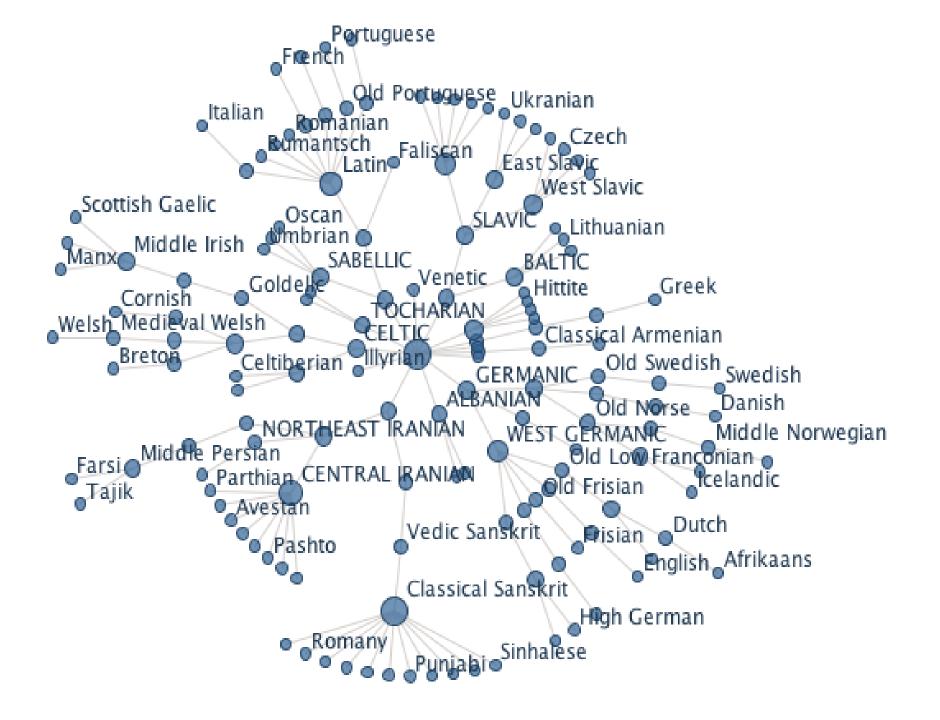
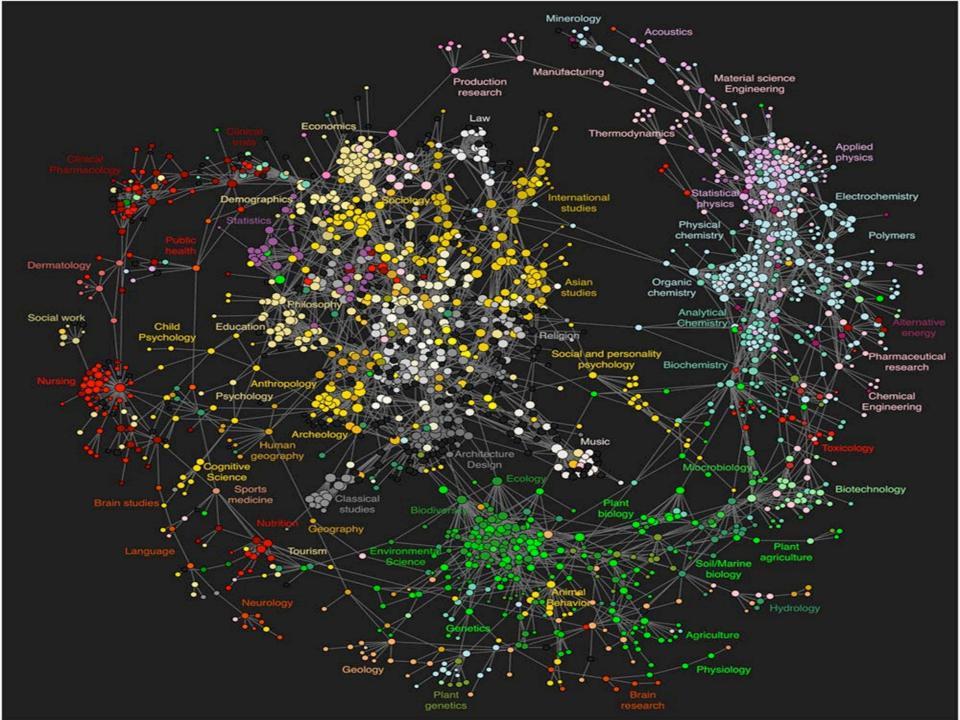
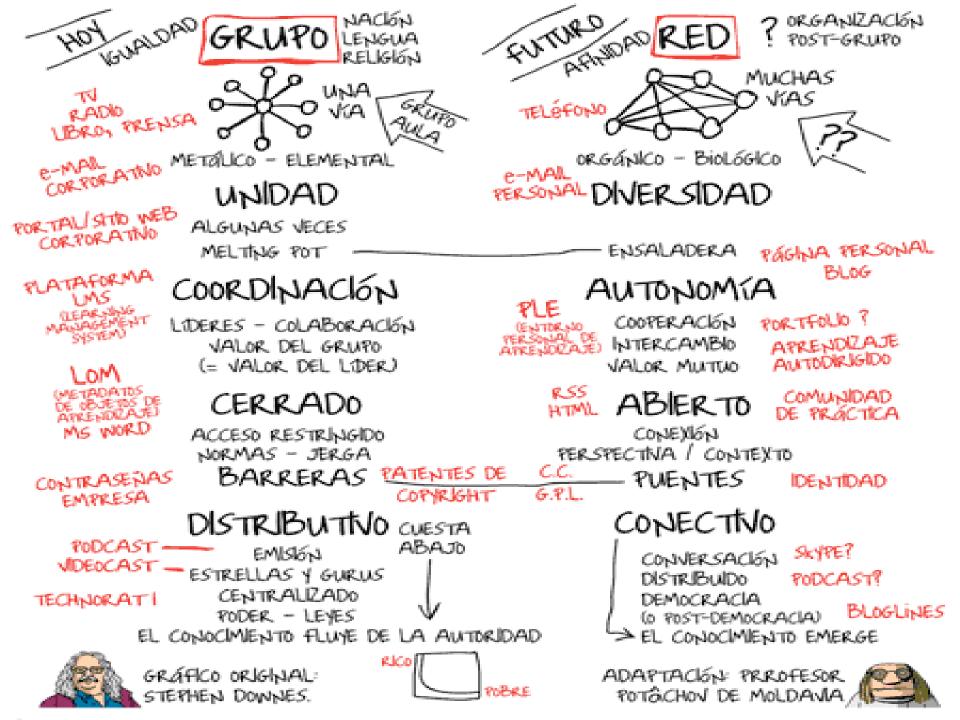
# Connectivism and Transculturality:

Personal Learning Environments









#### Diversity

 You need a mixture of materials – you cannot grow organically from carbon alone, or water alone



#### Openness

- Closed systems become stagnant
- Raw materials are depleted
- The system becomes clogged with the 'creative product' of its members



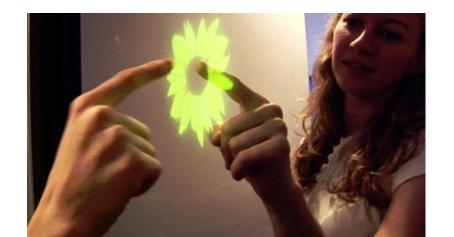
#### Autonomy

- The simple cloning of entities does not allow for progress or development
- Each individual entity must manage its own grown in its own way



#### Interactivity

- A system cannot grow unless its parts interact – flowers need bees, cows need grain, beavers need trees
- Growth is created not by accumulation but by flow, by constant activation and interaction



#### Connectivist teaching = Managing Connections

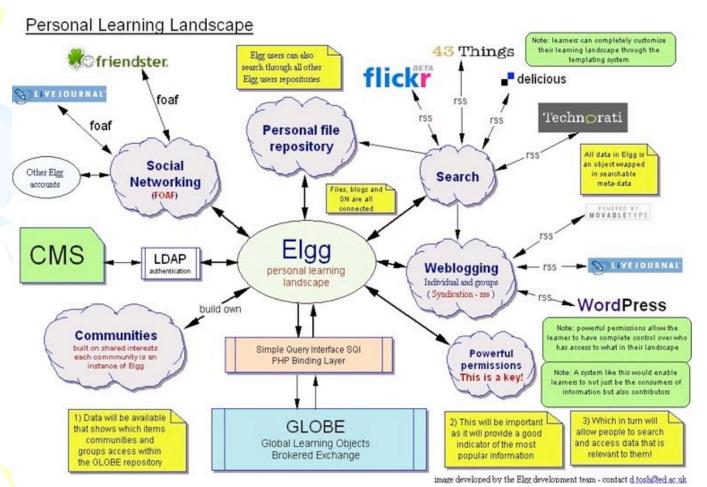


Image: <a href="http://tesl-ej.org/ej34/m1.html">http://tesl-ej.org/ej34/m1.html</a> Via: <a href="http://edtechpost.wikispaces.com/PLE+Diagrams">http://edtechpost.wikispaces.com/PLE+Diagrams</a>

#### Two Kinds of Knowledge

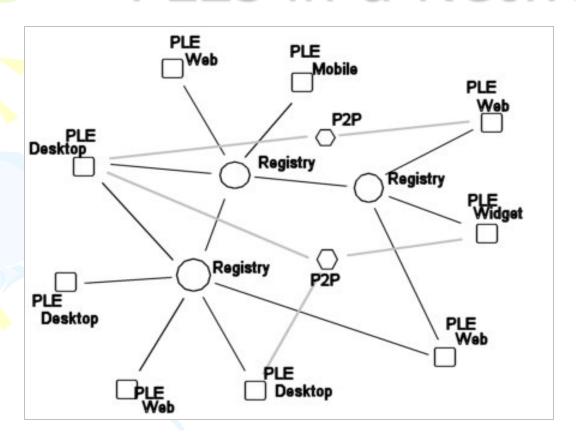
#### Knowledge in the Classroom:

- Static
- Declarative
- Authority-based

#### Knowledge in the Network:

- Dynamic
- Tacit / Non-Declarative
- Constructed

#### PLEs in a Network



Teachers and students are envisioned as working as a network

#### Social Learning

The next step in such a discussion is usually to describe a theory of social learning, depicting learning as an external process (or set of

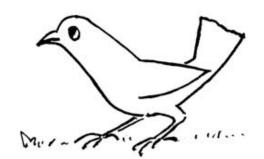
processes)



#### Some Forms of Social Learning

- Behaviourism / Instructivism
- Interaction & Interaction Theory (Moore)
- Social Constructivism (Vygotsky)
- Problem-Based Learning (Johnasson)





#### Aspects of Social Learning

- Externally-Based Definitions
  - Learning objectives, Body of Knowledge
- Externally-Based Processes
  - Learning activities, Processes and conversations
  - Interaction and communication
- External Systems
  - Classes, networks, groups, collaboration
- External Evaluation

#### Personal vs Social

Social knowledge is *not* personal knowledge

- Personal Knowledge management =
   Learning
- Social Knowledge Management = Research (or, social learning)

The product of the educational system is not a social outcome (knowledge, skill, problem, community) but a personal outcome



Image: http://www.stalipius.com/?page\_id=43

#### Personal Knowledge

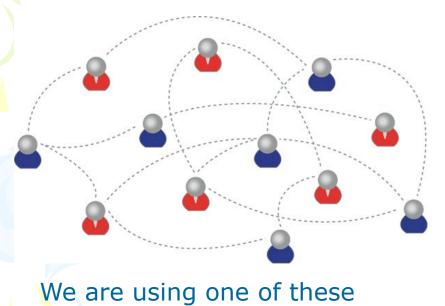


Figure 1. Biological Neuron

DENDRITES

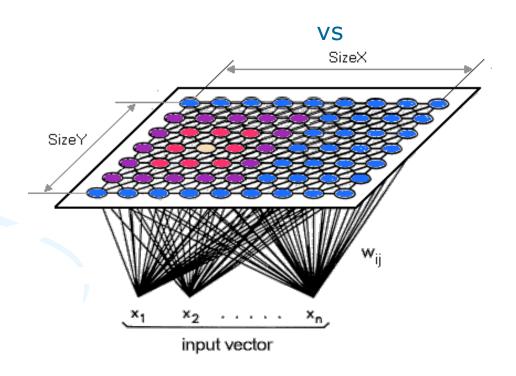
To create one of these

Personal knowledge consists of neural connections, not social connections

#### Learning Outcomes

Simple vs complex – text vs network

"Paris is the capital of France"



#### It's the difference between:

- 'Knowing' that 'Paris is the capital of France' or even some sort of 'knowing how' (these are external definitions of this knowledge) and
- What it feels like to have geographical knowledge; what it feels like to be a speaker of a language

## Learning a discipline is a total state and not a collection of specific states

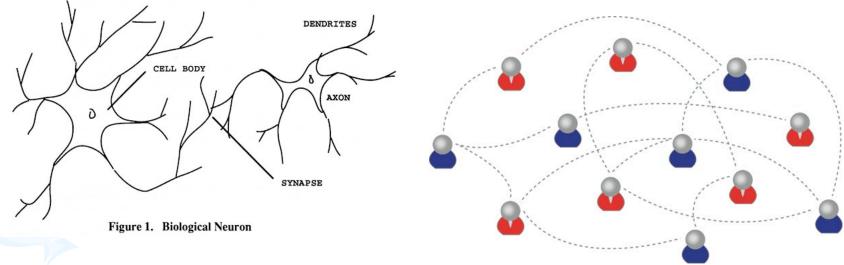


## It is obtained through *immersion* in an environment rather than acquisition of particular entities



Image: http://www.perthenglish.com/English/aboutus.html

It is expressed functionally (can you perform 'as a geographer'?) rather than cognitively (can you state 'geography facts' or do 'geography tasks'?)



We recognize this

By perfomance in this

There are not specific bits of knowledge or competencies, but rather, personal capacities

#### Personal Knowledge

- Is not 'constructed'
- You do not 'make meaning' for yourself
- It is a matter of organic growth



#### PLE as Exercise Machine

- A PLE is a tool intended to immerse yourself into the workings of a community
- Once immersed, you then practice being one of the people characteristic of the community

For example, you would learn philosophy by practicing 'being a philosopher' in a philosophical community

Developing personal knowledge is more like exercising than like inputting, absorbing or remembering

Your personal growth develops as a consequence of the interactions with that community

#### The Connectivist Course

Information is not 'taught' in a course offered using a personal learning environment. In the connectivist model of learning, course 'content' is created by the course participants themselves.

Students are not asked to perform any task in particular.

Rather, they are presented with a set of resources (readings, audio or video, email postings) from the instructors and other participants, and may do with these what they please.

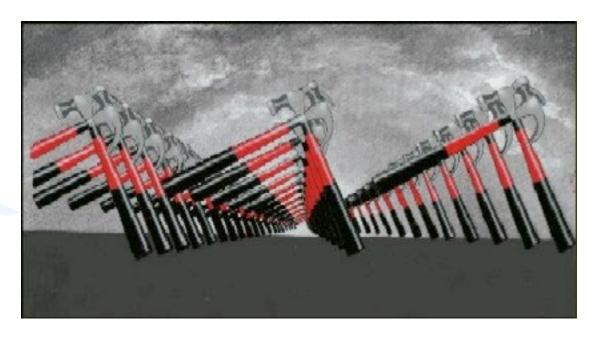
### Typically, a student in a connectivist course will:

- read (some of) the readings and listen to or watch some of the recordings
- post comments in threaded discussion forums
- create a blog and post comments and responses
- contribute content to the course wiki

#### In practice, students have engaged in a wide range of (generally unexpected) activities, such as:

- create a map of course participants
- establish, design and host seminars in a Second Life environment
- create videos of discussions
- Create Google or Yahoo groups
- organize translations of course materials
- create concept maps of course structures
- host live online forums

A connectivist course does not consist of a single identifiable group of people stepping through the same activity.



It is understood and expected that different students will undertake different activities, and that new learning will emerge through the interactions of students engaged in those different activities.

## A Connectivist course therefore has two major modes:

1. a creation of an environment (and expectation) of great diversity, creating multiple points of view on an amorphous body of material, domain or discipline
2. creation of new and unexpected knowledge as a result of the interaction of participants from those different points of view

- Stephen Downes
- http://www.downes.ca



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