

What do we mean by methods? (Ay – there’s the rub)

Input to content and functionality of Methopedia – and what we mean by methods

In order to agree on both the content and functionality of Methopedia, I feel that an important prerequisite is to come to a shared understanding of what is meant by ‘methods’, ‘approaches’ and ‘learning designs’ which are some of the different concepts we have discussed in our meetings. I thought one model (adopted from Ola Berge’s PhD dissertation) might be a good entrance or reference point. He distinguishes between the following ‘levels’ of a learning/pedagogical design (the grey boxes added by me):

Overall pedagogical approach	Pedagogical Approach			
Course Templates/Descriptions	Course Design			
Methods/activities	Course design components			
Material/resources	Own Material	External material	Repurposed external material	Reification of practice

Adopted from (Berge, 2007)

Grant Agreement Number: 2007-3623 / 001- 001

Pedagogical approach

Is then the overall approach as summarised by Christian (I think) during our last meeting:

"What do we mean with pedagogical approaches and learning theories

- *Behaviorism, Constructivism, Cognitivism, Design-Based (see: <http://www.learning-theories.com/>)*
- *project learning, self organised learning, group learning"*

Course Design

Would be e.g. templates or descriptions of courses (where courses consist of several modules/activities) and usually last from at least a day to several weeks. As I understand it, the Estonian partners have been working quite a lot with the dynamic creation of course templates – such as e.g.:

Course title

Course responsible(s)

Lecturers

Duration

Start/end dates

ECTS point

Goals and structure of the course

Modules, activities, methods and content

- **Module/activity 1**
- **Module/activity 2**
- **Etc.**

Assessment method

So the question is, whether Methopedia should also include something related to course design e.g. sharing course/learning designs (and these designs/course descriptions might be composed of various modules, activities or methods?)

Methods/activities

Would then be descriptions – to some degree like the course designs – but for methods/activities of much shorter duration e.g. a module in a course could consist of a number of methods/activities – lasting from a number of minutes to e.g. two hours? I think Christian has provided some good examples of methods or activities from e.g. the site:

(specific method)

<http://www.uni-duesseldorf.de/ttt/?id=7&kat=b1>

Grant Agreement Number: 2007-3623 / 001- 001

Number of – repository of methods:

<http://www.learn-line.nrw.de/angebote/methodensammlung/liste.php>

From all of this I would suggest a hierarchical list looking something like this:

- Pedagogical Approach
 - Course Design (templates, descriptions)
 - Course design components:
 - Modules
 - Activities – Methods
 - Materials

Another structure could be:

- Pedagogical Approach
 - Course Design (templates, descriptions)

 - Activities – Methods

We could reference the course design within the method-descriptions . E.g., within the method description of the method "Expert learning" there could be a link/category "used in the course": "Programming for Beginners", "Learning theories", "Introduction in Cognitive Science". So this approach would be more semantic and less hierarchical.

Questions:

– Should materials/resources be part of the methods and included in Methopedia? In what way? Do we want all the different levels to be part of Methopedia – in what ways?

- Pros:
 - to have examples of different learning fields
- Contra:
 - too complex?
- Open:
 - The material could be attached to the course design? What do you think?
 - What should be the structure of the material (Scorm, IMS, Word, HTML, ZIP)? Are the users able to handle it?