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Contemporaneous Issues in e-Learning Projects of the European Union

Andrei Hutanu^a, Gabriela Prostean^a, Alin Vasile Mnerie^b, Raluca Schiopu^{a*}

^aPolitehnica University of Timisoara, 1 Pta. Victoriei, 300006, Timisoara, Romania

^b"Ioan Slavici" University of Timisoara, 144 Dr. Aurel Paunescu Podeanu, 300587, Timisoara, Romania

Abstract

This paper analyses the impact of changing requirements in an international (European Union) e-Learning project. As in other domains, keeping the project milestones is very important for the success of the project. Keeping the milestones in a European e-Learning project is crucial for the future development of a common learning strategy. Nevertheless, there are unexpected issues which can occur during the development of educational technologies. Applying the common implementation processes can lead to an e-Learning platform which is not fulfilling its scope. The objective of this paper is to present a release strategy of the educational platform for every European country involved, which ensures that the same information is provided throughout all participating countries. The methods applied will be different from the classic approaches and also will combine the well-known e-Learning development processes with the techniques used in other areas, like IT or software automotive processes. By analysing projects in different areas, this paper chose time as the most important factor which influences the success of a project. By managing the factor of time, even if requirement changes occur during implementation, there is still the possibility of releasing an e-Learning platform, as expected by the project stakeholder, by adapting the release strategy.

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Keywords: Educational development platform, changing requirements, release strategy, combined development processes.

1. Introduction

The scope of this paper is to analyse the methods of introducing a new e-Learning platform in different environments, as in different countries of the European Union. While having to aim to develop new projects on a large scale, there are particular problems which can occur. The difficulties can occur while implementing new country-specific

* Raluca Schiopu. Tel.: +40-256-403-416

E-mail address: raluca.schiopu@upt.ro

requirements, like new guidelines in an existing learning platform. These changes will lead to requirement changes during project implementation or even after finishing the last project milestone. As the e-learning development projects have a timeline and the scope to deliver a unique result, the changes in later stages can endanger the rollout. This paper will present a parallel between different development processes and the advantages and disadvantages in choosing one process or another. Finally, the authors will present a way to achieve the project expectations by applying processes from outside e-Learning development processes.

2. Theoretical approach of development processes of an e-Learning platform

The intent of this chapter is to present a few development processes applied in the development of an e-Learning platform. With this presentation, it is possible to have a better understanding of the uncovered aspects of changing requirements during the implementation and rollout of e-Learning platforms.

1.1. ADDIE model

“ADDIE is an iterative instructional design process, where the results of the formative evaluation of each phase may lead the instructional designer back to any previous phase. The end product of one phase is the starting product of the next phase.” (www.cmcltd.com, 2013).

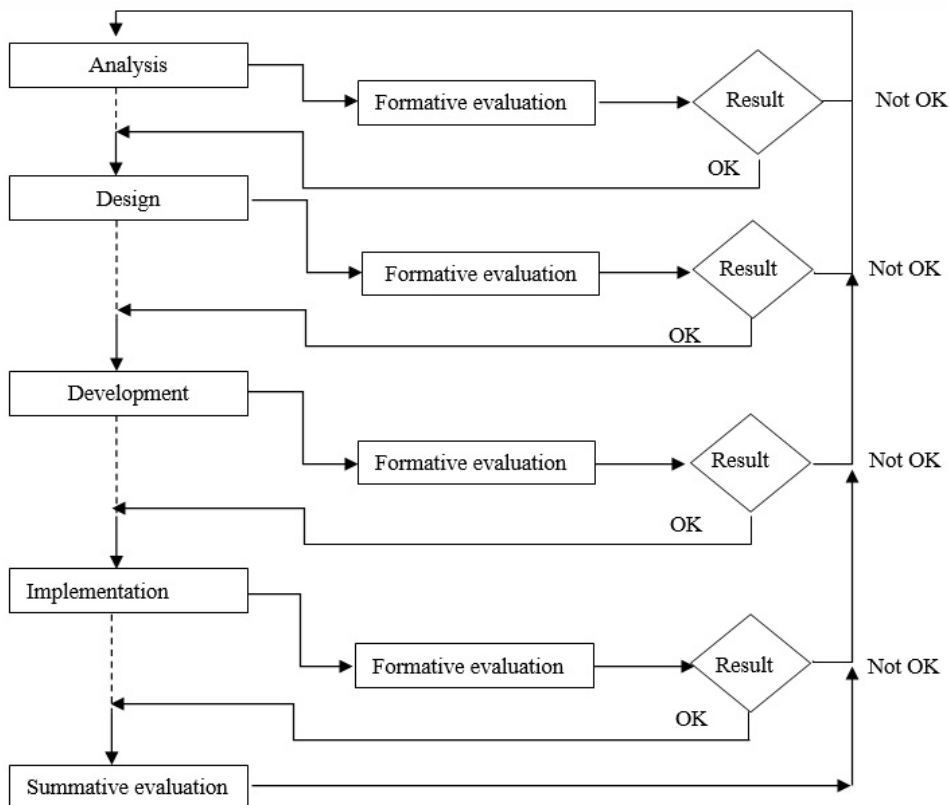


Fig.1: Graphical representation of ADDIE model. Inspired from (www.cmcltd.com, 2013)

The phases of ADDIE are (www.cmcltd.com, 2013):

- Analysis: “the instructional problem is clarified, the instructional goals and objectives are established and the learning environment and learner's existing knowledge and skills are identified”;

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