Learner motivation and engagement.
How to help learners in setting goals, building confidence and self-regulating learning with micro-credentials?

Timo Halttunen & Katja Mäkinen
ECTEL conference workshop (MicroHE)
17 September

TURKU AMK

Outline

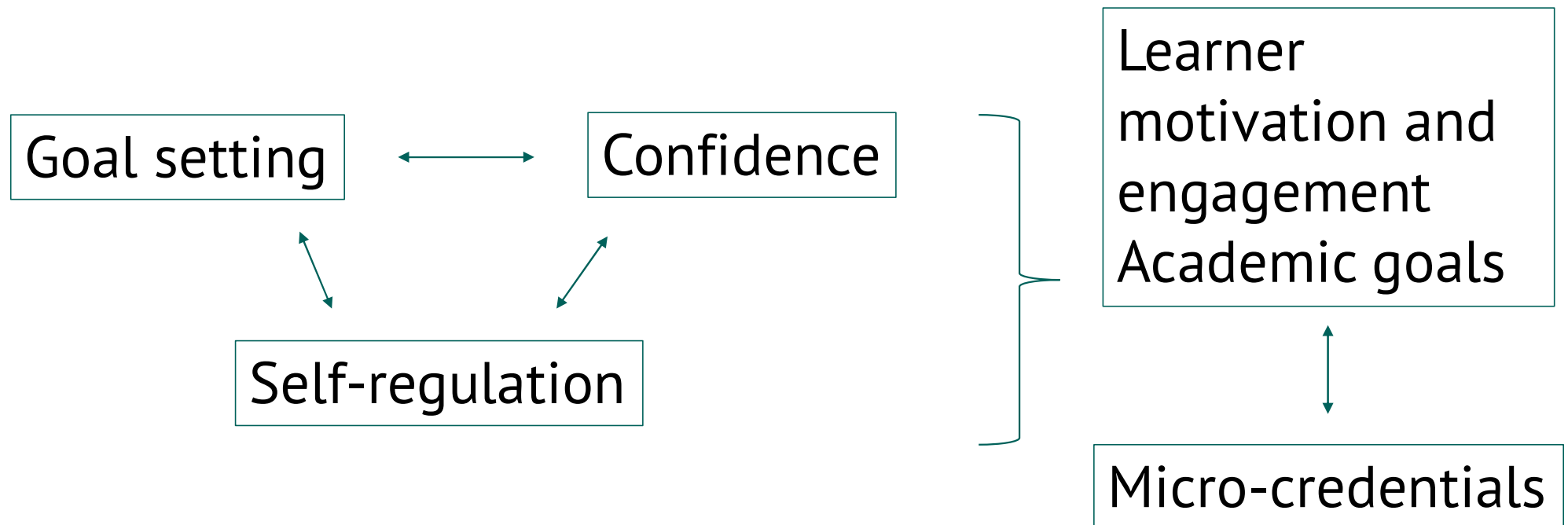Key concepts and their connection
Vignettes on learner experiences
Experiences of Micro-credentials in continuous learning
Perceptions of preferred learning modalities at the workplace
What research tells us about facilitating goal setting,
building confidence & self-regulation

Key concepts

Goal setting

- *Learning goals* refer to individual's intention to develop competencies, knowledge or skills. Recently, scholars agree on a model of multiple goal orientations within one person. (Kunst et al., 2017)
- E.g. teachers with a high learning goal orientation invest more in their professional development, and have higher levels of self-efficacy (Butler 2007, Runhaar 2010)

Building confidence

- *Confidence* refers to student's perception of their own skills, aptitudes and abilities to achieve their goals. (Granero-Gallegos et al., 2022)
- Students in higher education are expected to be self-regulated, autonomous and responsible in their learning. Learners may feel shame, anxiety and stress in failure .(Choi, 2021)

TURKU AMK

Self-regulation

- *Self-regulation* refers to learner's beliefs about their ability to engage in appropriate actions, thoughts, feelings and behaviours to pursue valuable academic goals. (Baumeister et al., 2006)
- Students with optimistic attitude towards their learning monitor and control their learning process and apply diverse learning strategies. (Virtanen et al., 2015)

Micro-credentials

- *Micro-credentials* offer a flexible, targeted way to help people develop knowledge, skills and competences needed for their personal and professional development (EU council, 2022)
- Micro-credential as a term in Finnish context has remained vague in research and applied solutions. However, they are considered useful to overcome gaps in learning provision, including limited upskilling opportunities for adults, and limited availability of short courses relevant to the labour market. (Brauer 2023)

Vignettes on learner experiences in continuous learning

Goal setting

- The learner may find it difficult to set learning goals and to recognize his /her competencies or skills. This happens typically if the learner has not studied for many years but has been in working life.

- *Example: We provided 30 ECTS open university pathway course in Nursing. Most of the students were laid off stewardesses who had for a long time ago completed the old vocational level degree in Nursing. They wanted to update their degree to Bachelor level. However, it was a new and difficult task to build a personal study plan. Some students saw themselves purely as customer service workers.*

Building confidence

- Sometimes a learner might see his work experience and competence as part of his lifestyle and daily life, without seeing it as a valuable resource in professional development.

- *Example: A student who has grown up at his parents farm, where he has also worked his whole life. He has completed the upper secondary school. Although he has kept the farm after his parents gave up, he saw himself as a manual worker. He could not identify himself as a student either. After long discussions, he realized that keeping the farm was a business.*

TURKU AMK

Self-regulation

- The learner might have challenges to be systematic, and manage time, help seeking and motivation, whilst maintaining attention and concentration over time.
- *Example: The learner has over 20 years of work experience in selling and marketing in global business. Her excellent self management skills have brought her a lot of success in her career. However, the employer wants her to complete the Master's degree in Business Management.*
- *As Master student, she finds the studies overwhelming and says that she cannot concentrate in studying. It is extremely difficult for her to commit to schedules and to complete learning assignment as part of a team of students. She wants to achieve results quickly. Analytical thinking and reading theory as well as writing essays are frustrating to her.*

Micro-credentials

- The learner's social world may propose barriers to participation in continuous learning.
- *Example: Employment in tourism is often seasonal, low-paid, part-time work. When you are employed, you don't have time to study. When you are unemployed, there is no employer to pay for your professional development.*
- *Example: Tourism companies have taken concrete actions for sustainability, but don't know how to tell about it in their websites. No added value is created in customer's perceptions as there is no communication on sustainability.*

TURKU AMK

Role of micro-credentials in professional development at the workplace – case of tourism industry

TURKU AMK

Necessity to Blend the Different Modalities of Learning. Case: Micro- credentials in Tourism Industry.

Halttunen, T., Brauer, S. & Jutila, S. (2024). Role of micro-credentials and open badges in sustainable tourism education. Manuscript accepted for publication.

Affordance	Attributes	Dimension	Rationale
Verification of skills and expertise	Industry certificates	Operational	Meeting a set of minimum standards
	Open badges	Competence development	Advanced skills and expertise
Social impact of learning	Employer	Leadership	Motivating and guiding members to new sustainable frames of reference
	Employee	Management	Implementing sustainability strategies into action
	Employee	Reflective practice	Demonstrating critical thinking and reflection on sustainable operations
	Employee	Customer service	Engaging customers in sustainability culture
	DMOs	Policy development	Creating benchmarks for sustainable destinations
	Proficiency goals	Frame of reference	Providing a benchmark for scope and breath of learning
Preferred modality	On-site at workplace	Onboarding	Familiarizing with company sustainability standards and culture
	Open badges	Recognition of competence	Demonstrating situation-specific skills and expertise
	MOOCs	Upskilling and reskilling	Enabling continuous learning

TURKU AMK

Necessity to Blend the Different Modalities of Learning. Case: Micro- credentials in Tourism Industry.

TURKU AMK

Halttunen, T., Brauer, S. & Jutila, S. (2024). Role of micro-credentials and open badges in sustainable tourism education. Manuscript accepted for publication.

Affordance	Attributes	Dimension	Rationale
Verification of skills and expertise	Industry certificates	Operational	Meeting a set of minimum standards
	Digital badges	Competence development	Advanced skills and expertise
Social impact of learning	Employer	Leadership	Motivating and guiding members to new sustainable frames of reference
	Employee	Management	Implementing sustainability strategies into action
	Employee	Reflective practice	Demonstrating critical thinking and reflection on sustainable operations
	Employee	Customer service	Engaging customers in sustainability culture
	DMOs	Policy development	Creating benchmarks for sustainable destinations
Preferred modality	Proficiency goals	Frame of reference	Providing a benchmark for scope and breath of learning
	On-site at workplace	Onboarding	Familiarizing with company sustainability standards and culture
	Digital badges	Recognition of competence	Demonstrating situation-specific skills and expertise
	MOOCs	Upskilling and reskilling	Enabling continuous learning

Necessity to Blend the Different Modalities of Learning. Case: Micro- credentials in Tourism Industry.

TURKU AMK

Halttunen, T., Brauer, S. & Jutila, S. (2024). Role of micro-credentials and open badges in sustainable tourism education. Manuscript accepted for publication.

Affordance	Attributes	Dimension	Rationale
Verification of skills and expertise	Industry certificates	Operational	Meeting a set of minimum standards
	Digital badges	Competence development	Advanced skills and expertise
Social impact of learning	Employer	Leadership	Motivating and guiding members to new sustainable frames of reference
	Employee	Management	Implementing sustainability strategies into action
	Employee	Reflective practice	Demonstrating critical thinking and reflection on sustainable operations
	Employee	Customer service	Engaging customers in sustainability culture
	DMOs	Policy development	Creating benchmarks for sustainable destinations
Preferred modality	Proficiency goals	Frame of reference	Providing a benchmark for scope and breath of learning
	On-site at workplace	Onboarding	Familiarizing with company sustainability standards and culture
	Digital badges	Recognition of competence	Demonstrating situation-specific skills and expertise
	MOOCs	Upskilling and reskilling	Enabling continuous learning

Necessity to Blend the Different Modalities of Learning. Case: Micro- credentials in Tourism Industry.

Affordance	Attributes	Dimension	Rationale
Verification of skills and expertise	Industry certificates	Operational	Meeting a set of minimum standards
	Digital badges	Competence development	Advanced skills and expertise
Social impact of learning	Employer	Leadership	Motivating and guiding members to new sustainable frames of reference
	Employee	Management	Implementing sustainability strategies into action
	Employee	Reflective practice	Demonstrating critical thinking and reflection on sustainable operations
	Employee	Customer service	Engaging customers in sustainability culture
	DMOs	Policy development	Creating benchmarks for sustainable destinations
Preferred modality	Proficiency goals	Frame of reference	Providing a benchmark for scope and breath of learning
	On-site at workplace	Onboarding	Familiarizing with company sustainability standards and culture
	Digital badges	Recognition of competence	Demonstrating situation-specific skills and expertise
	MOOCs	Upskilling and reskilling	Enabling continuous learning

TURKU AMK

Necessity to Blend the Different Modalities of Learning. Case: Micro- credentials in Tourism Industry.

TURKU AMK

Halttunen, T., Brauer, S. & Jutila, S. (2024). Role of micro-credentials and open badges in sustainable tourism education. Manuscript accepted for publication.

Affordance	Attributes	Dimension	Rationale
Verification of skills and expertise	Industry certificates	Operational	Meeting a set of minimum standards
	Digital badges	Competence development	Advanced skills and expertise
Social impact of learning	Employer	Leadership	Motivating and guiding members to new sustainable frames of reference
	Employee	Management	Implementing sustainability strategies into action
	Employee	Reflective practice	Demonstrating critical thinking and reflection on sustainable operations
	Employee	Customer service	Engaging customers in sustainability culture
	DMOs	Policy development	Creating benchmarks for sustainable destinations
Preferred modality	Proficiency goals	Frame of reference	Providing a benchmark for scope and breath of learning
	On-site at workplace	Onboarding	Familiarizing with company sustainability standards and culture
	Digital badges	Recognition of competence	Demonstrating situation-specific skills and expertise
	MOOCs	Upskilling and reskilling	Enabling continuous learning

How to design engaging micro-credentials for continuous learning?

- We should make sure that learner's develop strategies to set goals for their learning, find tasks that are challenging enough and are able to adjust their strategies into different situations and contexts.
- At the same time, we should design activities that create experiences of autonomous, competent and related learning.

Learning competencies: perspectives of SRL and SDT theories

TURKU AMK

Self-regulated learning theory (SRL, Zimmerman 1990)

Metacognitive learners

Motivated learners

Strategic learners

Aware of their personal learning strengths and challenges – attuned other needs and interests

Willing to attempt challenging tasks – persistent and believe in success

Have large repertoires of learning strategies – adaptive and flexible – adjust to meet various tasks

Autonomy

Competence

Relatedness

Self-determination theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2017)

Learning competencies:
perspectives of SRL and SDT theories

TURKU AMK

Self-regulated learning theory (SRL, Zimmerman 1990)

Metacognitive learners

Motivated learners

Strategic learners

Perception of being able to connect with others and maintain trusting, respectful relationships

Sense of volition to act, to be open to the influence of others, yet maintain sense of choice and freedom over thoughts and actions

Perceived experiences of being able to influence and master tasks within their environment

Autonomy

Competence

Relatedness

Self-determination theory (SDT, Ryan & Deci, 2017)

Conclusions

- Open badges allow flexible professional development for advanced skills and expertise - self-regulation?

- MOOCs are often needed to fullfil competence criteria required in open badges – self-regulation?

- Open badges allow demonstration of existing situation-specific skills and expertise – confidence?

- MOOCs enable continuous learning – goal setting?

Literature

Choi, B. (2021). I'm Afraid of not succeeding in learning: introducing an instrument to measure higher education students' fear of failure in learning. Studies in Higher Education, 46(11), 2107–2121. https://doi-org.ezproxy.utu.fi/10.1080/03075079.2020.1712691

Council Recommendation of 16 June 2022 on a European approach to micro-credentials for lifelong learning and employability (OJ C 243, 27.6.2022, pp. 10–25).

Baumeister, R. F., Gailliot, M., DeWall, C. N., & Oaten, M. (2006). Self-regulation and personality: How interventions increase regulatory success, and how depletion moderates the effects of traits on behavior. Journal of Personality, 74, 1773–1801.

Brauer, Sanna (2023). Case study Finland: Microcredentials for labour market education and training. First look at mapping microcredentials in European labour-market-related education, training and learning: take-up, characteristics and functions. Thessaloniki: Cedefop.

Butler, R. (2007). Teachers' achievement goal orientations and associations with teachers' help seeking: Examination of a novel approach to teacher motivation. Journal of Educational Psychology, 99(2), 241–252.

Granero-Gallegos, A., Escaravajal, J. C., López-García, G. D., & Baños, R. (2022). Influence of Teaching Styles on the Learning Academic Confidence of Teachers in Training. Journal of Intelligence, 10(3), N.PAG. https://doi-org.ezproxy.utu.fi/10.3390/jintelligence10030071

Kunst, E.M., van Woerkom, M. & Poell, R.F. (2018). Teachers' Goal Orientation Profiles and Participation in Professional Development Activities. *Vocations and Learning* 11, 91–111. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-017-9182-y

Runhaar, P., Sanders, K., & Yang, H. (2010). Stimulating teachers' reflection and feedback asking: An interplay of self-efficacy, learning goal orientation, and transformational leadership. Teaching and Teacher Education, 26(5), 1154–1161.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness. Guilford.

Virtanen , P , Nevgi , A & Niemi , H 2015 , ' Self-regulation in higher education: Students' motivational, regulational and learning strategies, and their relationships to study success, Studies for the learning society , vol. 3 , no. 1-2 , pp. 20-36 . https://doi.org/10.2478/sls-2013-0004

Zimmerman, B. J. (1990). Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: An overview. Educational Psychologist, 25(1), 3–17.

Thank you!