Goal-Based Scenarios

General

Goal-based scenarios, introduced by Roger Schank, are a model of constructivist learning that **combines case-based learning** with **learning by doing**. Goal-based scenarios teach a set so steps need to take in order to accomplish desired goal. According to Schank,

- *"The intent of a goal based scenario is to provide motivation, a sense of accomplishment, a support system, and a focus on skills rather than facts."*[1]

What are goal-based scenarios?

Schank starts from the assumption that

- *"every aspect of human behavior involves the pursuit of goals."* and *"If goals are at the base of the human thought process, then it follows that learning must be a goal-dominated arena as well."*[2]

He believes that learning in school is unsuccessful for children since it replaces natural learning goals by artificial ones. Instead of learning to be able to do something, children learn in order to please the teacher, get good grades, or in order get into a good college. Goal-based scenarios serve here as a mean of achieving educational purposes by attempting to achieve set goal of the scenario.

When designing a goal-based scenario, following steps should be followed:

- **Identify target skills** independent of context which should be learned (practical or intellectual). For example cost accounting, or teaching Newton's second law.
- **Developing tasks** or activities that will require those skills in a domain selected by the students. Tasks can be real or play-acting, yet students must want to achieve to solve them. For example cost accounting with respect to various government regulations.
- Choose a **focus**.
- **Create a story** surrounding tasks or activities.
- **Build learning environment** to support target skills.
- Assign roles to the learners in a single or group situation that develops **towards accomplishing the task**.
- Explain the task to the students and encourage them to pursue its goals.
- **Help students** as soon as they encounter a problem.

What is the practical meaning of goal-based scenarios?

In 1991 Roger Schank created a goal-based scenario named "Broadcast News". This multimedia environment including facilities for editing text and video, old newspapers articles and newscasts, reference works, a teleprompter, video camera, and a computer-controlled VCR enables students to work on a virtual newscast, develop story lines using information from a database (usually from a day

before), and compare them with a real newscast for the same event. As the result, students have eventually developed adequate skills to deliver the news as professionals.

Criticisms

Keywords and most important names

- **Goal-based scenarios**
- Roger Schank

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Read more

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[1] , [2]
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