

SELF-ORGANISED LEARNING

When learners control their own learning and make decisions about the way they organise their learning, given content and goals, this is called self-organised learning.¹

This clearly distinguishes self-organised learning from self-directed or self-determined learning.

In general, the term self-directed learning means that learning children or adults decide themselves about the goals and contents, the forms and ways, results and times as well as the places of their learning.

In the following, we want to deal exclusively with self-organised learning, because this approach fits better to our setting. In our setting, some of the parameters of learning are already fixed, while others are quite flexible and can be changed more often.

Let us first take a closer look at the individual parameters:

PARAMETERS (DIMENSIONS) OF SELF-ORGANISED LEARNING

•Access to education

Under which conditions does one learn?

This includes all framework conditions such as age, social class, education, etc., which in their totality result in different access to education.

•Aim

Why does one learn?

This includes personal as well as externally determined goals (intrinsically or extrinsically motivated).

•Content

What is to be learned?

This can be understood as the subject matter as well as personality-building content.

•Learning methods

How does one learn?

Methods include the different teaching styles as well as the different ways of learning.

•Location

Where does one learn?

Places can be usual seminar rooms, workshops etc. as well as nature with all its resources.

•Time

When, how long and how often does one learn?

•Composition of Learners

With whom does one learn?

This refers to the size of the group as well as the composition of the learning group.

•Evaluation of the results

What criteria determine a success?

Is there an evaluation system like school grades or another system and who does the evaluation.

¹ Michael Bannach (2002): Selbstbestimmtes Lernen. Freie Arbeit an selbst gewählten Themen. Schneider-Verl. Hohengehren

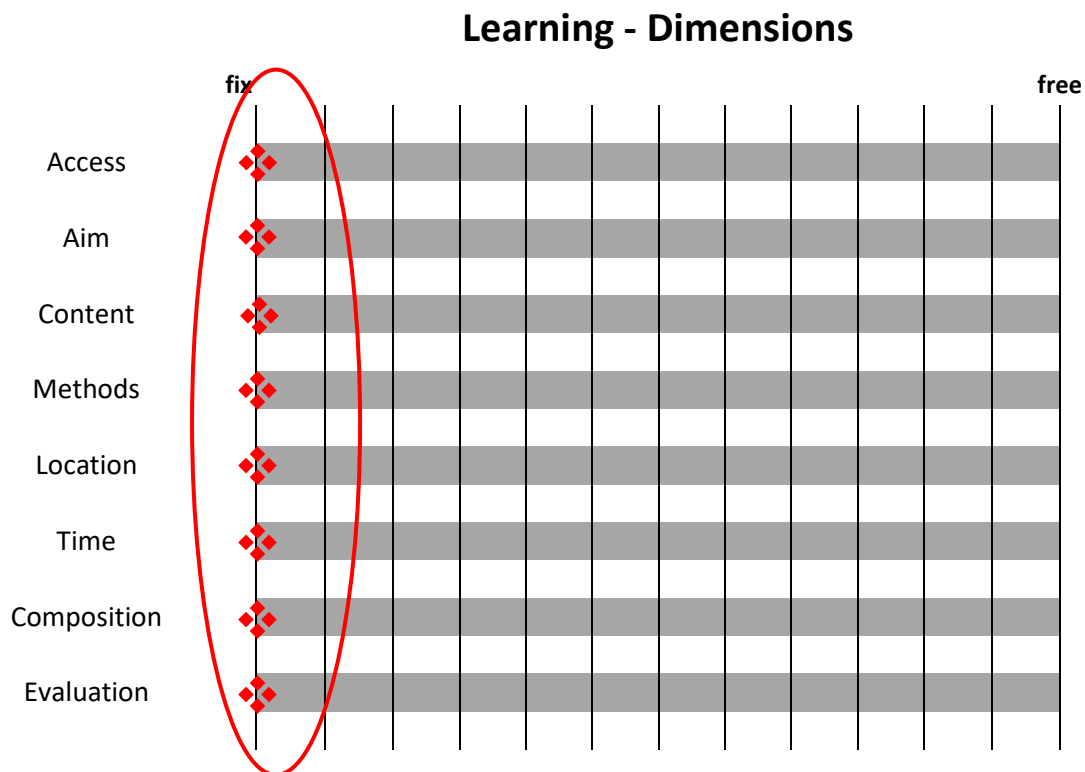
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL TRAINING AND TRAINING IN A SELF-ORGANISED SETTING

In order to gain an understanding of self-organised learning, it is useful to understand these dimensions as variables that are either fixed or more or less freely configurable.

In conventional teaching, the learning dimensions, which can also be understood as framework conditions in the broadest sense, are fixed.

As a rule, educational institutions and/or their orderer determine these framework conditions and there is something like a tacit agreement between teachers and learners that the teachers are also the experts for the design of these dimensions and that it is therefore also their sole responsibility to change these conditions in consultation with decision-makers.

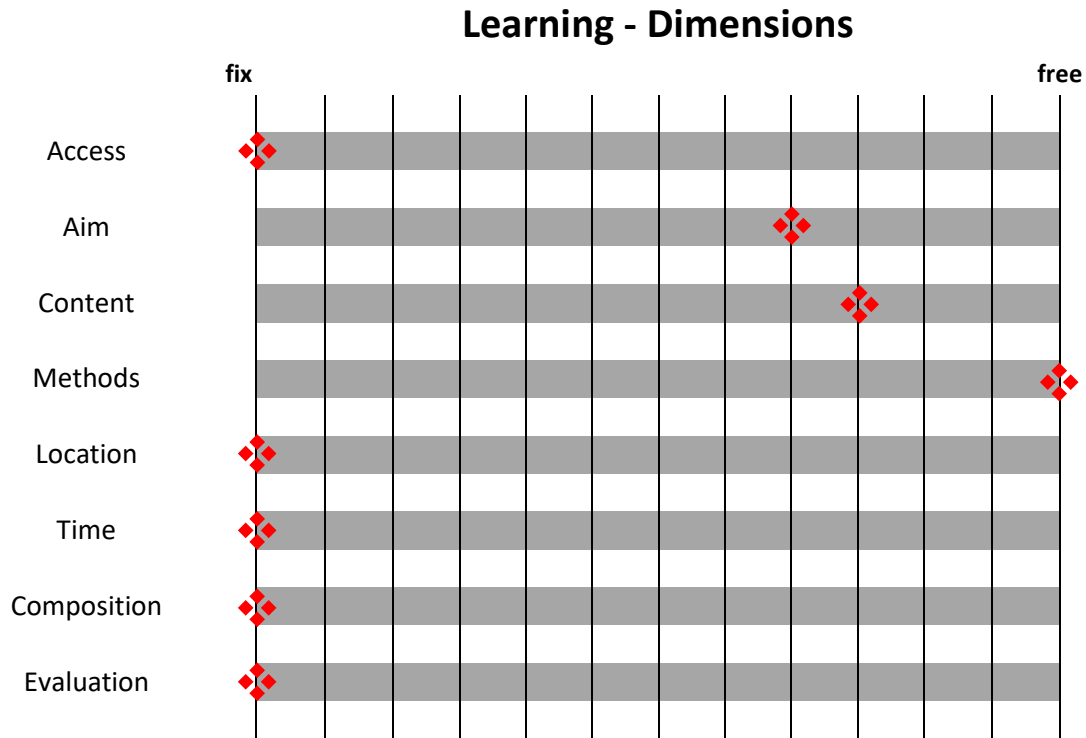
Figuratively speaking, it would be like this. If the individual parameters were available on a mixing console, all sliders would be set to the "fixed default" setting:



The idea of self-organised learning is not to understand these dimensions as fixed quantities, but as variables that can be shaped more or less freely by the teachers in conjunction with their learners.

EXAMPLES OF SELF-ORGANISED LEARNING

In this example, the content as well as the pace at which learning takes place and the associated teaching style are relatively free to choose, while the space in which and the time at which learning takes place are quite fixed.



In the following example, the places where learning takes place can be determined relatively freely, e.g. whether learning takes place in a seminar room, in nature through outdoor exercises or in premises at other cooperation partners, while the content of the seminar is strongly predetermined.

