definitions of the Child and Youth Finance International group (CYFI 2012) or the OECD definition are pointing out: “financial education is the process by which financial consumers/investors improve their understanding of financial products and concepts and, through information, instruction and/or objective advice, develop the skills and confidence to become aware of (financial) risks and opportunities, to make informed choices, to know where to go for help, and to take other effective actions to improve their financial well-being and protection” (OECD 2005a). It is therefore the task of (business) educators to provide information about and enhance understanding of financial matters, to make people reflect on their attitudes and behavior, to help them decide whether they need more information on financial products, and where to find it in order to make sound financial decisions and achieve financial well-being.

Selected Results and Synthesis of Empirical Research on Financial Literacy

There are several research studies on financial literacy in different countries, many of them initiated and analyzed by the OECD, like the recent study “Measuring Financial Literacy” (Atkinson & Messy, 2012). The research design and the findings of this study are consistent with those of most other studies. Therefore, a few results of the “Measuring Financial Literacy” study are selected in order to illustrate the level of financial literacy among people in a range of countries. Each of the 14 participating countries undertook a nationally representative survey using the core questionnaire designed by the OECD and provided a dataset to be analyzed by the OECD. The following questions were used to measure people’s level of financial literacy, covering three main areas of financial knowledge: 1) the concept of interest and compound interest, 2) the value of money and inflation, and 3) risk diversification.

Table 1: Items to measure knowledge of financial matters in the OECD study *Measuring Financial Literacy* (source: Atkinson & Messy 2012) – the correct answers are indicated in bold letters

Area	Items
Division	Imagine that five brothers are given a gift of \$1000. If the brothers have to share the money equally, how much does each one get? [Open response. The correct answer is \$200]
Time-value of money	Now imagine that the brothers must wait for one year to get their share of the X. In one year's time will they be able to buy: Multiple choice: a) More, b) the same amount, or c) less than they could buy today.
Interest paid on a loan	You lend X to a friend one evening and he gives you X back the next day. How much interest has he paid on this loan? [Open response. The correct answer is 0]
Calculation of interest plus principle	Suppose you put \$100 into a savings account with a guaranteed interest rate of 2% per year. You don't make any further payments into this account and you don't withdraw any money. How much would be in the account at the end of the first year, once the interest payment is made? [Open response. The correct answer is 102 \$]
Compound interest	And how much would be in the account at the end of five years? Would it be: a) More than \$110 b) Exactly \$110 c) Less than \$110 d) Or is it impossible to tell from the information given
Risk and return	An investment with a high return is likely to be high risk [True/False]
Diversification	It is usually possible to reduce the risk of investing in the stock market by buying a wide range of stocks and shares [True/False]

In none of the 14 participating countries – not even in well-developed countries like Germany or the UK – more than 70% of the respondents were able to give the correct answer to at least six of the eight questions. In many countries less than 50% were able to do so. The results in table 2 show that most respondents were able to get the division right (except the respondents in Norway) and most respondents are also familiar with the concepts of inflation and the time value of money. It is much more difficult for people to calculate the amount of interest (for exactly one year) and to apply the concept of compound interest. Additionally, most respondents do not have a clue in which way diversification contributes to minimizing financial risk.

Table 2: Percentage of respondents who were able to give the correct answers (source: Atkinson & Messy 2012)

	Division	Time value of money	Interest paid on loan	Calculation of interest plus principle	Compound interest and correct answer to previous question	Risk and return	Definition of inflation	Diversification
Albania	89%	61%	n.a.	40%	10%	77%	81%	63%
Armenia	86%	83%	87%	53%	18%	67%	57%	59%
Czech Republic	93%	80%	88%	60%	32%	81%	70%	54%
Estonia	93%	86%	84%	64%	31%	72%	85%	57%
Germany	84%	61%	88%	64%	47%	79%	87%	60%
Hungary	96%	78%	95%	61%	46%	86%	91%	61%
Ireland	93%	58%	88%	76%	29%	84%	88%	47%
Malaysia	93%	62%	93%	54%	30%	82%	74%	43%
Norway	61%	87%	61%	75%	54%	18%	68%	51%
Peru	90%	63%	n.a.	40%	14%	69%	86%	51%
Poland	91%	77%	85%	60%	27%	48%	80%	55%
South Africa	79%	49%	65%	44%	21%	73%	78%	48%
UK	76%	61%	90%	61%	37%	77%	94%	55%
British Virgin Islands (BVI)	84%	74%	60%	63%	20%	83%	87%	41%

The OECD survey also comprised some questions on the respondents' attitudes towards dealing with money and their (self-assessed) actual behavior in financial situations. Most respondents indicated that they only make purchases after careful consideration and those they usually do not need a credit card in order to be able to pay for their everyday purchases, but only a minority of the respondents keep track of their expenses and make long-range plans. Just very few respondents seek comprehensive information and advice when selecting financial products (Atkinson & Messy, 2012).

In every country, there is a positive correlation between the respondents' level of financial knowledge and their self-assessed behavior of managing their finances. There is also a positive correlation between the attitude to make plans and financially literate behavior. Of course, these correlations do not prove, but might indicate causal relationships. It seems plausible that people who are knowledgeable about

money and financial matters are interested in learning even more about financial products and economic development. Consequently, their decisions are based on more information and more careful and critical consideration. They gain first-hand experience in dealing with money and making sound decisions which is again reflected in a more profound knowledge base.

Lusardi & Mitchell (2011) have found similar results in their international studies. A synthesis of their recent research studies has also shown that people in developing and rapidly changing countries such as Russia, as well as in industrialized and well-developed countries like Germany or the UK, lack important knowledge on how to deal with money competently and to make sensible financial choices and plans.

Nevertheless, there are some factors that seem to be conducive to higher financial literacy. To some extent, financial literacy can be predicted by demographic factors as well as by income (Hung et al., 2009). Men usually have higher scores on assessments of financial literacy and rank higher in their self-evaluations than women. More educated people usually are better informed although higher education is no guarantee to make sound financial decisions (Lusardi & Mitchell, 2011). Accordingly, Lusardi and Mitchell (2006 and 2007) find that older adults who displayed better financial knowledge were more likely to plan, to succeed in planning, and to invest in complex assets.

However, there are no consistent findings on the research question whether financial education has a direct impact on financial literacy or not. There are just a few studies that have been able to construct sophisticated measures of financial literacy and definitively establish causal links between financial education, literacy, and behavior. Many studies on financial literacy did not collect sufficiently detailed information on individuals' financial education and variables related to financial decision-making (Hung et al., 2009).

A recent study carried out at the University of Munich has found encouraging results. In a field experiment evaluating the impact of financial literacy training on high school teenagers aged between 14 and 16, researchers measured little interest in financial matters and low levels of self-assessed knowledge in both treatment and control groups before the training. After the training, teenagers in the treatment group exhibited a significant increase in their interest in financial matters, their self-assessed knowledge, and in some dimensions of their actual financial knowledge. According to their self-assessment, the students are less prone to impulse purchases and more likely to save money. These results suggest that teenagers can be influenced towards being more responsible and reflective consumers (Lührmann et al., 2012).

Summary and Implications for Future Work

Several international studies like those presented in Section 4 of this paper have revealed that the majority of people lack profound and comprehensive knowledge of financial matters. Most of them have difficulties to understand and apply the concepts of compound interest and risk diversification. Some people are not able to calculate the amount of interest for a given amount of money and a certain time. Many people indicate that they do not keep track of their expenses and do not plan which is consistent with highly alarming statistics on bankruptcy of businesses as well as of private individuals.

Obviously, educational systems all over the world have failed to help people gain financial literacy. To explore and identify these shortcomings and to develop and evaluate programs for the improvement of financial literacy will therefore be very ambitious, yet important challenges for business educators soon.

First, more empirical research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of financial knowledge, attitudes, and behavior and how these dimensions of financial literacy are interrelated. It has not been explored yet in which way knowledge, attitudes, and behavior influence each other and which dimension is important to stimulate another. Recent findings of habit formation and learning in children need to be considered (Whitbread & Bingham, 2013). It also seems desirable to learn more about the impact of (different kinds of) financial education on financial literacy. There is just a very small number of evaluation studies and it is not known how effective most of the programs really are.

Secondly, business educators need to analyze curricula and learning objectives as well as evaluate programs for teaching financial matters. Integrating financial education into the curricula – as it has been recently done in the UK – is the most effective way to reach a large portion of the population. Financial education should start at an early stage at (primary) schools. These students have their first pocket money at their disposal and make their first (small) purchases. They have a lot of wishes and need to learn the concept of saving money and of spending it only after careful consideration. Financial education should be continued on to secondary level as well as in higher education when students do not only have their pocket money at their disposal but also money they have earned themselves. Many of them have bank accounts and bank cards, so it has become easier to spend money. Very often parents do not discuss financial issues at home or do not involve their children – regardless of their age – in their financial considerations and decisions. Therefore, many students (at all levels of schooling) have no financial education at home. Therefore teachers should be able to teach these matters at school and help their students become more financially literate. It is also the task of business educators to provide adequate material and programs to support effective financial education.

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Students' Competency - The Intersection of Didactics and Organisation of Higher Education



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Abstract

Output orientation in the realm of education has become a requirement for higher education that is now slowly starting to be manifested in its curricula. This raises the question: what competences students are supposed to develop in the course of their studies and how these competences can be developed. In a first step, this article will therefore deal with the notion of competence. The next step involves an analysis of the various approaches to didactics in higher education, which plays an important role in the promotion of students' competency as well as in the design of individual lesson plans and of the curriculum for individual classes as well as for the entire programme. This section will also touch on the interconnection of research and teaching. It will be shown that, due to the specific way in which higher education is organized, any course of studies promotes the development of competences, which might seem, at first sight, beyond the grasp of didactics of higher education. The core of this article will be the introduction of a model which depicts the development of students' competency in the intersection of didactics and organisation of higher education. The development of students' competences is subject to various factors influencing each other. This article does not aim at presenting conclusive results but is intended to spark a productive debate.

Students' Competency

The notion of competency has found widespread popularity in social and scientific discourses, because it also incorporates the individual's capacity for self-organisation (ideally present as a disposition) in addition to traditional conceptions of knowledge and skills (Kirchhöfer, 2004, p. 63). One of the best-established definitions was formulated by Weinert and forms the basis for numerous further definitions, essentially dominating the discourse on matters of education, at least in Austria. The concept of competence refers to an individually or interindividually available collection of prerequisites for successful action in meaningful task domains. (Weinert, 2002). Even though the delineation to other concepts can be difficult, this definition at least allows for the identification of various basic characteristics of competency (Kaufhold, 2006):

- Competency is concerned with specific situations which call for action.
- Competency is tied to a specific situation and a specific context.
- Competency is tied to the subject.
- Competency can be developed.

Competency only becomes visible through performance. Only then it becomes apparent what kind of use people make of their competency in a specific situation (Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner, 2011). Competency is therefore content specific; it is manifested in the way people deal with the kind of problems they encounter in their (professional) life and it is always "something deeply personal and at the same time more precious than anything bought or gifted" (Ziegler, Stern, & Neubauer, 2012, p. 14). The following definitions and considerations are mostly concerned with schools (Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner, 2012), but can be easily transferred to the realm of higher education. Any programme of higher education is usually designed to provide a science-based preparation for a professional career, even though individual programmes (especially in the case of universities of applied sciences) may differ widely with regard to their specialisations. From the students' perspective, the applicability of skills and knowledge in various situations is of great importance. The above listed characteristics of competency can also be found in higher education. The development of students' competency is, next to research, one of the core tasks of any university. This task has not always been paid sufficient attention from the universities (for example in Austria), which is reflected in the discourse on the didactics of higher education and the development of students' competency.

Development of Competency between Research and Teaching

Recently there has been renewed scientific interest in the didactics of higher education. Questions concerning didactic and methodological implementation, as well as the general objective and mission of universities, have been raised (Egger & Merkt, 2012). Like any institution in the domain of education, universities are often accused of resisting reform. This accusation is however missing its target since universities find themselves in a process of constant change, even though these changes might be triggered more by external initiative rather than the institutions' own desire for reform. Teaching at universities in particular has been subject to many changes recently, on the structural level as well as with regard to foundational values. Universities (at least in the German speaking countries) attach great importance to the unity of research and teaching, so it is somewhat baffling that "years may pass until a student has struggled through the chaos of the foundation courses and encounters research for the first time. Many faculty members view students merely as a nuisance, singularly devoted to preventing them for their true calling: research." (Hielscher, Koch, & Schmidt, 2002, p. 1). This attitude can be easily explained by the fact that nearly any faculty member in higher education (in most of the European countries) is evaluated based on their reputation, which is primarily based on research output, acquisition of third-party funding, and the list of publications. The quality of teaching is essentially irrelevant from that perspective (Höscher & Suchanek, 2011). Although this disparity of ideal and reality persists, competency-based teaching and learning is attracting more and more attention, primarily in the context of a comprehensive notion of quality management.

A comparison of various courses of studies however also shows differences in students' competency levels that cannot be traced back to teaching alone (Shaeper, 2008; Schaeper & Briedis, 2004). The different levels of importance attached to codification and regimentation, classification and framing, transparency and coordination in different disciplines, and curricula and organisational structures of programmes seem to explain these differences (Bernstein, 1977; Schaeper, 2008). Development of competency at universities is therefore not restricted to teaching, but takes place in various areas, on a conscious and subconscious level. Formal, non-formal, as well as informal educational processes have to be considered. Formal learning takes place in educational institutions (eg. at a university) with structured learning objectives, learning time, etc. being pre-defined. This kind of learning culminates in certification, if successful. Non-formal learning is systematic too (in terms of learning time and learning tools) and goal oriented but does not take place in educational institutions and its results are (usually) not certified. Informal learning finally does not occur in a structured fashion or an institutional context and is not certified. It can be goal oriented, but not necessarily (European Commission, 1995). Informal learning must not be disregarded, even in educational institutions, since it is assumed to make up for more than three quarters of human learning in general, according to the estimations of the Faure-report (Faure, Herrera, Kaddoura, Lopes, Petrovski, Rahnama & Ward, 1973; Molzberger, 2007).

Different Approaches to Didactics of Higher Education

The question of didactics of higher education is currently experiencing a certain renaissance. The last time such concerns had dominated the European scientific and social discourse had been in the 1960s. Even then there was a general consensus that didactics of higher education must not be confined to methodological issues of teaching but had to be "developed with a strong sensibility for a highly differentiated system of disciplines with varying contents, objectives and methods and a pronounced commitment to the scientific method" (Wildt & Jahnke, 2010, p. 4). This led to the further differentiation of various approaches in didactics of higher education. Huber (1979) distinguishes the following six approaches:

- teaching technology approach
- sociopsychological approach
- curricular approach
- theory of science approach
- professional experience approach
- socialisation theory approach

These categories can be extended to situation oriented, participant oriented, as well as practical experience and project-oriented approaches, under consideration of socioeconomic and institutional framework requirements (Wildt & Jahnke, 2010). Nowadays, research into didactics of higher education can be grouped into three main branches (Metz-Göckel, Kamphans & Scholkmann, 2012), which overlap in certain areas. The first branch is devoted to academic teaching per se and is concerned

with students' learning progress and development of competency. Another concern is the measurement of this development (Braun & Hannover, 2008). The second branch is focussed on teachers, their qualification, further training, and promotion by the university (Dany, 2007). The third branch is finally comprised by interinstitutional research in higher education concerned with the structures and processes of education on the university level (Auferkorte-Michaelis, 2005; Metz-Göckel, 2008; Metz-Göckel, Auferkorte-Michaelis, & Zimmermann, 2005). In addition, there is research on super-ordinate and overlapping topics, such as changes on organisational level of programmes, junior staff development, modularisation, and competency orientation of curricula (Faulhammer, 2005; Staudacher, 2012; Wergen, 2011). Research into all these three branches as well as into the overlapping topics is primarily aimed at the development of students' competency, even though different approaches may be pursued.

Anyone interested in teaching at the university level will soon encounter the catch phrase "research-guided-teaching". Universities have a variety of tasks, the most important being research and teaching, forming the main pillar of "tertiary education in system of mass education" (Pellert, 1999). Luhmann views research and teaching as separated systems, "but the fact that they operate on a unified basis has a hardly determinable impact on scientific publications and a maybe even stronger impact on a certain science focus and alienation from practical experience characteristic for university education." (Luhmann, 1997, p. 784). Another aspect to bear in mind is the fact that the development of students' competency is not the sole responsibility of didactics of higher education, but also the objective of numerous measures in the area of human resource management and individual and organisational development. Such measures, even when undertaken without the guidance of any didactic considerations, have a non-negligible impact on teachers and students.

Universities as Organisations

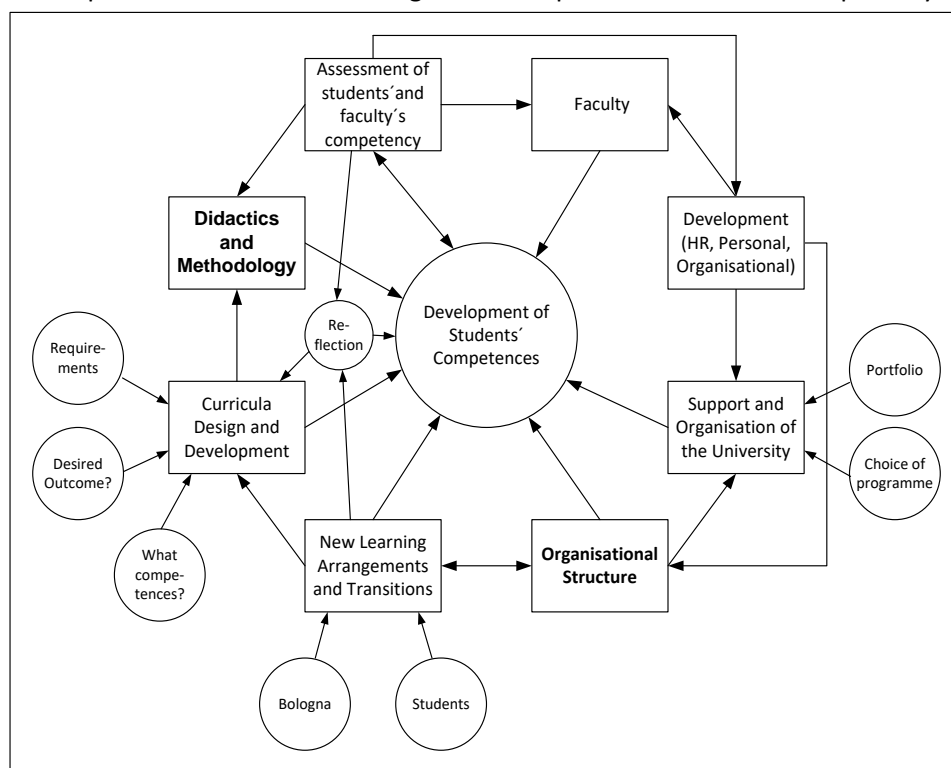
Universities are expert organisations since they do not only produce implicit and explicit knowledge, but also promote and disseminate it (Pellert, 1999). Expert organisations are viewed as knowledge based organisations which trade in personalized services with a high degree of customer-integration (Students are only viewed as customers in the context of administrative issues in this article. In the context of (research-guided) teaching, they are always co-producers.) These organisations display a lot of characteristics that are also found at universities: eg. orientation towards their own profession's respective disciplines instead of orientation towards the goals of the entire organisation, tensions between administration and profession, a high degree of individual autonomy, and a low degree of institutional autonomy. (Grossmann, Pellert & Gottwald, 1997). Just like institutions in general, universities are social organisations that shape the potential for activities, defining the framework of not just the agent's own activities, but also the activities of those around him. This process creates both formal and informal norms and notions of desirable outcomes within the context of universities (eg. third-party funding). Another result is a shared knowledge of the world within the organisation and how its components are interrelated (Schimank, 2008). The question of what category of organisations universities fall into, is best addressed by looking at the distinction of organisations formed around work

(work organisations) and organisations formed around shared interests (interest organisations) (Schimank, 2005). Work organisations are established by the main pillars of the organisation (eg. the owners), who then look for suitable employees. Interest organisations, in contrast, form around "individual agents with shared interests, who unite their individual potentials to better accomplish shared objectives." (Schimank, 2008, p. 160). This usually leads to problems, since universities are work organisations behaving like interest organisations.

Development of Students' Competency: Models and Factors

As an organisation, the university has been subject to a process of transformation from traditional agency to a learning agency (Meier, 2009). The reason why the university should become a learning agency is to support the students' learning. The model depicted in Figure 1 represents various factors influencing the development of students' competency. The focus is on factors emerging with the university itself and the society surrounding the institution. Any processes of socialisation beyond studies, education, performance motivation, relevant prior experience, etc. are beyond the scope of this model.

Figure 1. Model of potential factors influencing the development of students' competency



Didactics of higher education is concerned with didactics and methodology, assessment of students' and teachers' competency, curriculum design, new learning arrangements, and transitions between various stages of the educational system. Didactics is understood in the broadest sense, dealing with "questions

of teaching and learning on all levels of the educational system and in all areas of subject matter” (Terhart, 2009, p. 133), including methodology. Despite this broad understanding, curriculum design has been added as a separate factor, to achieve increased emphasis and also to acknowledge the fact that curriculum design is influenced by various factors which are entirely unrelated to didactic considerations. The main question is how individual factors influence each other. Each of these components is rooted in further areas of research, concerned with the choice of outcomes to be accomplished by a given curriculum with regard the specific competences to be developed in students. Assessment of competency furthermore must not be confined to grading and awarding of credits and certification but should also aim at providing constructive feedback to students and teachers. The top priority should be the support of learning processes and not so much performance assessment in the traditional sense. The teaching process itself is in the area of the faculty-members, the assessments, and the reflection. The organisational structure of universities also plays an important role in the development of students' competency. This involves the support provided to students by the organisation (counselling, jobs, library, etc.) as well as the field of human resource management (HR), personal development, and organisational development having a profound impact on faculty. This impact is not just manifested in trainings, but in the established organisational culture, which is, for instance, reflected in recruitment policies.

If there is to be a focus on teaching and thus on students' competency, the organisation university has to consider these interdependencies even for changes that do not directly fall within the category of didactics of higher education. It is also important to consider that not all competences the university claims to aim at developing among its graduates can only be developed in a classroom context. A capacity for self-organisation, assertiveness, and the ability to take criticism can be encouraged in the context of teaching, but they are also shaped by the organisation itself, its values, norms, and processes.

The model introduced in this article should be understood as a work in progress. It needs further refinements to capture the dynamic of academic competencies. The model serves to illustrate interconnections influencing the development of students' competency from the university's perspective. For this purpose, the university is seen as an expert organisation in the sense of a learning organisation. Individual factors have been elaborated upon. The results of such an analysis should help universities to better support students about the development of their competency, while acknowledging interdependencies influencing the organisation itself.

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The Story as a Cultural Transmitter: Applications for Business Education



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Abstract

Stories assist in transmitting cultural wisdom, including wisdom about the business community. The role of stories in various contexts such as education (including international management), management, and marketing, as well as the job search is explained. The article concludes by presenting instructional activities for business education that develop cultural competence through stories.

Introduction

Intercultural competence is developed through global business education. To really know a culture, one must know the stories of the culture. Stories contain embedded cultural wisdom about all aspects of a culture, including the business community. The oral tradition of using stories to transmit or pass down history and cultural values has long been noted. Further, family histories have also been recounted in this fashion. As Estes (1993) asserted,

the ultimate gift of story is twofold; that at least one soul remains who can tell the story, and that by the recounting of the tale, the greater forces of love, mercy, generosity, and strength are continuously called into being in the world (p. 3).

In the popular children's culture, stories often began with the words, "Once upon a time," developed with numerous details often prefaced with the words "and then," and closed with the statement, "and they lived happily ever after." In that storytelling process, important cultural values and life lessons are transmitted from one generation to the next in a palatable and meaningful form.

Stories and Their Benefits

The story format is a powerful one because stories are memorable. Relating the story allows the storyteller to form a bond with the audience. Halsey (2011) wrote, "Stories touch the emotional center

of the brain and cause the switch to go on that releases chemicals that not only cement learning but say, 'Hey, this is important. Pay attention' " (p. 86). Baker (2013) asserted that telling a story sometimes can be an effective strategy for solving misunderstandings that may occur during conversations.

While there are many forms of stories, including parables, folklore, fairy tales, songs, presentations, plays, and poems, they fall into two essential types: inspirational tales and cautionary (instructional) tales (Meyers & Nix, 2011). Inspirational tales help people to overcome challenges. Cautionary tales provide cultural wisdom and values and may end with the statement, "and the moral of the story is" followed by the moral itself.

Stories and Cultural Dimensions

The purpose of stories, regardless of their form, is to transmit cultural values and important lessons. Analyzing stories through the cultural dimensions they reveal assists in developing the cultural understanding needed in international business. These cultural dimensions include high or low context, individualism or collectivism, short-term or long-term orientation, and monochronic or polychronic time orientation.

High or low context cultures. Davis, Ward, and Woodland (2010) asserted that, "One of the first concepts to facilitate an understanding of culture and cross-cultural communication is the concept of high-context and low-context cultures" (p. 9). Simply put, high context cultures communicate indirectly and value nonverbal communication over verbal communication, while low context cultures are known for brevity and a direct verbal communication style (Reynolds & Valentine, 2011).

Individualistic or collectivistic cultures. The focus is on a single person in a culture that prizes individualism and is outcome oriented, while the good of the team or organization (relationship orientation) is revered by cultures in which collectivism is valued (Reynolds & Valentine, 2011).

Short-term or long-term orientation. Cultures that make decisions based on what is best for the short-term may clash with cultures that are characterized by a long-term view. In fact, some cultures, including certain Native American tribes, ask what the influence of the decision will be on the seventh generation of ancestors (Wikipedia, 2013).

Monochronic or polychronic time orientation. Cultures may be classified by how they experience or relate to time. For example, monochronic cultures view time as linear and focus upon completing one task. Polychronic cultures have a more flexible relationship with time; they may not arrive at meetings on time and may undertake multiple projects at the same time (Reynolds & Valentine, 2011).

Stories allow listeners to identify and understand cultural dimensions. The wide influence of stories around the world to inspire and instruct cultures about cultural wisdom and values has been discussed. The following sections address these research questions:

1. What strategies can be used to tell a story?
2. How are stories related to various disciplines such as education, international management, and marketing?
3. How can stories be used strategically in the job search?

How to Tell a Story

Telling a story that captivates and instructs an audience is an art (Buchanan, 2013). Meyers and Nix (2011) asserted that good stories contain elements identifying where, who, when, what, and why. The emphasis of the story is on the first three elements: where, who, and when. Buchanan (2013) summarized how to tell a story, comparing a story to taking a journey. "But instead of choosing the most efficient or scenic route, you choose a route that will bring you and your audience to the destination changed. Simple or profound, the change must have meaning" (p. 45). Well-told stories have the potential to transform the listener or receiver of the story; in other words, the stories help individuals become different and perhaps better people in the end.

Stories can build intimacy between the storyteller and the audience (Sinclair, 2005), thus stories can assist in developing better relationships. While both oral and written stories are high in social presence, spoken stories are higher in medium richness since they deliver cues through the storyteller's body language. As a result, stories delivered face-to-face are more effective than stories in written form. Further, feedback may occur with spoken stories, which does not occur with written stories (Sinclair, 2005).

Stories in Various Contexts

Stories in Education. Stories are experiencing a resurgence in educational circles. Flottemesch (2013) examined digital storytelling in intergenerational relationships. The research results indicated that digital storytelling enhanced relationships across the generations. Storytelling may now be delivered through a digital format such as movie-door-2-door.com (MD2D). For example, this platform has been used to reinforce concepts in an accounting course to create multiple episodes of a story about a business startup of recent business school graduates (Suwandy, Pan, & Seow, 2013).

Case studies, frequently used in education, may be considered a story form. Grosse (2012) commented on the benefits of using case studies in international management courses. "The story format is familiar to both student and professor, adding to the appeal of cases for teaching about global leaders and how they manage people from diverse cultures" (p. 81). Further, "intercultural management cases often make reference to the cultural competence and communication skills of the leader and others in the

company” (p. 81). Moreover, such case studies typically contain an international management dilemma, which can engage students in conversation and reflection about understanding and managing differences in culture (Grosse, 2012).

Grosse (2012) identified Aristotelian elements of stories that help students analyze and learn from international management cases. Peripeteia refers to the turning point in a story and was first used by Aristotle to describe a sudden course of events or of a reversal of circumstances such as moving from wealth to poverty or moving from poverty to wealth. Anagnorisis refers to moving from unknowing to knowing, which may accompany the turning point or peripeteia. Aristotle coined the term to refer to a moment in a drama when a character recognizes her or his true identity or nature of the identity or nature of another. Table 1 presents these terms and examples from case studies that illustrate these elements.

Table 1

Prominent Story Concepts^a

Concept	Example
Peripeteia	An expatriate manager loses his or her temper and insults the local Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by hanging up the phone when the CEO calls at home on a weekend morning to discuss a matter that the manager deems insignificant.
Anagnorisis	The expatriate manager realizes that he or she needs to cultivate a better working relationship with the local CEO to carry out his or her job. As a result of this anagnorisis, the manager attempts to develop mutual understanding and to bridge differences with the manager.

^aAdapted from Gertsen and Soderberg (2011, p. 804).

Stories and Management. Storytelling has been in vogue in management for the past 20 years with a plethora of conferences, workshops, books, and TED (Technology, Education, and Design) speeches about the topic (Buchanan, 2013). More specifically, the role of effective storytelling in leadership has been examined by several researchers (Auvinen, Lamsa, Sintonen, & Takala, 2013; Cayla & Arnold, 2013; Denning, 2011; Muir, 2007; Weischer, Weibler, & Petersen, 2013; & Yang, 2013). Denning (2011) emphasized using stories to lead others: (a) to ignite interest and action, (b) to work cohesively to attain goals, and (c) to navigate the changes necessary to advance into the future.

Stories and Marketing. With an emphasis on branding in the marketing function, stories are evident during retail sales encounters (Gilliam & Zablah, 2013). Most people are entranced by a good story (Buchanan, 2013; Knight, 2013) and are eager to learn how the story ends. Understanding the role of storytelling in effective branding assists students in creating an effective job search campaign since telling their story clearly and powerfully through pre-employment documents, such as electronic portfolios or eportfolios and in the employment interview process, is a vital skill that enhances employability.

Stories and the Job Search. Good storytelling techniques are important during the job search. Two aspects of the job search that require powerful storytelling skills are eportfolios and employment interviewing.

Brammer (2013) recommended using eportfolios to tell personal stories that could provide evidence of accomplishments for the job search process. Typically, eportfolios include artifacts of a student's work such as assignments or projects. In addition, a current resume and recommendation letters or letters of commendation may be added.

Baker (2013) recommended the use of stories during the opening stage of a presentation to engage the audience, commenting, "Select short stories that capture attention and emotion and that clearly drive home your key point. Stories hold our attention because we want to know how the story ends" (p. 187). Interviews may be considered a type of presentation that requires the communicating of one's best self.

Job candidates are often instructed to tell their story during employee interviews to increase their chances of obtaining a job offer. For example, Baker (2013) advised using the PAR (Problem, Action, and Results) strategy to present stories about prized attributes during employment interviews.

Consider developing a story for all the areas that might be covered in a job interview, such as your ability to work in a group, your presentation skills, your computer skills, your greatest achievement in life, your greatest challenge in life . . . Begin with the problem or situation, tell what action you took, and tell the results (p. 88).

The PAR stories should be carefully thought through, cohesively and succinctly organized, and practiced so that they are delivered confidently and effectively in a conversational manner so they sound natural. Creating an outline of the key points will help to avoid sounding stilted.

Instructional Activities for Understanding the Role of Stories in Culture

The following activities may be used in business courses to encourage the understanding and application of cultural knowledge as presented through stories available in different genres.

1. Ask students to select a story from a culture assigned by the instructor. Stories representative of many cultures may be located at www.wordoftales.com, or students can be encouraged to locate their own stories. (Be cautious about selecting stories. While the stories are representative of the culture and its wisdom, some of the stories are not politically correct and may contain stereotypes.) Ask students to identify the type of story (parable, fairy tale, folklore, and so on), the origin of the story and its history, and the cultural wisdom transmitted by the story. Then ask students to retell the story using modern business language. Being able to identify the cultural wisdom communicated by the story assists students in developing cultural competence. The retelling of the story using modern business language aids in processing the story and develops the ability to summarize, paraphrase, and communicate to a different audience.

In addition to receiving feedback from the instructor about the use of modern business language, an instructor developed rubric could be used to evaluate the identification of the type of story, the origin of the story, and the moral or cultural wisdom transmitted through the story.

A variation of this activity could involve using the story selected for Activity No. 1 to reinforce knowledge of cultural dimensions. Ask students to classify the cultural dimensions revealed through the story such as high or low context, individualism or collectivism, short-term or long-term orientation, formality or informality, and monochronic or polychronic time orientation. The correctness of student classifications of the cultural dimensions can be used to evaluate the activity.

2. Select a free international management case (refer to the Case Centre at <http://www.thecasecentre.com> for select cases, some of which may require a fee) and ask students to identify the concepts of peripeteia (story turning point) and anagnorisis (knowledge learned) revealed in the story. Refer students to Table 1 for examples. If time permits, request that students engage in role plays, assuming the role of the expatriate manager and the CEO to illustrate both peripeteia and anagnorisis. The examples in Table 1 may also be used to address workplace readiness skills such as being able to resolve conflict with others, use of time, and diversity awareness.
3. Relate the following scenario to students. “You are being interviewed for a position that requires knowledge of various cultures. Prepare a short story that you could tell during the interview to provide evidence of your intercultural competence.” Ask students to record the story using software such as YouSeeU or on a smartphone. The recorded story could become part of an eportfolio since it emphasizes intercultural competence and experiences. The story

could be evaluated by peers to determine its effectiveness not only in content but also in terms of delivery aspects such as volume, rate of speech, use of vocal variety, and absence of verbal fillers such as “uh,” “er,” “um,” “you know,” “okay,” and “you guys”.

4. Ask students to read the Chief Executive Officer’s (CEO’s) letter of an international firm that is a preamble to an organization’s annual report. In a team, have students identify the cultural story that is being presented. How is that story reflected on the organization’s website? Also, students can analyze the letter to determine the specific cultural dimensions revealed in the message. The correctness of the identified cultural dimensions can be used to evaluate the activity.
5. Ask students to form groups of three to discuss how traditional stories of a culture might be used to market products. For example, the products associated with the Wizard of Oz story are known to sell well. In particular, products celebrating a memorable event, such as the 75th anniversary of the Wizard of Oz movie, are bestsellers. Students might evaluate product ads to determine the type of story used as well as its effectiveness.
6. Request that students investigate how stories are often used in organizations to recount history. As such, these stories may be thought of as part of the institutional memory. Ask students to share stories that they remember from organizations for which they have worked. Then have students analyze the influence of those stories on employees and how and to what extent the stories reflect(ed) the organization’s culture. This activity assists students in distinguishing between the aspirational or desired culture of the organization and the actual organizational culture. Ideally, these two cultures would be the same; however, in actuality they may differ. The identification of the aspirational and desired culture can be analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the activity.
7. Request that students create a six-word memoir. The six-word memoir was begun by the storytelling magazine, *Smith Magazine*, and is used by instructors, especially in writing intensive courses such as business communication, to assist students in writing directly (Grossman, 2010). The memoirs are described as “a simple creative way to get to the essence of anything—from breaking the news of the day to your own life and the way you live it” (SixWords, 2013, n.p.). Examples of six-word memoirs include “Today I can make a difference,” and “Graduating soon, need a job abroad.” The purpose of this activity is twofold: first, to practice writing concisely, and second, to use the created memoir as the theme of a story they create. A variation of this assignment could ask students to write a six-word memoir that describes a particular culture. Then the created six-word memoir can be used as the basis for a longer description of the selected culture.

8. Ask students to create a PAR story in anticipation of a job interview. The PAR story should illustrate the greatest accomplishment or the most difficult intercultural obstacle or challenge the student has overcome. Once the PAR story has been outlined, students should practice telling their individual stories until their delivery is natural and poised. Then students may present their stories to the class. This activity encourages students to use a structured approach to presenting stories during interviews. This structured approach can be used to relate stories in other situations. A variation of this activity could require students to use YouSeeU or a smartphone to record the PAR story, which could then be evaluated by members of the international business advisory board using an instructor-developed rubric.

Most of these activities can be evaluated by an instructor-developed rubric. Some of the activities lend themselves to both peer and instructor evaluation. For example, the recordings described in Activities 3 and 8 could be uploaded to a learning management system such as Moodle for peer evaluation using a rubric.

Summary

Stories are powerful in their ability to inspire and instruct. Cultural values and history have been distributed through the oral tradition since beginning times. Mastering the art of telling a story is a critical skill for business students to develop their ability to compete in the global job market. Further, being able to analyze stories from various cultures based upon cultural dimensions assists students in adding to their intercultural and international business acumen. Engaging in the instructional activities presented in this article will encourage students to develop intercultural competence skills.

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