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Connective Knowledge

1. Before trying to understand the unifying theory that applies to all kinds of knowledge at once, it is useful to apply it to them one at a time. (In fact, I understood the unifying aspects only much [later](#).)

I have my problems with “What is?” definitions because often they don’t focus on how a term of ordinary language is connected to related concepts of every day usage, but they ambitiously try to describe deeper meanings that seem most interesting in theoretical, philosophical, ethical, or actionable ways.

My discomfort with such deep brooding is not only due to my lack of philosophical training. Rather, I think that even the ordinary language meaning of knowledge is already interesting enough to be discussed in the light of today’s changes, and it is a pity to omit this discussion.

However, such ordinary language terms use to have multiple **senses**, and for “knowledge” I found in Merriam-Webster’s four major ones of them, two of which are marked as obsolete or archaic, and the remaining two are grouped around the concepts of

- someone’s *personal* knowing, and
- “the sum of what is known : the body of truth, information, and principles acquired by *humankind*“.

(These two can probably be mapped to the distinctions at the very bottom of Downes’ “[Types of Knowledge](#)”, and later even better to his "[Two Kinds of Knowledge](#)".)

2. Particularly the latter sense, the “body” of knowledge, is certainly something that is, in many contexts of everyday language, perceived as a **thing**, that can be stored in an encyclopedia and acquired from there - no matter how much we doubt the relevance of this sort of knowledge now. ([174](#))

The conceptualization of knowledge as a thing has caused big misunderstandings. These show not only in naïve expectations about teaching being able to transfer knowledge into the heads of the students. Similar misunderstandings shine through even in ideas that have partly embraced connectivist connections and see these (correctly) as more important than the content but see them (erroneously) as pipes that transport the knowledge content. Some seem to think that, in connectivism, the knowledge thing is simply transported through social connection pipes instead of using the vehicle of books.

3. Moreover, this kind of connections (social or external) are not the only kind that are examined by Connectivism. Rather, there are connections on three layers considered: Neural,

conceptual, and social/ external. They all three have one thing in common: that they can be illustrated by a single same **metaphor**, which allows to understand more than the simplest forms of knowledge.

It's the neuronal metaphor, the metaphor of a network with nodes and connections, where

“Not all connections are of equal strength in this metaphor” ([Wikipedia](#))

In a neuronal network, a (source) node is not uniquely related to one (target) node, but to *multiple* other nodes, and not with a probability of 1 but less than 1, so the residual *uncertainty* can not always be neglected.

- If the nodes each had one single target assigned to them they would form a *hierarchy* rather than a *network*.
- If one node would inevitably and with certainty lead to one determinate other node, we could speak of *rules* rather than *patterns*.
- If the strengths were equal, we had *equivalence* rather than *similarity*.

So-called exact knowledge often consists of a structure of concepts and terms that form a hierarchical tree of “broader terms” and hyponyms or special cases. If an object seems to resist such unique assignment, we add case discriminations. These distinctions add further branches and twigs to the hierarchical tree but never challenge the tree structure. With countless special cases and exceptions, the formation may become arbitrarily **complicated**, and the imaginative separator line between two concepts may look like a zigzag path, or adopt a folded or pleated shape. This is what the etymological root of complicated is (Latin *complicare* “to fold together”). The word root nicely visualizes the difference between complicated and **complex** because the latter comes from Latin *plectere* “weave, braid, twine”. This cannot be reduced to some hierarchy but always remains a network or a web.

4. So, connectivism and its neuronal connections metaphor, allow to distinguish more clearly between two types of knowledge, one of which is the more adequate one for coping with complexity and uncertainty: *connective* knowledge. ([169](#))

In particular, the difference between a hierarchical, **tree**-like topology and a true **network** graph topology, will suggest fruitful further considerations later. Since the tree topology is simply a **special case**, a border case, of a more general network, the two corresponding ideas about knowledge can peacefully coexist. Similarly, some simpler networks that cater to a simpler knowledge idea, are a special case of more complex networks.

One of the toughest parts of connectivism as an exhaustive explanation, is the question of representational knowledge. As I understand it, we should not think of knowledge as an internal reproduction of an external world, both of which would possess some absolute, objective, ontological (?) reality. However, I think there are many kinds of simple knowledge where such a simple conception does not hurt.

For many cognitive operations it is just sufficient to think of a knowledge item such as “Paris is the capital of France” as a simple connection between the object of Paris and the object of France, like a database relation which sort-of “snaps in place” when the **assertion** is learnt, and which helps more assertions about Paris to snap in place when combined. As long as the connection strength equals 1 (certainty or with a neglectable residual doubt about this reality), then I think this special case of knowledge can lightheartedly be viewed in the traditional,

non-connectivist way. After all, much public knowledge (accumulated through history, of non-[buffs](#), and dead people) is perceived in this way by the ordinary people who use the term in ordinary language.

If we see it as a border case of connective knowledge like the rectangle is a border case of a parallelogram, then, of course, we could still insist on the dictum that a rectangle is not a parallelogram, and that this simple case is not knowledge, but it is not too important, IMHO. As I understood it, connectivism allows for the special case, at least it “allows that representational systems - and hence, meaning - exist” ([Downes](#)). (179)

5. I think the connection, as the key element of connectivism, may be very concretely imagined and modelled by the metaphor of a line connecting two nodes, because then the essential distinctions are much easier to analyse. For instance, simple knowledge assertions like “Paris is the capital of France” can be imagined as connections that all have equal strength of a binary value 1 or 0, while the more complex knowledge constituents have varying strengths between 1 and 0.

Even with the special case of equal connection strength, the interesting comparison of DIK (see also the more philosophical, wisdom oriented thread on DIKW in the Moodle [forums](#)) can be [explained](#) in a way that I would call connectivist. (174)

Trees, Webs, and Similarity

6. Recall from above, that not all connections are of equal strength. If the connection strengths were equal, we had *equivalence* rather than *similarity*. And if the nodes each had one single target assigned to them they would form a *hierarchy* rather than a *network*. So, there are two aspects that can be illustrated particularly well by the connection metaphor, and they apply to my favorite thinking-support tools.

- One is **visualization**: The spatial proximity of nodes on a map can best cater for relationships that consist only of gradual similarity.
- The other one is bridging the gap between trees and networks by “**see also**” links: When nodes cannot uniquely be assigned to one distinguished parent node but exhibit only a preponderant affiliation, then the cross-reference is an important means to express the secondary relationships. (169)

The **tree vs. web** dichotomy is a very obvious issue that has intrigued me ever since my very first blog post in [2004](#), and it also constitutes the difference between mind maps (trees) and concept maps (webs).

There was a [discussion](#) about how hierarchical our “noodles” are. I wouldn’t see hierarchies/ trees as an incompatible opposite of networks/ webs. They are a border case, and mixed forms like this map (containing a cross link) are very useful. The more certainty we need the more hierarchical topology will emerge (i. e., the connection strengths will be binary). So for the belief system in the cited discussion, it’s no surprise to become a tree. However, software and industrial office organization have indeed skewed the balance in our noodles unduly towards trees. (176)

There is a fuzzy sort of classification scheme for concepts or subjects that is much more flexible and powerful than explicit, tree-like, taxonomies. It is emerging with many Web2.0

features, such as book recommendations, blog filter patterns by citation/ commenting, and social bookmarking, through mechanisms like “People who read *this* also read *that*“:

Much of our cognitive interests cannot be organized by explicit verbal classifications because the connections between the various topics that fascinate us are still too weak and vague. We seem to have no clearly defined list of topics that we like to read or blog about. However, the scope of interest revealed by **like-minded** persons, often serves as a good guess of whether it will be relevant for us or not, although this may be a seemingly chaotic collection of non-consistent matters. (193)

7. The tree vs. web dichotomy is also echoed in the difference between Concept Maps and Mindmaps, in a broader sense, that is, not strictly following the criteria of Novak (Cmaps) or Buzan (Mind Maps), because otherwise most maps that we produce would not deserve either of these labels.

In this broader sense, I would call anything a **mindmap** that has a predominant, radial, **hierarchical** structure (with cross connections being the exception), because the emphasis on the creative map generation process requires this radial structure.

Cmaps, in contrast, explicitly encourage cross-links (see the theoretical article linked in the Moodle discussion: “*Another important characteristic of concept maps is the inclusion of cross-links.*”). So I would call every **mesh-like** diagram of concepts a Cmap and ignore the urge for “propositions”.

I think the inclusion of propositions is a concession to people whose preferences (I don’t dare to say “style”) are more verbal than [spatially](#) visual, and this is useful when the map is not only used as a thinking tool by the creator himself but also for other viewers.

Similarly, today’s mindmaps are often trimmed in a manner appealing to people that would not otherwise look at pictures, and therefore often resemble text outlines. (177)

8. In any case, such visualizations lend themselves ideally to show similarity, conceptual proximity, by *spatial* proximity, and to show even conceptual connections that are still so weak that you don’t dare to draw a connector line between them. In this way, the graphic helps to temporarily store, and thus offload, parts of the “visuo-spatial sketchpad” of our short-term memory. (I wrote about this already before CCK08)

This is where ambitious discussions about the “outboard brain” may start, and where it becomes obvious why the connections on internet/ social/ external level are so prominent: Because the connectivism ideas are much more provocative here.

The idea that knowledge resides outside of ourselves, is really fascinating, and there are quite a few aspects where I admit the ideas are very close to plausible: Besides the the idea of the external [extension](#) of the “visuo-spatial sketchpad” of the short-term memory in visualization think-tools, this includes

- the strong congruence between people and the concepts they raised in their blogs - this gives me kind of a **sense of place** of knowledge when I try remembering where I read about a certain concept, and I retrieve it at the blogger’s place;

- the idea of knowledge as **navigating the connections** - this comes to mind when I navigate my various folder shortcuts, gradually strengthening the memory connections about which topics have tighter ties;
- and ultimately, the idea of the outboard brain auxiliary, in devices such as GPS, see [David Brooks](#) (via [Downes](#)). ([184](#))

Unfortunately, such “tools for thinking” often involve subtle differences that are at odds with the binary thinking in terms of either correct or incorrect of education leaders, and it is not easy to notice the differences involved in thinking since this takes place in the inaccessible preverbal domain (behind the mouth & ear firewall, so to speak). And few have called their own thinking styles into question. So, leaders often don’t even *notice* what a difference New Media makes. ([192](#))

Learning for Complexity

9. In education, **binary** thinking might suggest itself in a special extent since the notion of correct vs. incorrect is naturally important for teachers who mark responses every day. ([192](#)) As with electric circuits, there are only two states, on or off. Having learnt from the metaphor of neural pathways, however, we may know that there is a **diversity** of weak and strong circuits, and similarly, a diversity of methods leading to success. ([173](#))

In CCK08, our two facilitators modeled and demonstrated diversity. While George and Stephen still have more opinions in common than discrepancies, their differences were so beneficial that this might suggest that a connectivist teacher should always operate in tandem. Because students are always diverse. ([197](#))

10. Week eight’s topics of complexity and chaos illustrated what kind of world the students will have to cope with after they left school. It is immediately plausible that for this world, curricula are not very appropriate that focus on the opposite type of structures: **Neat**, linear or hierarchical knowledge content, perhaps occasionally complicated (like in jigsaw puzzles), but never messy and complex (like in weather).

So it is seemingly obvious that a teaching style might be more appropriate if it lets the students **rehearse complexity** right away. The more so as learning itself is complex, as well: Certainly teaching influences learning in *some* way, but we don’t really know in *which* way (deterministic unpredictability), and certainly it is not that simple and controllable that teaching them neat concepts (input) will enable them (output) to make the world neat.

But: Hoping that complexity enriched input will lead to complexity enabled output - doesn’t that also **presuppose** the controllable, cause effect relationship that we just denied learning to be?

Let me explain my doubts with the example of Phelps’ [study](#) to apply nonlinear methods to computer literacy learning. Nonlinear is not yet complex, in fact, it can be even simpler than complicated, namely exhibiting clear, tree-like structures. If we just send students out to the internet to find their sources, there is a big temptation that they settle with a resource that neatly arranges all the supposedly relevant facts in a few, hierarchical pages. So the trend would be even towards *less* complexity?

In the special context of computer training (that Jenny pointed to in her [number 2.](#)), this may not be noxious, since the subject matter of menus, click paths and file systems **is** indeed

hierarchical, and the “Ah ha” effect is nice when we discovered that a new shortcut leads to an already known option, much like **exploring** a foreign city and recognizing a previously visited crossing. But exploring does not necessarily mean to cope with complexity. It is even more precarious when a simulation creates the impression of a true copy of real world that only needs to be mastered to become fit for the next forty years.

So I think this week’s topics do not suggest ready-made recipes for next week’s instructional design. However, they might inform the construction of new, unbiased studies. (185)

11. What is the relationship between general education on one hand, and training for future careers and life, on the other?

Considering the growing complexity discussed last week, it is very improbable that the preparation for the future can be achieved by trying to anticipate the needed knowledge and impart it. And trying to anticipate complexity, simulate it, and [rehearse it](#) ? This may also be questionable. So, how much should education be assimilated to training? Humboldt, obviously, viewed this rather light-heartedly. He advocated for **autonomous** personalities. As U. Welbers observes, "*This educational ideal has incredibly much to do with trust.*"

With his advocacy for an autonomous learner, Humboldt sounds quite modern. Our today’s obstacle is that instead of trust, we focus on countless assessments and objectives and measurable outcomes. But after the degree is granted, nobody cares if the alumnus is able to keep current in their field. (186)

12. So, the topic of the next week was quite interesting: the assessment and assurance of validity and credit. In the context of connective knowledge, it bears major challenges.

- The traditional practice of assessments is largely shaped by a **measurability** delusion and the simple belief in determinable truths and collectable facts that has no room for complex patterns of weak ties.
- Similarly problems are apparent with traditional **citation** practice which tries to guarantee validity by building on well-supported papers of a certain level and size, that, in turn, inherit their credibility by the same constrained citation practice. However, relevant ideas that incrementally emerge from microcontent and grow by means of the subtle mutual influence of multiple authors, cannot be tracked like this. Some authors, such as [Efimova](#), acknowledge the difficulty of proper attribution. Sometimes a major influence is [contested](#). And most journal papers never cite blogs articles, at all.

Traditional assessments and citations alike, are flawed in this context. I think a possible reason is that *validity* assurance is overly messed up with prestige-laden **ranking** considerations.

In my opinion, a connectivist credit practice would keep proven means for validity assurance but would have to find new ways for grading, and more flexible ways for attribution of ideas.

- Ranking (beyond passed/ failed decisions about whether somebody has become capable of doing some responsible job) could be performed by the **open** assessments suggested by Siemens, if the examinee seeks so.
- Attribution to ideas “from the cloud” would require less formal procedures allowing for less precise, but more honest statements about who influenced an author. (188)

13. For paper 3 we were asked: "*Can our current world of weak ties and easy connections produce the depth of learning required to meet the complex challenges facing our future?*" Yes, and the weak connections are a core element of connectivism. Weak conceptual ties may become stronger, and then they afford more valuable **depth** of learning because they are anchored in a broader web and hence are more robust. And personal/ external connections are in many ways able to foster the *conceptual* connections. A major misconception may, however, arise from the disproportionate emphasis of the *personal* ties (and especially the "easy connections" on the internet) in contrast to the less spectacular conceptual layer ones. (192)

Theory and Change

14. Is Connectivism a learning theory or not? The first aspect, "*Does connectivism add something not covered by existing theories of learning?*" can be absolutely confirmed. For me, the most compelling indication was in Siemens' [interview](#) in Rick's cafe, his account of his own networked learning experience that were simply **not explained** by existing theories (~ 4'16"). This resonated well with my own experience, and if previous theories did not address these patterns, they are due to be supplemented (I don't say *replaced*). (173)

But I think connectivism's most interesting aspects are not *only* being a theory of learning, but offering a whole new view for much more. This whole new view, that is enabled by connectivism, extends to much more than learning and schools. Downes' and Siemens' discussions shed new light on fundamental concepts, such as rules versus patterns, complicated vs. complex, equivalence vs. similarity, and coping with ambiguity and uncertainty. And these considerations render many entrenched practices of the entire knowledge industry questionable.

The connectivist metaphor brings much more profit than just being a theory of how to improve teaching by learning from neuronal networks. Similarly, the **Renaissance** was not only the singular theory about how to improve, say, architecture, by learning from the antiquity, but instead, it brought about a whole variety of distinct but somehow similar and interrelated new thinking. And I like the Renaissance comparison more than comparing educational change with the [reformation](#) and the religious wars. (169)

By understanding the basics of diverse thinking styles, and if we accommodate for the coexistence of both connectivist and older styles, the theory could best leverage its descriptive strength by offering a whole new view as described [previously](#).

Further opportunities abound but I can only speculate and hint. Particularly, the theory explains mechanisms of learning that are best suited for coping with the growing complexity of our information rich world, by bridging literate abstractions and "oral" immediacy. And I suspect that connectivism therefore has the potential to provide the appropriate cognitive tools to eventually combine [Egan's](#) "three conflicting pillars", i. e., (i) socializing, (ii) knowledge about what is real and true, and (iii) encouraging the development of individual potential (which, in turn, perhaps correspond to [Lisa's](#) "industrialized education", Locke, and Rousseau....?) (192)

Resistance against the possible change will probably be the larger, the more the opportunities and the *descriptive* aspects are misunderstood as *prescriptive* and urge.

15. The paper 2 assignment asked: "Enjoy a creative stroll in rethinking 'what could be?'"

Yes, educators' roles are changing. But not in a radical, decisive way, as if the actors only needed to memorize a new text and change their costumes. There is still the stage director and the theatre principal (the reality of the actors' current position), the audience (the students who might desire the Nuremberg funnel), and the actors themselves (who might not always be the ideal cast for the juvenile beau). And they all have a certain attitude towards the role in question and a certain understanding of the whole script.

The main difference in the understanding of the instructional play is about how **tightly coupled** the curriculum and its "outcomes" are. Some think that simply the right content needs to be packaged in the right way and then the students will be well equipped for the rest of their lives. But a similar mindset can be found within the connectivist camp: Compose the right activities by mapping the right tools to the desired pedagogical principles, and then the students will go out and discover the right connections. To ensure short-term control, meticulous measurements and assessments are invented. And to make the program planning future-proof, rehearsal of complexity and unpredictability is included, as well.

One might suspect that such strong desire to control the educational progress is a matter of the personality of the respective actors, or even that teachers were particularly prone to such behavior. Or else, one could attribute this or that behaviors to varying abilities (as Dan Willingham says: "Good teaching is good teaching").

But I think both the personality and the ability explanations of the different behavior styles are insufficient (while definitely contributing). I think, the major styles and preferences difference is a cognitive one, a matter of how one likes to think about things and how one sees the world,

- more focussed in a **narrow**, goal-directed context, on facts, and rules,
- or more associatively interested in **wider** contexts embracing diversity, imperfect similarities and patterns, acknowledging uncertainty and unexpected, indirect effects.

Of course I cannot prove this conjecture or even give references, and I know that cognitive styles are a can of worms and readily equated with superficial VAK nonsense. ([189a](#)) Styles may show in preference for trees vs. webs as discussed above, for browse vs. search, for depth vs. breadth, for literacy vs. orality, abstraction vs. immediacy, or for forums vs. blogs below.

But the task is to ask "What could be". So I picture myself in a school where teachers simply are **aware** of their own cognitive style, and therefore concede students *their* styles, as well.

The first consequence of such a hypothetical wonderland would be that research studies concerning styles could be designed and performed without bias (or more precisely, with mutually neutralizing biases). And I would suspect that this would end the "no significant difference" findings and refute Willingham's nonexistence doctrine of learning styles.

Secondly, practices could be evolved that synthesize the two conflicting approaches. Probably, such a synthesis would not simply be a **mixture** of a fixed set of connectivist and traditional component ingredients. Nor would it be an optimal, fixed proportion determined with a [slider scale](#). Rather, the most appropriate way will probably be determined in each unique **situation** by the practitioners who know how to find the balance and the corridor ([Csikszentmihalyi's](#) flow) between patronizing the students with controlled design, or overcharging them with premature single-handedness.

Here I trust the experience of the **practitioners** (disclosure: I am not a teacher, but the flow concept applies also to my discipline). ([189a](#))

16. In today's climate of scientific certainty, the term "theory" immediately triggers the demand for **empirical** evidence. I don't doubt that such evidence could be delivered some day. But in complex environments like knowing and learning (that take place behind the observable input/ output interfaces of the mind), it is very difficult to construct study scenarios that are appropriate for the objects under study, without falling prey to some bias, and without having the results being spoiled by circumstances that unconsciously perpetuate the old-style approaches. Without such careful and patient design, the study would likely end up with the usual "no significant difference" finding which eventually shows up as "There is no ..." in some abridging citations (especially by authors who shy at the need for change).

However, Connectivism could very well help inform the design of such studies, because it is a powerful new view of many of the relevant aspects. ([179](#)) Its comprehensive, holistic understanding will empower the informed construction of valid testing scenarios. It can avoid hidden **bias** because it understands **subtle**, incremental effects and can easily detect and unmask potentially distorting conditions.

For empirical evidence to be established, there needs to be a robust, resilient set of concepts that can be applied when the study scenarios are to be designed. Not only the testing scenario that is *favorable* for connectivism needs to be constructed but also the *adverse* one for the control group. What type of concept networks are particularly adverse to connectivist learning? Perhaps those who, in some way, feature the involved *nodes* more than the involved *edges*. But how would a test arrangement be advised that obeys such criteria? ([196](#))

The MOOC

17. I soon realized how impossible it is to process all postings, so I tried to select a sample as randomized and representative as possible, and improved my digital. ([172](#))

The selecting and **picking** is not only a major component of digital literacy, but it is also tightly associated with trust, and resonance, which is where the conceptual layer of connectivism and its social layer meet.

This relationship of the conceptual connections and the social/ external connections, was the most intriguing question of the MOOC. It was not separately addressed but on several occasions I could enhance my understanding about it. And since for me, the conceptual level is the most important one while the social/ external level was more intensively discussed due to the relevance of the internet (and the neural level being tackled already by **connectionism**), the progress with this relationship is a very satisfying result. ([193](#)) I also chose this topic for my final [presentation](#).

However, it is still a very tough topic and I cannot sufficiently express all my guesswork. This revolves around four major clusters:

18. One is Echo and resonating. This is the most powerful but hardest to describe mechanism: What happens when an idea or some microcontent strikes a chord or resonates with someone else, and when that other person's reaction, in turn, influences the first person's conceptual network.

The parts of a text that *do* resonate with someone else are a very **significant** selection of the entire text because this selection does not necessarily indicate just some validity measure, but a conceptual connection within someone else's cognitive network. And the text may resonate with multiple people, in different areas within their conceptual networks. These reactions can be more valuable than the text itself, since they manifest **multidimensional**, web-like connections while the text itself is just a linear, funneled surrogate of the author's multidimensional concept network.

The unique, personal view of others about a work does not only exert its effect via comments and citations on the author's own learning. It also serves as redundancy for thirds: Sometimes when a reader had first neglected a certain important aspect, others will probably notice this aspect and cite, comment, or otherwise highlight it. This **redundancy** mechanism is a pleasant relief from the urge of quickly deciding whether to read a text or skip it. In fact, without this effect the **scanning** and skimming of the information overload would not be possible.

All these effects of multiple minds on a conceptual problem are a great affordance of connectivist patterns. And while **constructivism** focusses on the effects on a single, shared learning experience, these effects of connections allow for multiple simultaneous knowledge enhancements. (193) I resumed these topics later, in particular [e-resonance](#).

19. Another cluster of my above-mentioned guesswork about the interaction between the conceptual layer and the social/ external layer is (besides fuzzy categories and knowledge residing externally, see above), the question of *Structural preferences*.

The extent to which someone dislikes centralized discussion venues or distributed exchanges, is IMO often correlated with other preferences, both social and conceptual ones. This became apparent in the debate over forums vs. blogs discussions.

I have the impression that while the distributed blogs need a **centripetal** power towards the common discussion topic, there is a **centrifugal** tendency on forums, to meander farther away from the subject, perhaps in order to profile oneself among the crowds on the central stage, or simply because that is one's style to deal with concepts. Some just prefer hierarchical tree-like structures (which are excessively and IMO dauntingly predominant in Moodle's nested view of the monster threads of 150+ posts) while others prefer a web and put up with the different access procedures and the orientation challenges.

Similarly, there were differences visible that relate to power structure, and to personality styles of coping with this. Different perceptions of what is an "ad hominem" attack as opposed to "ad rem" illustrate how people's and matters' connections are related. (193)

For me, the moodle forum was quite a challenge. Both the nodes and the connections of the mammoth threads are impossible to overlook, neither in nested nor in threaded nor in flat form. The **connections** to the previous posts are mostly implicit, or at best cryptic ("Hi Pat"), so that reconstructing them costs me thorough reading rather than scanning.

And the **nodes** are undistinguishable because the post titles remind me of the [Colossal Cave](#) game (that we seniors played on black and green screens): "*Little maze of twisting passages - Little maze of twisty passages - Little twisty maze of passages - Maze of little twisting passages - ...*" If the titles happen to be slightly different, they are still meaningless.

So, clicking back and forth to reconstruct the inner, conceptual connections between posts, which has become a matter of course with blog reading, is a pain. I suspect that the real forum lovers never read them in context on the browser, but in the mailbox just one after another. I don't argue that forums are worse than blogs - they are just for a different learning **style**, and *not* for mine. ([175](#))

6. Mai 2012, 14:52