

# **237 Which future skills and entrepreneurial skills are teachable at universities and what are the currently applied teaching methods?**

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## **Research Domains**

Learning, teaching and assessment (LTA)

## **Abstract**

The future is uncertain as well as the skills which students should have after their university studies. Independently from that universities must be prepared for both present and future requirements at the same time. This paper compares teachable entrepreneurial and future skills, and also investigates the relating teaching methods. It is based on partial result of a literature review related to an in-progress dissertation research. The goal is to present the first results and first impressions related to the differences and similarities between these two groups of skills and between their teaching methods. The results are useful for higher education institutions, who are eager to investigate to what extent their programs include teachable future skills, and which methods can they apply to provide effective entrepreneurial and future skills development to their students.

## **Full paper**

### **Introduction**

Universities are eager to equip students with the skills of today and tomorrow as well. However, it is hard to determine the list of future skills due to fast changes of our world. As no one knows what will happen in the future it is almost impossible to be prepared for the unclear challenges. In spite of it, employers and students have requirements in connection with students' skills development: teach as much future skills as possible. Next to this, the future of entrepreneurs is also uncertain. Entrepreneurial related programs should develop the skills which are important in the present and will be important in the future as well. This paper introduces teachable entrepreneurial and future skills based on results of a literature review. Additionally, it also includes the relating skill development methods provided by universities. At the end of the paper teachable future skills and entrepreneurial skills will be compared as well as their teaching methods.

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this paper is literature review. I observed the discourses related to entrepreneurial and future skills. To involve literatures only from a trustworthy source EBSCO and Scopus databases were used and different filters were applied (e.g.: peer reviewed, published after 2015, only English, etc.). Currently partial results are presented. In the following two figures introduce the content of literatures related to teachable skills and teaching methods. It is important to note, the figures highlight only the skills which were marked as teachable skills in the literatures.

### **Teachable entrepreneurial skills and teaching methods for entrepreneurial skill development**

As it can be seen on Figure 1, the emphasis is on the soft skills. The risk-taking, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork skills are the most popular ones as they are mentioned by more than 1 author. In connection with the skill development all methods are practice oriented. Most of them are in person technique, however the appearance of e-learning materials indicates skill development in an online way.



Figure 1.: Entrepreneurial skills and teaching methods (source: Szendrei-Pál, In press)

### Teachable future skills and teaching methods for future skills development

As Figure 2 shows critical thinking and collaboration skills are mentioned the most. Next to soft skills, hard skills like STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) (Garcia-Esteban & Jahnke, 2020) appear also on the list of skills. The teaching methods are practice oriented and mostly focus on gaining international or real-world experiences.

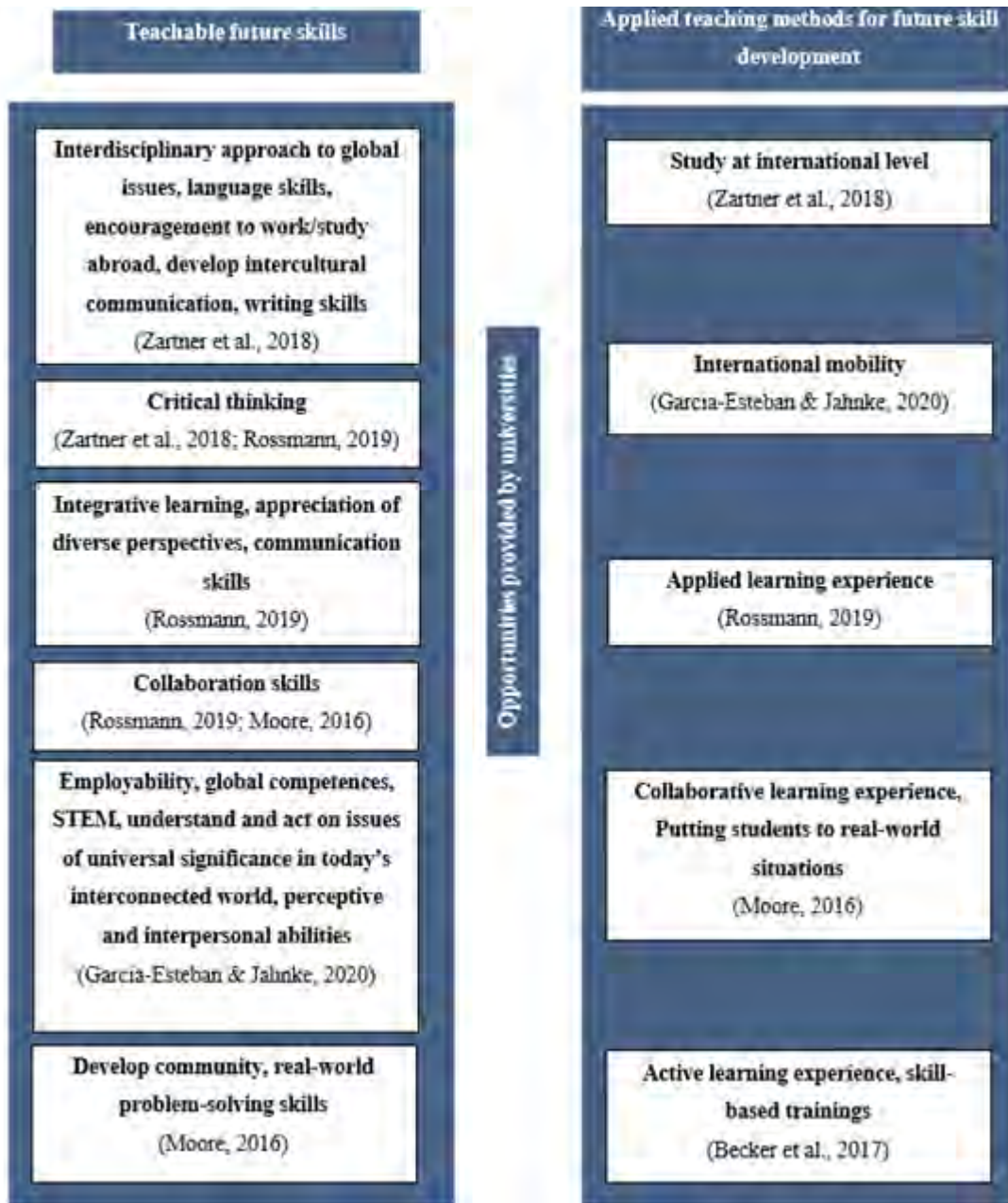


Figure 2.: Future skills and teaching methods (source: own elaboration)

### Comparison of figures (first impressions)

Regarding to the similarities between future and entrepreneurial skills critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving are mentioned in both cases. The teaching methods are practice oriented, and the emphasis is on the (international) internship and experience.

In connection with the differences entrepreneurial skills are developed mostly within the university, while the development of future skills is happening outside of it. Next to this, there are specific teaching methods for entrepreneurial skills (e.g.: flipped classroom), however there are mostly indirect ways to gain future skills (not taught by teachers). Additionally, instead of traditional teamwork, collaborative learning experience is applied during classes as it is more effective. Finally, hard skills appear only in case of future skills.

To sum up it seems like universities are developing future skills in an indirect way, while they provide direct ways to develop entrepreneurial skills. The reason behind it could be there is no exact teaching methods for the uncertain future skills. It seems like while universities try to figure out the best ways to develop future skills, they solve it with the help of employers and foreign higher education institutions through providing internships or international semesters to students. The motto could be "bringing the future through practice", as the students can gain the currently important skills from employers. Next to this, they can discover the skills they will need in the future by themselves. Universities should prepare students for one of the most important future skills which is the adaptability.

## Conclusion

It is important to note it is an early phase research. Further investigation is required to collect evidence how the teaching of these skills is really occurring at universities' curricula. In the future this research will be continued, and the mentioned skills will be investigated in universities' curricula. The results are useful for universities who want to become more future oriented. For example, they can follow up their students' early career: which skills did they obtain during their studies and which skills were required by the employers.

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