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ENTEP DIDACTIC MANUAL

Didactic Manual Development Group

Programme and Partner Institutions involved in the development of Didactic Manual:
Ural State University of Economics, Russia
Technical University of Dresden
Penza State University
Institute of Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Problems

Led by Elena Guseletova, Ural State University of Economics, Russia

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1. Introduction

Advanced pedagogical approaches and innovative methodologies are presented in the way of the Didactic Manual. It gives an overview of the most important types of didactic teaching strategies and their genesis as well as presents possible subject-specific applications of these strategies. It also introduces the PCI teaching staff to the contemporary teaching practice and to the core systemic principles of the Pedagogical framework. The Manual offers a comprehensive set of professional guidelines and teaching tools for teacher training providers and leaders and gives an opportunity to teachers to select from a range of contemporary teaching strategies in both online and face-to-face contexts, including empirical strategy, problem-solving strategy, modelling strategy or other ones, depending on the teaching objectives.

The success of teaching-learning is defined by the mutual interaction of a number of factors, one of the most important being the didactic strategy employed by the teacher, which should fit one of the Bologna cycles or levels (BA, MA or PhD).

2. Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and Dublin Descriptors

As a result of the push generated by policies produced by the Bologna Process a framework was created to be of use for qualifications recognition and which allowed for a dialogue between academic and professional systems in various countries.

The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is based on an intergovernmental agreement within the Bologna Process. The Framework's aim is to organize national higher education qualifications into an overarching European-wide qualifications framework. Within this Framework, qualifications are defined according to levels of complexity and difficulty. Generic descriptors of the requisite learning outcomes at each level have been defined by expert working groups within the Bologna Process. These descriptors, called Dublin Descriptors, are broadly applicable in all national contexts.

The Dublin Descriptors are the cycle descriptors (or "level descriptors") presented in 2003 and adopted in 2005 as the Qualifications Framework of the EHEA. They offer generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with awards that represent the end of each of a Bologna cycle or level. The descriptors are phrased in terms of competence levels, not learning outcomes, and they enable to distinguish in a broad and general manner between the different cycles. A level descriptor includes the following five components:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Applying knowledge and understanding
- Making judgments
- Communication
- Lifelong learning skills

The overarching Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA derives its distinctive purposes from the objectives expressed through the Bologna Process: international transparency, recognition and mobility. International recognition of qualifications builds on transparency. The overarching Qualification Framework provides a common understanding of the outcomes of a programme as represented by the qualification (diploma). This contrasts with a mere assertion of comparability. The overarching Qualification Framework greatly enhances the usefulness of qualifications across the EHEA.

The core element of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) is a set of eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do — their 'learning outcomes' — regardless of the system where a particular qualification was acquired. The EQF focuses on learning outcomes: what a person holding a particular qualification actually knows and is able to do. This approach is intended:

- to support a better match between the needs of the labour market (for knowledge, skills and competences) and education and training provision
- to facilitate the validation of non-formal and informal learning
- to facilitate the transfer and use of qualifications across different countries and education and training systems.

The challenge to be faced by the EQF is by no means simple: on the one hand, each system must maintain its own structure, whereas on the other hand, it has to link with a single reference framework. Furthermore, inasmuch as the EQF wishes to include all the existing qualifications in a perspective of lifelong and lifewide learning – from education and professional training to higher education, and from basic education to adult level – the framework is structured in 8 reference levels, from basic qualifications (such as primary school) to more advanced (such as PhD). Each level is determined by a series of descriptors which indicate the learning outcomes of the qualifications attributable to that level, in terms of knowledge, competences and ability which the holder of the qualification must have acquired, independently of the system or the modality with which the qualification has been obtained (formal, non-formal or informal study path).The EQF reference levels shift, therefore, the attention from a traditional approach – based on standardized programmes and courses – to a structure linked to learning outcomes.

It should be noted that the EQF does not intend to substitute any national education and training system, but may be a tool – and as such remain – to facilitate cooperation between the different countries. It is indeed true that every country can create its own national qualifications framework on a number of levels differing from that of the EQF, but which will then be linked – referentially – to the European framework. The countries are encouraged to elaborate a framework of comparable and compatible qualifications for their higher education systems, which should seek to describe qualifications in terms of **workload, level, learning outcomes, competences and profile**.

The last three EQF levels – levels 6, 7 and 8 respectively – have been made compatible to the three cycles – the first, second and third cycles respectively – of the European

Higher Education Area Qualification Framework of the Bologna Process: the qualifications belonging to such cycles/levels are thus compatible between themselves on the basis of common descriptors – the EQF learning results (learning outcomes) on one side, and the Dublin Descriptors for the Bologna Process on the other side. Qualification descriptors are generic statements of the outcomes of study (learning outcomes). They provide clear points of reference that describe the main outcomes of a qualification often with reference to national levels. Qualification is any degree, diploma or other certificate issued by a competent authority attesting that particular learning outcomes have been achieved, normally following the successful completion of a recognized higher education programme of study.

Degree structure of the European Higher Education Area is organized in three sequential levels or cycles: the so-called Bachelor-Master-Doctor system.

First cycle - Bachelor's level

This cycle typically includes 180-240 ECTS credits

Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle (e.g. Bachelor's degrees) are awarded to students who:

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study;
- can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;
- have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues;
- can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.

The first cycle (Bachelor's degrees) of the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area refers to level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework.

Second cycle - Master's level

This cycle typically includes 90-120 ECTS credits.

Qualifications that signify completion of the second cycle (Master's degrees) are awarded to students who:

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with the first cycle (Bachelor’s degree), and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;

- can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
- have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
- can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
- have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.

The second cycle (Master's degrees) of the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area refers to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework.

Third cycle - PhD

A typical amount of credits is not prescribed for this cycle

Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:

- have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;
- have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
- have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
- are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
- can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
- can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.

The third cycle (e.g. PhD or Doctoral degrees) of the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area refers to level 8 of the European Qualifications Framework.

3. Comparison: Program Goals, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

3.1 Programme Goals and Objectives

When designing an educational programme of the first or second cycle one should start from formulating Programme goals and objectives.

Goals are broad, general statements of what the programme or course intends to accomplish. They basically represent broad definitions of student competences. Goals describe broad learning outcomes and concepts (what you want students to learn) expressed in general terms. Goals should provide a framework for determining the more

specific educational objectives of a programme, and should be consistent with the mission of the programme and the mission of the institution. A single goal may have many specific subordinate learning objectives.

Goals and *Objectives* are similar in that they describe the intended purposes and expected results of teaching activities and establish the foundation for assessment. *Goals* are statements about general aims or purposes of education that are broad, long-range intended outcomes and concepts; e.g., "clear communication", "problem-solving skills", etc. *Objectives* are brief, clear statements that describe the desired learning outcomes of instruction; i.e., the specific skills, values, and attitudes students should exhibit that reflect the broader goals. Course objectives describe what a teacher will cover in a course. They are generally less broad than goals and broader than student learning outcomes.

There are three types of learning objectives, which reflect different aspects of student learning:

- *Cognitive* objectives: "*What do you want your graduates to know?*"
- *Affective* objectives: "*What do you want your graduates to think or care about?*"
- *Behavioral* Objectives: "*What do you want your graduates to be able to do?*"

Objectives can also reflect different levels of learning:

- Mastery objectives are typically concerned with the minimum performance essentials – those learning tasks/skills that must be mastered before moving on to the next level of instruction.
- Developmental objectives are concerned with more complex learning outcomes – those learning tasks on which students can be expected to demonstrate varying degrees of progress.
- Instructional objectives describe in detail the behaviors that students will be able to perform at the conclusion of a unit of instruction such as a class, and the conditions and criteria which determine the acceptable level of performance.

What are the differences between Goals and Objectives? Both goals and objectives use the language of outcomes – the characteristic, which distinguishes goals from objectives is the level of specificity. Goals express intended outcomes in *general* terms and objectives express them in *specific* terms.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

The key role of learning outcomes in achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process has been emphasized in the Bologna Process Stocktaking Report (Rauhvargers et al, 2009).

"*The endorsement of learning outcomes by the Ministers was a significant development, since the 2007 stocktaking report identified implementation of learning outcomes as a precondition for achieving many of the goals of the Bologna Process. It remains equally true that learning outcomes are central to the development of qualifications frameworks, systems for credit transfer and accumulation, the diploma supplement, recognition of qualifications, prior learning and quality assurance and provision of flexible learning paths as part of the lifelong learning continuum. In effect, the success of the Bologna Process depends on the comprehensive implementation of a learning outcomes approach in*

higher education. Learning outcomes are used in the Dublin descriptors, which are the basis of the three-cycle degree system. They also feature in the overarching framework of qualifications in the EHEA with which national frameworks are being aligned. They are an essential ingredient in quality assurance systems and in ECTS-compliant procedures for credit accumulation and transfer. They make transparency and recognition of qualifications more easily manageable. In short, learning outcomes encapsulate a learner-centred approach and shift the focus in higher education away from the traditional teacher-centred or institution-centred perspective." Rauhvargers et al, p. 24 - 25, 2009

Programme learning outcomes describe the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that it is intended that graduates of the programme will be able to demonstrate. The rules for writing learning outcomes for programmes are the same as those for writing learning outcomes for modules. The general guidance is that there should be six to ten learning outcomes for a programme or module and that only the minimum number of outcomes considered essential should be included.

When writing learning outcomes it is helpful to make use of *Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. This classification or categorisation of levels of thinking behaviour provides a ready-made structure and list of verbs to assist in writing learning outcomes. Most learning outcomes describe evidence of learning in areas like 1 knowledge, 2 comprehension, 3 application, 4 analysis, 5 synthesis and 6 evaluation. This area is known as the *cognitive domain*. The other two main domains are the *affective domain* (attitudes, feelings, values) and the *psychomotor domain* (physical skills) and within each of these domains he recognised that there was an ascending order of complexity. His work is most advanced in the cognitive domain where he drew up a classification (or taxonomy) of thinking behaviours from the simple recall of facts up to the process of analysis and evaluation. The taxonomy provides a framework in which one can build upon prior learning to develop more complex levels of understanding. Bloom's taxonomy was not simply a classification – it was an effort by him to arrange the various thinking processes in a hierarchy. In this hierarchy, each level depends on the student's ability to perform at the level or levels that are below it. For example, for a student to apply knowledge (stage 3) he or she would need to have both the necessary information (stage 1) and understanding of this information (stage 2).

Learning Outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that learners have achieved, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program. Learning Outcomes identify and describe in detail what the *learner will know and be able to do* by the end of a course or program – the essential and enduring knowledge, abilities (skills) and attitudes (values, dispositions) that constitute the integrated learning needed by a graduate of a course or programme.

When writing learning outcomes, it is helpful to use active verbs that are measurable or that describe an observable action. Such verbs help teachers (and students) avoid misinterpretation. The best outcomes will include a description of the conditions ("when given x, you will be able to…") and the acceptable performance level. Learning outcomes state:

- the performance the learner will be able to demonstrate;
- under what conditions the learner is to perform;

- the criteria for measurement.

Learning outcome statements must be concise, specific, observable, and measurable. Learning outcomes normally start with high level verbs: reflect, hypothesize, solve, generate, analyze, etc.

The learning outcomes approach to education means basing programme and curriculum design, content, delivery, and assessment on an analysis of the integrated knowledge, skills and values needed by both students and society. In this learning outcomes-based approach to education, the ability to demonstrate learning is the key point.

The importance of learning outcomes related to quality assurance has been confirmed in the Bucharest Communique where the consolidation of the EHEA is linked explicitly to the meaningful implementation of learning outcomes under various perspectives, including quality assurance. More precisely the Communique says: "The development, understanding and practical use of learning outcomes is crucial to the success of ECTS, the Diploma Supplement, recognition, qualifications frameworks and quality assurance – all of which are interdependent".

When formulating learning outcomes it is necessary to be sure that the programme's intended learning outcomes align with the relevant qualifications framework (i.e. the right level) and correlate with international requirements of the discipline and, where relevant, the professional field (i.e. content and orientation); teaching and learning (i.e. curriculum, staff, services and facilities) should ensure that students are able to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

3.3 The differences between Goals, Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Much confusion exists about the definition of goals, objectives, and learning outcomes. Part of the confusion results from the fact that the terms are often conflated, even in the literature. The majority of accrediting agencies and national Ministries of Education now require that teachers include learning outcomes on all course outlines and in their syllabi, so it's important to understand the differences in these terms.

Objectives are intended results or consequences of instruction, curricula, programmes, or activities. *Outcomes* are achieved results or consequences of what was learned; i.e., evidence that learning took place. Objectives are focused on specific types of performances that students are expected to demonstrate at the end of instruction. Objectives are often written more in terms of teaching intentions and typically indicate the subject content that the teacher(s) intends to cover. Learning outcomes, on the other hand, are more student-centered and describe what it is that the learner should learn to be able to perform effectively.

An effective set of learning outcomes statements informs and guides both the instructor and the students:

For teaching staff: It informs:

- the content of teaching
- the teaching strategies the teacher will use
- the sorts of learning activities/tasks the teacher sets for the students

- appropriate assessment tasks
- course evaluation.

For students: The set of learning outcomes provides them with:

- a solid framework to guide their studies and assist them to prepare for their assessment
- a point of articulation with graduate attributes at course and/or university (i.e. generic) level.

Learning Outcome statements may be broken down into three main components:

- an *action* word that identifies the performance to be demonstrated;
- a *learning statement* that specifies what learning will be demonstrated in the performance;
- a broad statement of the *criterion* or standard for acceptable performance.

3.4 Translating Course Goals into Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

- Assessment can measure the extent to which course goals have been achieved, but only if those goals are measurable. For the most part, course goals are too broad or too abstract to measure directly. Once goals have been formalized, the next step is to translate the often abstract language of course goals into a set of concrete *measurable student learning outcomes*.
- Measurable student learning outcomes are specific, demonstrable characteristics – knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, interests – that will allow us to evaluate the extent to which course goals have been met and learning outcomes achieved.

The same objective may be achieved in a variety of ways during the process of teaching-learning. The various teaching strategies lead to different learning results, and the different educational contents can be processed through different learning paths and with varying efficiency. As long as the successful meeting of educational objectives is at stake, disciplinary methodology and didactics cannot ignore, which teaching-learning paths and methods lead to the predefined objectives. Teaching-learning strategy is one of the most fundamental methodological categories, which has been defined with the appearance of specialisations in the field of didactics and the emergence of didactic and disciplinary research within the pedagogical scientific framework.

4. Contemporary Concepts of Teaching-Learning Process

4.1 Learning Outcomes and Constructive Alignment

One of the essential points to consider when planning and designing a degree programme is that the learning outcomes, the teaching and learning activities and the assessment must all be linked. The linking of these three areas is commonly referred to as constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003; Biggs, 2005; Morss and Murray, 2005). Biggs points out that in a good teaching system, the method of teaching, learning activities and assessment technique are all coordinated to support student learning. When there is alignment between what we want, how we teach and how we assess, teaching is likely to be much more effective than when it is not aligned)…Biggs 2003a.

It is clear from the above that there are three basic areas involved in the constructive alignment of any module: 1. Clearly defining the learning outcomes that must be achieved before the end of the programme. 2. Designing of a curriculum and selecting teaching and learning strategies and methods that are likely to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes. 3. Assessing the extent to which a student has achieved the learning outcome and checking to see how well the achieved outcomes match with what was intended.

Statements of intended learning outcomes for each course of study are informed by the overall aims of an institution of higher education, program, subject or course. They are informed and should align with the generic skills and attributes required of graduates and their context within the field of study.

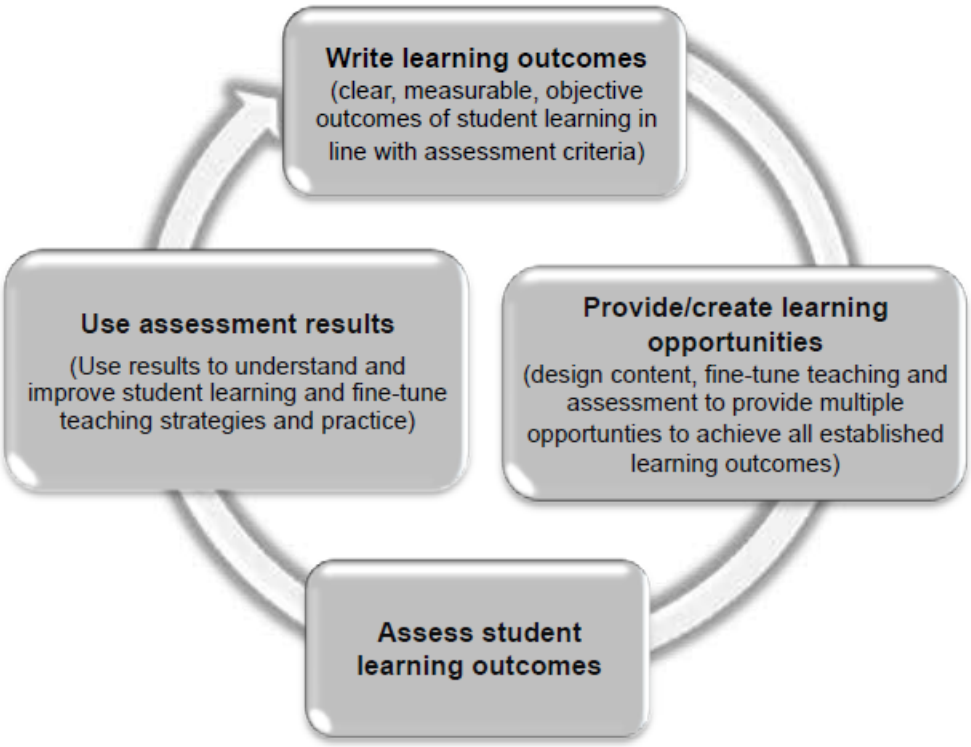
Standards or requirements for employment related to the field of study may inform the intended learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should relate to the assessment criteria and should be assessable. The clarity of learning outcomes not only impacts on student engagement, but also impacts on the perceived equity of assessments and student engagement in learning (on how students perceive assessment as being fair and equitable).

There is an intrinsic link between aims, teacher's goals, course content, learning experiences, teaching strategies and assessment. Teaching strategies are also designed in direct correlation to assessment processes. Course design and teaching should provide various opportunities to enable students to learn the knowledge and skills required to be successful in that course.

Constructive alignment reflects the shift to outcomes-based education. It facilitates the use of learning outcomes as an integral part of a cycle designed to secure an ongoing improvement of teaching and student experience and learning.

Therefore, it is important to design learning outcomes in alignment with assessment tasks and teaching strategies, and to create opportunities for students to use learning experiences to achieve measurable outcomes.

The graphical representation below shows how learning outcomes can be used in practice to fine-tune and enhance quality of teaching and learning. It presents a model of the cycle that can be used by policy makers, course designers and teaching practitioners for quality assurance, improvement of course design and teaching practice for student engagement in learning.



4.2 The Meaning of Teaching-Learning Strategy

The optimal paths and methods should be considered when exploring the question of strategies. We should think how the pre-specified objectives can be achieved: how knowledge can be obtained, how concepts can be shaped, how a knowledge system can be constructed, how the applicable knowledge can be moulded, how skills, proficiencies and abilities can be developed. When defining teaching-learning strategies, Sándor Nagy emphasizes that the student is able to construct his/her fundamental thinking-learning operations and arrives at a stage where s/he will be able to efficiently apply the same in different situations. Thus, the teaching-learning strategy becomes the student's learning strategy (Nagy, 1993, 46). **The strategy is such a complex system of methods, tools, organisational styles and forms aimed at achieving goals, which is based on a coherent theoretical basis and which has a particular syntax** (the definition and given order of executable steps) and is realized in a particular learning environment (Falus, 1998, 274). It is clear from the definition that while teaching content answers the questions "What shall we teach?" strategy reveals "How we should teach," yet it is not to be confused with the concept of method. For strategy does not refer to the organisation and realisation of a short educational moment, rather it is a long-term paradigmatic direction, perhaps covering several lessons. The paradigmatic nature means that strategies are always constructed according to the philosophical, logical or psychological theories of learning and knowing. Communication also raises the issue of paradigms, although it has to be clear that apart from the science logical paradigms, learning theory paradigms also play a crucial role when devising and processing the content for learning materials. The mutual relationship between the paradigms of the logic of science and theories of learning poses a separate problem which is primarily faced by course book writers and teachers organizing and realizing the process of teaching-learning. A strategy is a long-term definition of a general direction that encompasses design, supervision,

management as well as the system of the applied processes and their appropriate instructions. In general, the management and supervision of several areas of the economy and society presuppose the design, organisation, direction, monitoring and evaluation of the given activity, namely, the development of a comprehensive strategy considering the functioning and operation of the entire system. The strategies help uncover the effective ways and means of the functioning and operating of the educational process, which lead to the successful realization of the didactic activity. A teacher has to construct such teaching-learning models that are supported by well-defined learning theoretical paradigms and facilitate the processing of educational content in the interest of the predefined objectives. Thus, strategies are well-defined means of activity orientating the process of learning which, due to their internal logic, allow for the selection and construction of methods, tools, processes and organisational forms while represent a fundamental pedagogical approach (Ferenczi and Fodor, 1996, 82-84)

The right choice of the strategy together with a learner-centred approach can lead to impressive results in teaching communication. What does this mean? The learners collect, classify and evaluate the factual material, they may assume conceptualisation tasks, they repeat and classify the newly acquired knowledge in new task situations according to new perspectives, then apply and practice the same in particular situations and reflect on their own and others' activities. The teacher coordinates, supervises, assists, facilitates, complements the learners' activities as well as draws attention to particular points and evaluates their performance.

The use of case study methods, role playing, simulations, group discussions, research, presentations and other creative strategies makes the teaching/learning process more interesting and appealing to the students and develops their abilities.

The role of academics within faculties, schools and departments is to design the curriculum, the teaching methods and strategies, the pedagogy and the educational opportunities that intentionally promote these shared expectations. Most universities have or are developing a Graduate Profile or statements of Graduate Attributes. A learning outcomes approach to curriculum development is still relatively new and many academics initially find it difficult to express learning outcomes in a manner that is meaningful to both staff and students.

4.3 The Concept of Learning Outcomes and the Concept of Competence

The concept of learning outcomes is completely independent from the concept of competence. Achieving the learning outcomes of a programme or module is a step on the way to becoming competent (in the general sense of the word). Competence is a dynamic combination of attributes, abilities and attitudes. Fostering competences is the objective of educational programmes. Competences are formed in various course units and assessed at different stages. They may be divided in subject-area related competences (specific to a field of study) and generic competences (common to any degree course).

The European Qualification Framework distinguishes knowledge, skills and competence. It uses the following definition: "competence means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. In the context of the European Qualifications Framework, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy". In this case the term competence is understood in a more limited way, as the capacity to transfer knowledge into practice. (ECTS, 2009)

4.4 A Graduate Profile Outline

A Graduate Profile lays out explicitly the shared expectations for student learning at both the institutional and the programme levels. The Profile is therefore a guiding document for more specific disciplinary-based learning outcome statements and curriculum design.

Specialist Knowledge

- Mastery of a body of knowledge, including understanding of broad conceptual and theoretical elements, in the major fields of study.
- Understanding and appreciation of current issues and debates in the major fields of knowledge studied.
- Understanding and appreciation of the philosophical bases, methodologies and characteristics of scholarship, research and creative work.

General Intellectual Skills and Capacities

- Capacity for critical, conceptual and reflective thinking.
- Intellectual openness and curiosity.
- Capacity for creativity and originality.
- Intellectual integrity, respect for truth and for the ethics of research and scholarly activity.
- Ability to undertake numerical calculations and understand quantitative information.
- Ability to make appropriate use of advanced information and communication technologies.

Personal Qualities

- Love and enjoyment of ideas, discovery and learning.
- Ability to work independently and in collaboration with others.
- Self-discipline and ability to plan and achieve personal and professional goals.
- Ability to be leaders in their communities, and willingness to engage in constructive public discourse and to accept social and civic responsibilities.
- Respect for the values of other individuals and groups, and appreciation of human and cultural diversity.

The following teaching methods will be used to develop a graduate profile and skills:

5. Contemporary Teaching Approaches

Competence-based approach in the system of higher education requires significant changes in the pedagogical support of the university curriculum, filling it with teaching methods which could provide the training of future specialists with the required comprehensive result. The traditional methods of the university educational process (lecture, explanation, exercise, etc.) are certainly important for professional development. However, their limitations are felt even more acutely at present when a complex phenomenon such as competence is formed. Thus, modern education strategy should focus on the student's independent activity, the organization of self-learning environments and experimental and practical training, where students have a choice of actions and can use initiative as well as flexible training programs, where students can work in a comfortable rhythm.

There are different teaching methods, which can be used to develop professional skills for students, among which the most appropriate ones are interactive methods of training, which encourage interest in the profession; promote the efficient acquisition of training materials; form patterns of conduct; provide high motivation, strength, knowledge, team spirit and freedom of expression; and most importantly, contribute to the complex competences of future specialists.

Thus, responsibility of a teacher is to provide some knowledge and appropriate methods for the students to learn, and provide opportunities for the students to enhance their abilities which are useful in the future.

Over the past years, the concept of Students Centered Learning (SCL) has become central in the policy discourse on higher education. Both at European level and in national plan for higher education and institutional strategies is expressed the need to implement it. In 2012, the importance of SCL and learning-outcomes based learning was reiterated in the Bucharest Ministerial Communiqué and the European Commission's Communication on Rethinking education. That same year, the Bologna Follow-Up Group developed its working agenda with a specific focus on improving the social dimension in education through *student-centeredness* in teaching.

5.1 Nine general principles inspiring Student Centred Teaching (SCT) :

1. *SCT requires an on-going Reflexive Process*

A SCT style cannot remain applicable in a context through time. Teachers, students and institutions need to steadily reflect on their teaching/learning process and infrastructural systems in order to continuously improve the learning experience of students and ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved in a way that stimulates learners' critical thinking and transferable skills.

2. *SCT does not have a "One-Size-Fits-All" Solution*

A key concept underlying SCT is the awareness that all HEIs institutions are different, all teachers are different and all students are different. All of them act in very diverse contexts and deal with different subject-disciplines. Therefore, SCT is a learning approach that requires learning support structures, which are appropriate to each given context, and teaching and learning styles appropriate to those undertaking them.

3. *Students have Different Learning Styles*

SCT recognises that students have different pedagogical needs. Some learn better through trial and error, others learn through practical experience. For some learners much is learned by reading literature, others need to debate and discuss theory in order to understand it.

4. *Students have Different Needs and Interests*

All students have needs and interest outside the classroom. Some are interested in cultural activities, others in sports or in representative organisations. Students can have children or can be faced with psychological conditions, illness or disability.

5. *Choice is Central to Effective Learning in SCT*

Students like to learn different things and hence any offer should involve an amount of free choice. Teaching/learning can be organised in liberal formats, such as at colleges of liberal arts or choice can be offered in a more traditional, disciplinary style.

6. Students have Different Experiences and Background Knowledge

Learning needs to be adapted to the life and personal prior learning experience (non-formal and informal learning) of the student. Personal experience can also be used to motivate students, for instance, by allowing students to share a personal story to illustrate a point.

7. Students should have Control over their Learning

Students need to be as active partners having a stake in the way that higher education functions. Engaging students themselves in how their learning should be shaped represents the best way to ensure that learning focuses more on students is by

8. SCT is about Enabling not Telling

When teachers impart facts and knowledge to students (telling), the initiative, preparation and content comes mainly from them. The SCT approach aims to give students greater responsibility enabling them to think critically, process, analyse, synthesise, criticise, apply, solve problems and make decision.

9. Learning needs Cooperation between Students and Staff

It is important that students and staff co-operate to develop a shared understanding both of the problems experienced in learning, as well as their problems as stakeholders within their given institution, jointly proposing solutions that might work for both groups. In the classroom, such cooperation will have a positive effect as the two groups increasingly come to consider each other as partners. Such a partnership is central to the philosophy of SCT, which considers learning as a co-construction of teachers and students. (Todorovski, Nordal, E., Isoki, T., 2015, pp. 5-7)

From the point of view of student-centred teaching, we are guided by what is best for the students. Making decisions regarding content organisation and teaching approaches is largely determined by the students' needs. Even assessment may be influenced or determined by the students. Students are the centre and the teacher acts as a coach and facilitator. In many respects, the goal of this type of teaching is the development of the students' cognitive abilities. Student-centred teaching leads to 'better retention, better transfer of knowledge to other situations, better motivation for further learning, and better problem solving abilities. Active participation by students helps them construct a better framework from which to generalise their knowledge. Guided by the concept of student-centred teaching, there are several contemporary teaching approaches or tools for the teachers to consider, such as case study, concept mapping and problem based learning in addition to traditional ones, like lectures, seminars, group work, etc.

5.2 Contemporary Teaching Methods or Tools

Lectures. In a lecture, the teacher addresses learners without interruption. This method is used for large classes. It allows the teacher to use the whole of the teaching time. This method has limitations because it does not foster learning. As a matter of fact, the learner's main task is to listen carefully. A student is a listener; a little active; a little

autonomous, since dependence is on what the teacher says and does. The opinions of the learner count very little.

In addition to University professors, practitioners from public authorities and NGOs will be invited to take these classes and deliver lectures based on their practical experience. In this case the learning outcomes would depend to a large extent on the level of engagement of the students, their involvement in the discussion of the issues under consideration in the follow up seminars.

Ten tactics for motivating students in your lectures:

1. Tell them about what's in it for them. Think of the behefits thez should derive from attending this particular lecture. How will it help them in the big picture? What will they take away with them, that they wouldn't have goy if they handn't attended? How will being present at this lecture make their future lives easier? Sometimes you'll have to work out how to respond to 'what's in it for me?' by thinking quite hard about what exactly your students should be getting out of the lecture. Sometimes, the intended learning outcomes will lend themselves to indentifying the benefits of being present.

2. Link each lecture forward to assesment. Most students are driven by assesment. If they know they will get marks for something in due course, they pay more attention to it. In fact, each lecture *should* link forward to assesment in one way or another – whether leading towards an exam question posibility or a coursework assignment. Assessment should link firmly so students' evidence of achivement of the intended learning outcomes, so you should be able to comment on the links when you talk about these outcomes at the beginning and end of each lecture.

3. Make lectures an active learning experience for your students. They will remember what they *do* in your lectures much better than what you tell them. Plan at least three things for them to do in any hour. Bring in variety – something to do on their own, something to do in little buzz groups, and some questions for them to answer – for example in an oral quizz.

4. Ring the changes. Don't have students doing the same sort of thing for too long in any lecture. Concentration spans are measured in minutes, not hours. Motivation is often inversely proportional to boredom. When students say „the time flew by“ you know you're winning, and they are more likely to look forward to your lectures.

5. Help students to *make* notes, not just *take* notes. Just coping things down from the screen – or from what you say – is a very passive business. Students can *take* notes without the subject really passing through their conscious minds. Get them to *make* notes, for example by giving them a couple of minutes now and then to make their own summaries of what you've been explaining to them, or to try out what they've learned on case-study examples or problems.

6. Make it worth their while being there. They should take away with them more than just a pristine handout. Their motivation will increase if they feel that they've actually achieved something during each lecture. Aim to allow students to make sense of consepts and ideas actually *during* the lecture, rather than hoping that they will go away and make sense of things in their own time.

7. Make best of the whole group being together. For example, use lectures to find out what questions students have, and to answer them. This is actually much more efficient

for you than explaining the same answers to different students at different times. It's also fairer, as those students who ask questions privately could otherwise become advantaged over those who don't. Use lectures to answer all the important questions, so that people who didn't even realise that they didn't yet know the answer to a question are also helped.

8. Don't pretend that every part of the subject is extremely interesting! All subject have their less-interesting bits. Admit to your students that certain parts are difficult – even tendious – but explain why they *need* to master these parts to be able to move on to more interesting and more important areas. Students' motivation increases sometimes when they realise that finding something tedious or difficult is not at all unexpected to you. It helps them to appreciate that you're on their side, helping them with their learning, not just expecting them to be enthusiastic about everything without questions.

9. Come to a definite conclusion towards the end of each lecture. Don't just stop when time runs out. Help students to feel that they're really achieved something in each lecture. Remind them of the intended learning outcomes that they haven't yet achieved – come back to these in future lectures. Some things need several attempts before they begin to make sense – let students know this is perfectly normal.

10. Smile! Help the students to feel that you are pleased to see them. If *you* look bored with the subject you're going to lecture on, that won't do anything for your students' motivation.

Modelling

These fundamental teaching strategies – observing others' examples – are a crucial element in the classroom. Unfortunately, teachers often overlook these teaching strategies as a core principle for helping their students learn. But when a teacher wants to pass on information and skills to someone else, it is essential to recognize how important sharing various kinds of models is.

Educational modeling can be defined as giving students a demonstration or example of a process or product that is representative of the skill or content they are expected to perform themselves. It's more than just giving a visual representation of content; rather, a model is a product or process students can imitate to develop their own skills and understanding.

There are numerous benefits for providing students with examples to supplement instruction. First, models help students see what it is that they're supposed to produce and what their own product should look like. When the general explanation of a task is combined with a concrete model of what their process or product should look like, students have a better image of their targeted outcome.

Also, models can help students see the relevance of the tasks they are asked to do. It might be difficult for students to understand before doing something what the point is, but a clear demonstration of what the outcome looks like will help them see how the individual tasks they're performing contribute to their growing set of skills and knowledge. The process of model creation can help teachers create more meaningful and coherent tasks.

Modeling is an effective teaching strategy for almost any skill teachers may want students to develop. Whether it is giving a sample speech, walking through the thought process for

solving a word problem, troubleshooting technology, discussing an idea, composing a story, or using a piece of lab equipment, “Showing” rather than just “Telling” students what to do will enhance their understanding.

When selecting models to use in the classroom, a teacher may draw from professional, student, or personal examples. Models are meant to be discussed and explained, so students can acquire an understanding of what about the model is or isn’t appropriate. Models are put into a form that students can study outside of the classroom when they’re doing their own work as well. Models, when used effectively, give students a target toward which to drive their efforts. The result, though, is that many other possibilities for processes and products are eliminated.

Models are great for helping students achieve a certain level of competence, but they also may constrain what would otherwise be unique student approaches. Models show the basics. Even the exceptional examples illustrate only certain elements. It would truly be unfortunate if, instead of students struggling with a task and producing a great, original piece of work, they all ended up producing work that looks exactly like the example. But on the other hand, models are for students who would struggle and fail, for students who need a guide, and for students who are learning about a particular element for the first time. Although we want to provide models to help students achieve, we must avoid habits with models that would expect all students’ work to look exactly the same and reduce their originality.

Cooperative Learning – Small Group Methods

Cooperative learning is the use of small groups to inspire students working together to maximize their own and each other's learning.

Small group methods include:

- Seminar
- Class based group work including group discussion
- Case study
- Simulation
- Workshop
- Concept mapping
- Problem-based learning (PBL)
- Think-Pair-Share
- Jigsaw-Teams

- **Seminar**

The aim of the seminar is an in-depth exploration of a specialized topic. It consists of periodic (usually weekly) meetings of small groups of learners (sometimes between 10 and 15) and a teacher who acts as an expert or a moderator. The learners are to read one or several texts on a specialized topic. They write what will be the subject of the meeting (in a report form), give it in advance to their peers (one week before, for example). The discussion will focus on the arguments and conclusions of the participants. These meetings allow an in-depth look at one topic at time. They develop in the learner abilities for synthesis, critical analysis and communication skills. In addition, this teaching method allows students to develop case analysis skills.

- **Class Based Group Work.** Students will be encouraged to perform time-limited group tasks. This will develop their ability to discuss and resolve issues as a group and will also allow for the use of particular methods such as brainstorming and role-playing.

Group discussion is one of the group work methods that allows the learner to talk about his/her experiences, and to share ideas. It develops in the learner abilities for listening, comprehension, synthesis and critical analysis. During group discussion the fluent learner can dominate the discussion. The teacher should possess the qualities of a good moderator to maximize interest in the use of such a method in learning. Group discussions will cover issues that have been raised in lectures and that have emerged during independent study.

- **Case Study**

The case study method is training by solving specific cases. The essence of this method is a collective analysis of a situation, finding a solution and a public defense of said solution. In the process of reviewing the cases, students gain the skills of teamwork, independent modelling of the solution, independent reasoning and defending their opinion. This method involves ambiguity in the solution of the presented problem, which creates a challenge for discussing the reasoning of proposed solutions and choosing the most appropriate one. Therefore, the result is not only knowledge but also professional skills and a well-formed personality and set of values. The case study is a written record of a hypothetical or real-life problem. The case study must 1) present the learner with situations that are very much related to the ones the learner knows or will know and 2) lead to decisions like those that will have to be made in real life. The case study can allow the learner to seek information necessary for the study of the case. The case which is viewed by the students, is usually taken from a real professional area and is supported by visual materials, statistical data, charts and graphs, descriptions of how it is viewed by different people, reports, data from the media, Internet resources, etc. i.e., the information that allows us to understand what is described in the case.

Real stories can make the learning experience more interesting. A story can make students passionate and motivated. Real stories can help students recognize the real world and know how the world runs. Case studies shift students away from passive absorption to active construction. The questions can stimulate students to think more deeply. It can help students to shift from surface learning to deep learning. This approach can foster in students the following skills: analytical; classification; application; summarizing; scientific judgment; and critical thinking skills.

The structure of the case has three parts: two for the student and one for the teacher. The subject section describes the situation and allows the students to characterize all of its circumstances; the information section reflects the details of the support upon which a final decision is made; and the methodical section, designed for teachers, determines the location of the case in the structure of the course, tasks for students and pedagogical support for solving the situation. The solution of the situations offered to the students involves a variety of analytical methods: problem-based, cause and effect, praxeological, axiological, situational, prognostic and other types of predictive analysis. The actions of students as part of the method are productive in the following succession: 1) familiarity with the situation, its content and features, 2) the allocation of the main problems, the factors and personalities that can really act, 3) offering solution concepts, 4) analysing the consequences of the decision and 5) selecting the optimal variant, predicting consequences, an indication of the potential problems, mechanisms, prevention and solutions. The activity of a teacher using this method includes two phases. The first

includes creating the case, formulating the questions for analysis and developing methodological software support materials for the students and their independent work. The second phase includes the classroom activities of the teacher in discussing the case, where he/she makes introductory and closing remarks, organizes discussion or presentation, supports a business atmosphere in the audience and acknowledges the contribution of students in the analysis of the situation. Thus, studying and analysing work experience based on real situations, students comprehensively enrich the knowledge and skills that undergird the professional world, demonstrating a productive effect on the formation of their professional competences.

A case study approach can be combined with lectures and seminars. It will make them more interesting, more attractive, and more challenging.

- **Simulation**

A simulation game attempts to copy various activities from "real life" in the form of a game for various purposes such as training, analysis, or prediction. Usually there are no strictly defined goals in the game, with players instead allowed to freely control a character. Well-known examples are business games, and role play simulation. Role play simulation is a learning method that depends on roleplaying. Learners take on the role profiles of specific characters or organisations in a contrived setting.

A role-playing game is a game in which the participants assume the roles of characters and collaboratively create stories. Participants determine the actions of their characters based on their characterisation, and the actions succeed or fail according to a formal system of rules and guidelines. Within the rules, they may improvise freely; their choices shape the direction and outcome of the games. Role play is designed primarily to build first person experience in a safe and supportive environment. Role play is widely acknowledged as a powerful teaching technique in face-to-face teaching and role play online is also powerful, with some added benefits.

Role play project is a teaching method where learning is effected via problem solving. At the first stage the teacher fixes the learning (research) problem, i.e., makes the problem situation a psychological one. At the second stage the students split into two competing groups and craft solutions to the problem. The third stage is a final meeting where students take roles and publicly defend the developed solutions (peer reviewed prior to defense).

Role play projects are most successful in practical classes as they involve no explanation of the new material or information exchange between the teacher and the students. Informational, research, creative and applied projects can be done within this format. Thus, the role play project method provides high activity for teaching courses and is more productive because design skills are developed and the specialists will be more flexible and efficient in solving complex professional tasks in the future.

Role play simulation aims to revive the ease and joy of experiential learning.

Role play simulation models human interactions (allowing the players to role play) in a constructed environment by:

- creating an artificial social structure (or simulating some known social structure);
- enforcing the social structure;
- providing plausible scenarios for players to respond, react and enrole to.

Role-playing may also refer to role training where students rehearse situations in preparation for a future performance and to improve their abilities within a future role. The most common examples are occupational training role-plays and educational role-play exercises.

From three basic types of strategic, planning, and learning exercises: games, simulations, and case studies, a number of hybrids may be considered, including simulation games that are used as case studies.

- **Action Learning**

The method of action learning has recently become one of the promising areas of modern education, as it provides the organization of self-learning environments. This teaching method allows students to effectively solve problems of practice-focused training. This method is implemented in group work among students. During the joint work on the problem (which is practice focused), students develop their own way to a comprehensive solution, justify that solution and conduct a presentation of their proposals. A group of teachers discusses the results of the public defense and names the winner, which makes evaluation more objective. If this method is used by students during the period of work experience, the problems to be solved may be taken from a particular practice, which enhances the teaching potential of the method and the results obtained in the course of its implementation. Thus, learning by doing has a positive influence on the components of professional competence through practical skills which develop the organization of joint activities and taking responsibility for one's work.

- **Workshop**

A workshop is an educational seminar or series of meetings emphasizing interaction and exchange of information among a usually small number of participants. It is a brief intensive course or educational program for a relatively small group of students that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field, and which is often aimed at problem solving. Small group meets to explore some subject, develop a skill or technique or carry out a creative project.

- **Training**

Training is a teaching method that aims at developing skills and knowledge in any field by performing sequential tasks, activities or games. This method al-lows the teacher to give the participants missing in-formation and allows students to form skills of professional and appropriate behaviour in the performance of professional tasks. The advantage of training is that it ensures the active involvement of all students in the process of training. Training can provide preparation for professional communication and collaboration, execution of organizational or supervisory functions, etc. Training is usually done in several stages.

Introduction. This stage sets the tone for future work, creating a relaxed, democratic atmosphere. It is held in any form or by any means. The teacher informs the students of his/her expectations and hopes regarding the upcoming activity.

Discover. This step is a necessary procedure for the first class of any training. It activates the group for engaging in interaction and developing communication skills. It should be done even if the students know each other already. Through games such as “interview”,

“Know Me” and “exchange of business cards”, participants can see a new side of and feel concern for each other.

Expectations of the participants. Participants' expectations are clarified for example, “in a circle” with the help of the training issues that they meet at the time. Addressing the needs of the student not only directs their interest but is also an important benchmark for the activities of the teacher.

Determination of the order of the training. When all of the participants talk or write about their expectations, the teacher always tells them the training procedure, regardless of how long it lasts.

Adoption of the rules of the group (the “agreement”). For the participants to feel responsible for their training from the very beginning it is recommended that they accept the rules of the training or make an “agreement”. The articles of the agreement are usually recorded: e.g., we do not come late, speak out of turn, listen to off-topic conversation, etc. Each article is discussed, approved by majority vote and displayed in an accessible place. It will help create an appropriate working atmosphere, mutual respect and trust. It also needs to improve the learning of the material. Every student is responsible for the execution of the “agreement”.

Assessment of group information level is one of the tasks for the teacher. A questionnaire or checklist with the questions on the training theme is usually used for this purpose. Polling results show the level of students' readiness and help the teacher correct the content and balance of the topics, adapt the training and make the exercises easy to understand. A questionnaire repeated after the training is over is very effective. Comparing the results, the teacher will be able to assess how students increased their readiness, which is an important mea-sure of training efficiency.

Actualization of the problem. To develop the motivation for modifying professional behaviour and activity, the participants should be encouraged to discuss the training theme to arouse interest and make this issue relevant to everyone. The teacher can do a role play in the end.

Education. Direct interaction between teacher and students is to implement the key goal of the training at this stage.

This stage of training involves two steps. The first one is information: it can start with answering the items from the questionnaires which caused the most embarrassment. In addition, the main course material is presented at this stage by using such methods as lectures, talks, role playing, discussions and small group work. The second stage is practice-oriented: it is designed to help the participants acquire practical experience. Role playing, dramatization, discussion, “brainstorming” and other interactive forms of work can be used for this purpose. The choice depends on the conditions.

Summing up. Typically, this procedure is designed to ensure that the participants share their impressions and feelings and express their wishes. Summing up can involve filling the “sheet of revelation”, letters, questionnaires or surveys. An important component of training is the documentation of the student's progress, e.g., via photography. While summing up, these photos can be viewed to remind how the work was proceeding. Thus, training efficiently forms students' professional competence through establishing a confident and comfortable environment and the possibility of practically drilling the steps that are essential for future professional activities in general.

- **Concept Mapping**

Concept mapping is a technique used for representing knowledge graphically. It consists of nodes and links. Nodes represent related concepts within a topic. Links represent the relationship between concepts. Concept mapping can be used to construct a complex concept structure step by step, from simple to complex. This will allow students to think freely about the topic. Through the concept map, they can see the concepts and their relationships. Concept maps can help students to clarify what they understand and what they do not understand. Concept maps can be constructed by students from texts or after class discussions/lecture. It involves listing the main ideas/concepts and words and arranging these in a hierarchy. The most general, abstract and most inclusive (superordinate) concepts are lower down in the hierarchy. This array of concepts is connected by lines or arrows carrying labels in a propositional or prepositional form. At the terminus of each branch may be found examples of the terminal concept. A finished concept map is analogous to a road map with every concept depending on others for meaning.

Concept mapping is often combined with lectures, a PBL approach and other teaching approaches.

- **Problem Based Learning (PBL)**

Problem based learning is an instructional method that challenges students to 'learn to learn'. In PBL, the teacher first provides an ill-structured problem. Then the teacher helps students to analyze the knowledge they should learn for solving the problem. Usually a concept map is drawn. During the following weeks, the teacher can give several lectures and arrange several seminar sessions and tutorials to transfer the necessary knowledge and answer questions raised by students as they work on solving the problem.

During the process of problem solving, students work in small groups. They must identify what they know, and more importantly what they do not know for the problem. They must go beyond the textbook and classroom activities to pursue knowledge and information from other resources. They must make a plan, assign tasks to members of the group, collect information and data, and analyze the data. They must also communicate, discuss and then finally come to a conclusion. The problem should engage students' curiosity, and give students more challenges. These can increase students' interest and motivation to learn science and encourage more active learning. The teacher's role is supportive, but not directive. Through the process of problem solving, students can practice many lifelong learning skills, such as: information access; data collection and evaluation; analysis; scientific judgment; cooperation; application; and problem solving skills.

During the process of problem solving, students have not only caught a 'fish', but have also learnt 'how to fish'. It is a good way to foster the abilities of survival and lifelong learning. Whilst working on the problem students should communicate with many other people for data collecting. They should analyze the data collected. They should have the ability to process various types of information. They should have the ability of summarizing the process and then giving conclusions. In short, many skills will be developed; skills they will need in the future.

For each topic, the students are given two two-hour lectures, and arrange seminars two to four hours. In these seminars students can discuss the current issues under the teacher's supervision. At the end of term, a presentation session is organized. Each student should give a ten-minute presentation to introduce his/her work, and demonstrate

his/her product, and then everyone can share their opinions, and assess whether the product is good or not. Based on their presentations and demonstrations, the final assessment of the students is made.

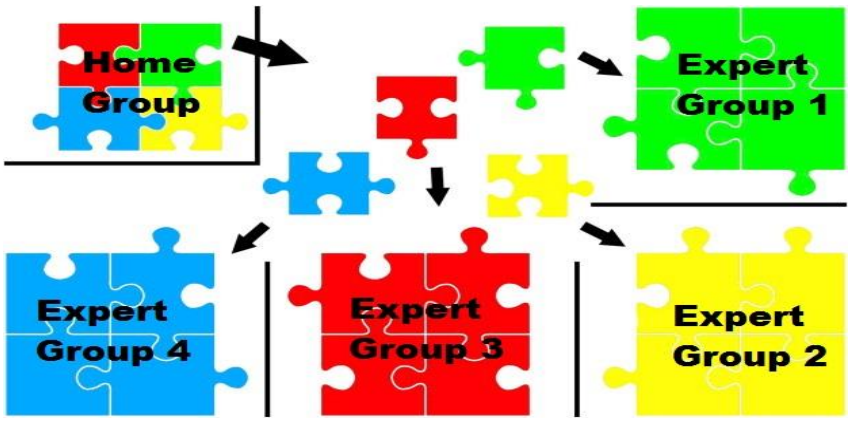
In the process of teaching and learning, we can utilize several different theories: behaviourist; developmentalist; constructivist; lifelong learning; student-centred learning; and so on. All of them can be used to some extent. Each has its strengths. In addition, many different approaches, including case studies and PBL can be used. Each approach also has its advantages. A single approach may not be suitable for every course, every topic and all the content. Thus, the responsibility of a teacher is to make the content and process more interesting and more attractive, and different approaches can help develop the students' various skills. Whichever approach is used, at the end the students should be taught knowledge and more importantly, the skills for survival.

- **Think-Pair-Share**

  - students think about their response to a question;
  - discuss answers in pairs, and
  - share their own or partner 's answer with the class.

- **Jigsaw-Teams**

  - each learner given a topic or concept
  - each learner "meet" with other learners with the same topic
  - they will discuss & develop materials to master the concept
  - thereafter, each "expert" learner returns to his or her group and start to share with the rest of the group members



Finally, *no method is absolutely efficient*. The efficiency of a method depends on the nature of the learner, the number of learners, the subject being taught, the teacher's personality, the material and physical conditions, etc.

6. Methods in Which Learning is Individualized

- **Independent Study.** Most of the prescribed course time will be devoted to independent study, including the compulsory reading for each course, other forms of information gathering, and completing specific assignments.

- **Practicals**

Practicals make it possible to combine theory and practice. The practicals give the learner an opportunity to go beyond the words which remain as abstract symbols. Practicals give the learner the opportunity to observe, to describe, to interpret, to solve problems, to manipulate, and to collate and report information.

- **Computer-Assisted Learning**

Using this method, the computer presents the material to be learned in an interactive manner. It is a system that allows immediate feedback, and the establishment of a specific working pace.

- **Individually Prescribed Teaching**

The originality of individual prescription teaching resides in the following main characteristics:

- The teacher writes and ranks all the specific learning objectives of each course.
- The teacher designs a set of placement tests aimed at measuring the achievement of the specific objectives in each learning unit.
- The teacher regularly informs each learner about progress and suggests ways (‘’prescription’’) to reach the objectives partially achieved, or to proceed.
- Thus, each learner benefits from an in-depth analysis of his profile at the beginning of the course; a method and individual activities are proposed (prescribed) to him or her so that all the objectives of the course are met.

- **Advisory Meetings or Tutorials.** The Masters programme makes provision for one-to-one advisory meetings with teaching staff to discuss the courses being studied and the Masters dissertation.

- **Dissertation.** This is the main instrument for developing and reinforcing independent research and analytical skills. The dissertation is written in close contact with the academic supervisor, who will advise on both methodology and content. Students research for their dissertation and meet with their supervisor throughout the programme of study and they write the dissertation in the last semester.

7. Dealing with Heterogeneity. Intercultural Didactics

One of the challenges in contemporary higher education is to deal with heterogeneity. Teachers are regularly confronted with learners who not only have different language skills, but also different cultural backgrounds, and learners can be very close to the surrounding learning culture, but can be also very unfamiliar with it. This heterogeneity is sometimes seen as barrier for learning, but in intercultural teaching and learning it can be used in a productive way. Intercultural didactics means to achieve awareness of linguistic and cultural phenomena not only from one perspective (for instance from the surrounding learning culture), but from different points of view. It means developing not only the capacity for tolerance but also the capability of learning from each other and to acknowledge different cultural values and behaviours (see Byram 2008, 68).
The prototype setting of cultural mixed groups includes at least three types of configurations of learners and teachers:

- Teacher and learners share the same cultural code.
- Teacher and learners don't share the same cultural code.
    - Learners are members of the surrounding culture, whereas the teacher is a member of a foreign culture.
    - The teacher is a member of the surrounding culture, whereas learners are members of foreign culture(s).
- Teacher and some learners share the same cultural code, but some learners are members of (an) other culture(s).
    - The teacher is a member of the surrounding culture. Some learners are also members of the surrounding culture; others are members of (a) foreign culture(s).
    - The teacher is a member of a foreign culture. Some learners are members of the surrounding culture; others are members of foreign culture(s).

The challenge is to build interactive learner groups in which learners can cross-exchange their knowledge and ultimately enrich each other. This can be realised by

- stimulating open dialogues about exemplary objects of different cultures;
- cross-cultural simulation games in which learners have to share knowledge, competences and experiences to solve problems or to achieve sufficient results;
- dealing with culturally sensitive objects, which can be examples from teaching material, from literature and art, from advertising, and other genres.

In simulation games, open dialogues about pictures, linguistic examples and especially with multimodal texts that combine images and verbal messages (like advertising posters or advertisements) learners can recognise and share their cultural values and expectations and learn to be aware of idiosyncratic peculiarities.

8. Conclusions

The contemporary teaching approach means that the number of hours devoted to **formal lectures** is kept to a minimum. The lectures are mainly intended to provide an overview of the academic discipline and to set out the basic propositions. **Presentations** by students are widely used. These are a classic means of combining independent study with class based work. The aim of preparing presentations will usually be to develop **case analysis** skills and the ability to present the results of case studies and other analytical or theoretical work. Students will acquire a considerable part of their knowledge through independent study accompanied by regular meetings with their teachers and group discussions.

Most teaching methods can be used with or without technology. However, technologies have made some teaching methods easier to implement and/or more efficient and effective. Moreover, students are used to using communication technologies throughout their education and in their personal life.

It is recommended to use a variety of teaching methods for several reasons:

1. different methods are appropriate for different learning goals – some learning goals are not really achievable through some methods;
2. it is important to monitor student learning outcomes;
3. individual instructors have different preferences
4. students have a variety of learning style preferences

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