ABSTRACT

Recognizing the inadequacy of current traditional knowledge-based assessment systems in Higher Education to achieve performance visibility, it is needed to rethink how to design new assessment approaches that can respond to the corporate requirements of the 21st century and reflect the learners’ competences. This paper considers the Competence-Based Assessment. It explores the importance of competency and competence modeling conceptual understanding. The research reviews the benchmark literature on the concepts, models and approaches of competence and competency and explores the confusions surrounding the pair of concepts; thus enabling to build the competence-based assessment approach within e-learning environments in an effective and efficient way. The proposed approach is characterized by the convergence of lifelong, formal, non formal and informal competence-based learning activities.

Keywords: Competence, Competence-Based Assessment, Competency, Lifelong Learning, Scenario Model

1. INTRODUCTION

In recognition of changes to the typical patterns of working life, Higher Education in overall the world is currently laying great stress on Competence-based learning. This is receiving attention particularly on competence-based development to improve the learner’s potential value within lifelong learning and universities are currently looking for the best way to competently manage learning. Nevertheless, while lifelong learning is increasingly influencing university and workplace in overall the world, some critical issues still have to be worked out so as to reach its full potential (Ilahi, Cheniti-Belcadhi, & Braham, 2013). Since, it appears to address the assessment expectations of these competences.

The continued growth and importance of this issue is shaping the new learning environments, posing new challenges, fostering the need for new models and approaches both at the learning and assessment levels. Hence, we are now confronted with the challenge to accomplish the initiated shift to a competitive and competence-based educational system in order to guarantee...
productivity and high quality. To attain such ambitious goal, learning has to fundamentally move from input-based to outcome-based approach. Nowadays, technological, economic, and organizational changes entail new needs for an educational system more responsive and open to the labor market’s requirements. To meet the challenges of worldwide increasing competition and to improve the employability of graduate students, education should provide learners with not only knowledge, skills, and competences but also with the proof that these learners could reveal the competences they are supposed to perform in the labor market. Thus, promoting a more dynamic and future-oriented interaction between labor demand and education supply which is evidently the great challenge for the educational system. To establish this interaction, there is a need for mechanisms such as competence models and related assessment tools, which can be used for enhancing the fluency of the key competences of learning and assisting the development of a range of valuable services, e.g. personal and professional development, competence-based learning and employment opportunity exploration.

Although implemented in different ways, current learning management systems share a core common weakness: the assessment process is mainly knowledge-based. This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of competence/y based approaches in the existing literature. The results show that these approaches are far from being able to afford the learner with his valid acquired competence profile. Competence-based assessment is still insufficiently implemented or even not addressed. The findings of the analysis are meant as a starting point for our work aiming at modeling and implementing a new assessment system providing learners with their acquired competences profiles.

Accordingly, we discuss in this paper academic Competence based assessment approach; a formal approach of assessment characterized by the convergence of lifelong, formal, non formal and informal competence-based learning.

Following the introduction, the remainder of the paper is structured in four sections: In section 2 we describe the theoretical background on the concepts, models and approaches of competence and competency and explores their relationship to one another. Section 3 reviews relevant related works on and presents the essential findings that could be retained from the comparative study. We argue that a proper competence modeling solution would increase the efficiency of competence-based learning and competence-based assessment. In section 4, we provide our approach towards competence Web-based assessment. Finally, section 5 summarizes the main conclusions of this research and outlines the future research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Though the rapidly increasing number of related work published in recent years, the theoretical grounding is still weak as a whole, especially in the introduction of concepts. In fact, the concepts of competence and competency are almost used substitutably without distinction. Hence, we introduce in this section the theoretical background of the paper, including the definitions of the concepts competence, competency and the competence-based assessment.

2.1. Competence

Competences are treated from different point of views and in an open sort of contexts to enlighten the required abilities for successful actions and efficient management of knowledge and skills (Ivanova & Chatti, 2011). The European Commission (2007) defines competence as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to a given context. In (Cheetham & Chivers, 2005), competences are defined as ‘overall, effective performance within an occupation, which may range from the basic level of proficiency to the highest levels of excellence’. The proposed definition
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