Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Learning Objects

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Briefly the objective of this presentation is to provide an overview of the origin of the concept and term of learning object in instructional design within the context of standardized, sharable, computer-based operations. Secondly, the philosophical foundations will be discussed mainly in terms of the framework of the crucial distinction between learning objects as mere external knowledge objects and the process of self-reflective learning that is needed to make the use of learning objects truly successful. Both the historical and philosophical foundations of learning objects will be treated in terms of the relationship between learning objects and learning subjects. The latter includes both instructional designers in the historical and practical development of learning objects, and the audience for which learning objects are intended to help educate. Particularly, historical and philosophical foundations should recognize the dual trajectory towards producing standardized small curricular units and at the same time affecting, educating and even transforming learners.