

Chapter 51

A New Paradigm for Learners and Teachers Thanks to Situational Pedagogical Games: Strengthening Transversal Skills

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ABSTRACT

Part of sustainable outcomes in Higher Education relies on the design of trainings able to help learners to develop transversal skills. Beyond such challenges, the aim is to obtain widespread involvement and to take advantage of interaction and dialogue in order to facilitate deeper learning and strengthen autonomy and decision-making based on specific context. An evolving pedagogical game, conducted over fifteen years in Master's degrees with inter-cultural groups, is presented; guiding learners towards skills in quality management. It has inspired a set of pedagogical mini-games (lasting less than two hours) as a solution to face the evolution of trainees' expectations and the reduction of time; part of hybridized courses, the aim is to incent involvement and learning with focus on knowledge. Results and comparison bring out the non-variable parts in order to make the best of such devices; worthwhile adaptation to increase problem-solving ability and future efficiency in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable outcomes of the training offer in Higher Education (HE) are presented that justify the use of specific pedagogical devices to strengthen transversal skills; among them, we quote: autonomy, intercultural, leadership (Kotter, 1990), ability to lead and manage excellence; i.e. quality of the management. Today, stronger economic issues urge the skilled workforce to find a more efficient pedagogical solution to achieve the goal. Beyond the solution relying on the organization, quicker ones depend on

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the trainer's skills in pedagogy; the aim is to strengthen reflexive feedback on experience and active behavior of the learner in the training. Among pedagogical means and tools, quote: collaborative mapping, problem solving, Problem Based Learning (PBL) and Pedagogical Serious Games (PSG). In this way, it creates an Integrated Learning Environment (ILE) that takes advantage of any resources within the reach of learners to develop their autonomy and network; the Personal Learning Environment (PLE) (Downes, 2012) of parties included. In the following, first, a background is given with respect to the company needs to drive the change in learners (already employed or future employees) and then, the pedagogical serious games are presented in a general manner as a possible reply. Second, a pedagogical serious game called Total Quality Game (TQ-G) of long duration is introduced in contrast with new pedagogical serious mini-Games (mG) which are an adaption in connection with tighter constraints. The motivations for the design of the games are explained before their full presentation. Third, a feedback based on several years of experiment is given with focus on groundbreaking improvements; the TQ-G was first developed fifteen years ago for a company and then transferred to an academic training leading to Master's degrees whereas the mGs were created only two years ago. Through the years, the games were tested with different kinds of learners, trainings and even multi-cultural context (Chatelet & Nuninger, 2011). Finally, the added value of the chapter is to bring out a validated common design method and criteria to help the selection of the kind of games to implement with respect to expected results and resources. The good practices to design and monitor such activities are pointed out with identified risks; the success mainly relies on the trainers' skill, social behavior and commitment in the training. To conclude, after prospects, such activities should be recognized and supported by the organization and pedagogical team of the HE provider to make the best of it (skills transfer) with respect to the training global requirement specifications (knowledge to acquire, set of skills to develop, chosen pedagogy and assessment procedure) in addition to a new paradigm for teachers.

BACKGROUNDS

Company Needs for Ramp-Up Skills

Companies face several evolutions that urge leaders to reassess the modes of organization with impacts on the staff (Roy, 1999) leading to a new challenge: make the individuals work all together and be efficient in the joint tasks. The performance index for the company now lies in mobilizing the collective intelligence (Crozier & Friedberg, 2014) and full knowledge of the stakeholders' expectations; companies have to take care of the key elements that make the business and to be aware of the market: workforce, source of supply and clients. As a consequence, Glaser (1994) notes that the ability to work cooperatively and productively in teams is the new job skill being required of employees from line workers to executives. According to Davis (1999), collective work, when effectively used in learning, is an important supplement to lectures which helps students to master concepts and apply them to situations calling for complex applications of critical thinking skills. Today, working in a team is unavoidable, whatever the position (Johnson, 2011), as enterprises expect employees to work well, both independently and collaboratively in order to maximize their potential and foster creativity and development from one-another (Pang, 2011). Therefore, future graduates have to be concerned that recognition and support is not enough to create collective intelligence. The issue is a teambuilding act to allow easy adaptation to changes in a given environment, accepting internal supplementary constraints easily thanks to anticipation of

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