

Chapter 5

Anticipating Competence Development With Open Textbooks: The Case of Liquid Skills

ABSTRACT

Today's workplace is showing that global quality of learning embodied development of hard skills and soft skills. The hard skills are specific tangible abilities such as reading, communication, leadership, flexibility, motivation, persuasion, and problem solving. Soft skills are less tangible because they refer to personality traits, social graces, and personal habits that are used in relationships with other people. Development of soft skills in an open learning environment involves motivation, mind, and body movement. OER has the power to transform education. The aim of this chapter is to explore issues of using and collaborative creation of open textbooks and the pedagogy of hard and soft skills development. After summarizing the idea of hard and soft skills development, the author suggests new study topics that may promote an interesting line of future research in the area of frontier pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

Data, intelligent machines, global events and initiatives change our lives. “Formal learning structures are eroding. We want to learn at any time, in any way, at any age and we want new skills fast” (Future Foundation, 2015). Nowadays, learning becomes a lifelong pursuit of each individual. Education

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systems fully embraced openness and become global. The open textbook has the power to move mindsets from one of passivity to one that values high interactive engagement for learning. This statement needs to be fully explored because the problem of skills development is more actual than ever.

In “Ljubljana OER Action Plan 2017” is noted that OER’s transformative potential going forward – reinforced by the expansion of ICT and broadband infrastructure – broadens horizons for knowledge sharing and collaboration among educators, institutions, and countries. If used effectively and supported by sound pedagogical practices, OER allows for the possibility to dramatically increase access to education through ICT, opening up opportunities to create and share a wider array of educational resources to accommodate a greater diversity of educator and learner needs. Increased online access to OER further promotes individualized study, which, when coupled with social networking and collaborative learning, fosters opportunities for pedagogical innovation and knowledge creation.

This chapter is focused on the investigation of pedagogical theory and practice. The initial statement is: pedagogy aims to investigate new models of society and education. But, at the core of these models are *data* (i.e. metadata, Big Data, Open Data), *processes* (i.e. cognitive, affective, metacognitive, critical thinking, emotional, appreciative etc.), *mechanisms* (i.e. cognitive, affective, metacognitive, appreciative etc.) and *objects* (i.e. learning objects, physical objects etc.), *systems* (i.e. open, closed, blended) and *environments* (i.e. digital, virtual, open, global, local etc.). These specific features of the actual educational systems are more different than is written in the classical books of pedagogy.

The first clear distinction between hard skills and soft skills was made by Robles (2012, p.453). In his opinion, hard skills refer to technical expertise and knowledge required for a job. Soft skills refer to interpersonal qualities or personal attributes (i.e. integrity, communication, courtesy, responsibility, social skills, positive attitude, professionalism, flexibility, teamwork, and work ethic). For today and future workplaces, both hard skills and soft skills are crucial. Let us consider that “architecture” of competence is composed of static and dynamic components. The static component may be equated with hard skills and the dynamic component – with soft skills. Hard skills are static technical skills and soft skills – are dynamic interpersonal skills and values. Liquid skills represent a combination of hard and soft skills that ensure the rapid adaptivity to challenges.

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