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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 5 Learning Objectives of Interest Revisited (#16) |
| Date | 23-Nov-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 5 |

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*Image courtesy of* [*http://academy.hubspot.com/blog/bid/109553/*](http://academy.hubspot.com/blog/bid/109553/)

Please find the revisit of the learning objectives of most interest to me for Module 5 below:

**Discuss the range of best practices in online teaching and learning as theory moves into practice**

I found my top three best practices for implementing online teaching in Otte and Banke:

* “Faculty development may be the single most central piece of any program” (Otte & Banke, 2006, p. 25).
* “A coherent support structure is essential” (Otte & Banke, 2006, p. 24).
* “Any change in instruction is, perforce, a matter of pedagogy, and that is never adequately addressed by a recipe-like how-to approach” (Otte & Banke, 2006, p. 25).

I found my top three best practices for implementing online learning in Moisey and Hughes:

* Learning institutions need to help students with examining their expectations & readiness for online learning (Moisey & Hughes, 2008).
* Institutions must provide administrative and logistic online support including course registrations, examination requests, purchasing textbooks, and course materials (Moisey & Hughes, 2008).
* Institutions must provide information and technological support including academic support, technical helpdesk support and program advising (Moisey & Hughes, 2008).

**Discuss how theory does (or does not) inform policy in the DE organization**

Theory can but may not always inform policy in a DE organization. Student proficiency levels and educational technology can be points of policy (Sears, 2013). Determining proficiency can be heavily influenced by theory. Those in the objectivist school with its emphasis on formal assessment would define how to assess proficiency differently than a constructivist practitioner. Technology may also be influenced by theory – an OCL practitioner has no need of chalkboards but may still need text book needed by their face-to-face counterparts.

Other areas related to policy are teacher evaluation and accountability (Sears, 2013). These areas are not as influenced by technology. Student survey results and peer observation are not influenced by theory although the medium of how they are gathered may be different (online surveys versus paper surveys). Both teacher and student accountability (making deadlines, responding in a timely manner to queries) again are not influenced by theory although the medium may be different.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Leadership & Interesting Insight & Favorite Quotes (#15) |
| Date | 20-Nov-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 5 |

**LEADERSHIP**

Otte & Banke’s (2006) descriptions of roles, advocacy, leadership, change management, liaising with other functional areas are all concepts that are part of my everyday reality. When I read Otte & Banke, I felt like I was returning home ☺

**INTERESTING INSIGHT**

The most interesting insight for Module 5 reading was in Gonzalez-Sanmamed, Guardia, & Sangra (2007) in regards to studies that state that there is no significant difference between face-to-face and online learning. They bring into question this research on the premise that online learning is just a duplication of traditional face-to-face materials; if the same materials are used, it is not surprising there is no difference (Gonzalez-Sanmamed et al., 2007).

**FAVORITE QUOTES**

To close out this reflection, here are my favorite quotes from Module 5 readings:

“Generally, faculties try to extend their face-to-face activities to a technological environment without taking into account how the educational context has changed” (Gonzalez-Sanmamed et al., 2007, p. 285).

“Depending on the nature of the organization – a mega-university, a dedicated distance learning institution, or a dual-mode institution – the manner in which services and supports are provided may vary. But the aim remains the same: to provide an ideal learning environment that promotes the learner’s independence while facilitating the learning process with supports that are flexible, accessible, and readily available when needed” (Moisey & Hughes, 2008, p. 437).

“Because the principal change agents are those managing new modes of delivery—and brokering the meshing of the old and the new—the pivotal leadership comes from them, dependent as they are on those above and below, on executive sponsorship and on the full cooperation of support staff and engaged faculty” (Otte & Banke, 2006, p. 24).

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 5 Learning Objectives of Interest (#14) |
| Date | 11-Nov-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 5 |

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The learning objectives of most interest to me for Module 5:

* Discuss the range of best practices in online teaching and learning as theory moves into practice
* Discuss how theory does (or does not) inform policy in the DE organization

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 4 Learning Objectives Revisited (#13) |
| Date | 11-Nov-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 4 |

**Explore the range of what community means in the field of online teaching and learning**

Community means different things to different researchers. Siemens (2004) views community through the metaphor of connections within a computer, people and the knowledge they understand are nodes connected together through their networks. Downes (2005) conceptualizes community as a group of people who share the same associations and meaning as others in the shared community. Siemens appears fascinated by the connectivity itself while Downes explores the same theory from a humanistic perspective.

Lave and Wenger (2002) researched the way people learn in their daily lives and suggested the typology of a ‘community of practice,’ which is based on the premises that humans are social beings, and that knowledge is developed through active engagement in valued undertakings throughout their lives. Clearly, learning does not only take place within a learning institution.

Kop and Hill (2008) discuss Lave and Wenger’s informal learning research. Lave and Wenger posit that people are social beings who develop knowledge through active engagement in valued undertakings. They suggested the term community of practice. Harism (2011) discusses how the role of instructor is to serve as representative of the knowledge community in their discipline.

The only definition that does not resonate with me is Siemens, the metaphor of human beings being likened to nodes in a computer network seems very mechanical.

**Discuss the current state MOOCs (xMOOCs and cMOOCs) and describe how they may affect the current and future roles of instructors, learners, course designers, and educational institutions and other stakeholders**

I feel xMOOCs which transfer the traditional, didactic model online will have less impact on current roles than cMOOCs which are a new model for learning (Siemens, 2012). All MOOCs require all stakeholders to be explicit with the written word, be able and willing to interact with computers rather than people to enable successful learning experiences. MOOCs require institutions to create/maintain a LMS to share online content.

cMOOCs allow learners to be participative as they explore distributed knowledge networks as they generate knowledge. Instructors and course designers must be expert in their subject areas in order to design courses and to guide learners. Learners must be proactive as they search for as well as generate knowledge.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Four Bones to pick with Connectivism (#12) |
| Date | 2-Nov-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 4 |

While I was reading about Connectivism, I ran across a number of items that I did not agree with. I start with the quote and then talk about the “bone” that was my objection. There were more items than those listed in this reflection; I felt the top four deserved individual attention:

“The organization and the individual are both learning organisms. Increased attention to knowledge management highlights the need for a theory that attempts to explain the link between individual and organizational learning” (Siemens, 2004, Introduction, para. 4)

Bone #1: Organizations themselves cannot consume or apply learning. Only human beings can consume and apply learning. Therefore, organizations are learning organisms ***only in so far*** as they have need of and fulfill needs of the *human* learners in their organization. Of course I am defining learning differently than Siemens (see Bone #3 below for this definition)

“In today’s environment, action is often needed without personal learning – that is, we need to act by drawing information outside of our primary knowledge” (Siemens, 2004, Limitations of Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism, para. 2)

Bone #2: Our working environments form a context or framework of the knowledge that the organization and the learners within it consider important. I agree, that we need to act by drawing on information with *scanty* primary knowledge. However, I disagree that we *can* act by drawing information *outside* of our primary knowledge. We have to have some sort of clue before we can take action. For example, when I was in IT, I was given the assignment of creating an ftp. I searched for information on the web host’s help system on how to do this. But I first had to have a clue that ftps existed, what they were good for, etc., before I would *even know it was possible to* or *would* *even want* *to* find out the details about setting one up.

“Learning (defined as actionable knowledge) can reside outside of ourselves (within an organization or a database), is focused on connecting specialized information sets, and the connections that enable us to learn more are more important than our current state of knowing” (Siemens, 2004, Connectivism, para. 1).

Bone #3: I really question *redefining learning* in the passage above. Learning can be defined as 1) knowledge acquired by systematic study in any field of scholarly application, 2) the act or process of acquiring knowledge or skill, 3) the modification of behavior through practice, training, or experience (<http://www.dictionary.com>). I would agree that learning ***objects*** can reside outside of ourselves. However, I feel it is a far leap to redefine learning as Siemens has done. The “traditional” definition given above involves a human agent doing something while Siemens definition only deals with an amorphous digital lump of knowledge residing in the ether of the internet.

Let’s say that a knowledge article on installing a well resides on a YouTube video. Someone residing in the country of Eritrea which is on the African continent would like to install a well in their town. Does that mean they *cannot* learn this because they don’t have access to YouTube or that video? I guess they’ll have to wait for a charitable organization to visit their town so they now have access to this “learning.”

“There is no 'magic' to obtaining ***knowledge***, no secret short-cut, ***save for practice*** and ***reflection***” (Downes, 2005, Knowledge, para. 7)

Bone #4: Hmmm…where have I heard this before? “Constructivist theory posits that people construct their own understanding and ***knowledge*** of the world through ***experiencing*** the world, and ***reflecting*** on those experiences**”** (Harasim, 2011, p. 60).

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 4 Learning Objectives of Interest (#11) |
| Date | 28-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 4 |

The learning objectives of most interest to me for Module 4:

* Explore the range of what community means in the field of online teaching and learning
* Discuss the current state MOOCs (xMOOCs and cMOOCs) and describe how they may affect the current and future roles of instructors, learners, course designers, and educational institutions and other stakeholders

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 3 Learning Objectives Reflection (#10) |
| Date | 27-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 3 |

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Image courtesy of <http://alphaconstructionoc.com/>

Since I was tardy on defining my learning objectives, this is just a wrap up of the objective that was of most interest to me:

**Define constructivist and OCL theories of learning and explore their strengths and weaknesses for online teaching and learning**

The constructivist view of learning has generated a number of teaching approaches, based on the following four key principles or values: 1) Active learning, 2) Learning-by-doing, 3) Scaffolded learning, and 4) Collaborative learning (Harasim, 2011). Constructivism is well suited to online technology as “computers are viewed as the optimal medium for applying constructivist principles to educational practice, because computer software can support various strategies and approaches more easily and effectively than other media” (Harasim, 2011, p. 73). Each principle of constructivism can pose the following challenges:

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| **Constructivist Principle** | **Challenges** |
| Active learning, Learing-by-doing, Collaborative learning | Instructors must set expectations for learners who are used to a didactic learning mode |
| Collaborative learning | Considerable thought into questions that might reveal misunderstanding or to promote synthesis about the material being taught is needed on the part of the designer (Moore & Kearsley, 2012). |
| Scaffolded learning | Instructors are challenged to provide adequate scaffolding for the diverse set of learners in their class |

Online Collaborative Learning (OCL) “refers to educational applications that emphasize collaborative discourse and knowledge building mediated by the Internet; leaners work together to identify and advance issues of understanding, and to apply their new understanding and analytical terms and tools to solving problems, constructing plans or developing explanations of phenomena” (Harasim, 2011, p. 88).

* **Idea Generation**: individual students contribute their ideas and opinions to the group (Harasim, 2011)
* **Idea Organization:** students reflect on ideas presented & begin to interact with each other – several smaller ideas become larger
* **Idea Convergence:** the group actively engages in co-construction of knowledge and group members synthesize knowledge into explicit points of view or positions on a topic

The strengths the discourse provided by OCL for online teaching and learning include: 1) greatly expanded student participation; student benefits from access to new cultures, perspectives and input, 2) exposure to guest experts or participants from outside class, and 3) the 24/7 availability of online discussions allows for highly active and interactive discourse as it gives participants time to draft a thoughtful response and access resources to enhance their input. This also facilitates discourse across time zones (Harasim, 2011, p.98). The challenges for the discourse used in OCL include: 1) participants need to become sensitized to cultural differences and nuances, 2) students can face difficulties in creating suitable learning spaces at home/office, 3) students may experience communication anxiety awaiting a response or frustration if discussion begins to lag, and 4) online forum systems are not well designed to facilitate convergent thinking, it requires instructor to organize/structure group discussions into intellectual processes.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Online Collaborative Theory the Next Step in Constructivist Epistemology (#9) |
| Date | 25-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 3 |

As I was reading Harasim’s (2011) chapter on Online Collaborative Theory (OCL) it brought me back to OMDE 601.

In Jonassen, Davidson, Collins, Campbell, Bannan Haag (1995), constructivism is examined in the context of computer mediated conferencing. Per Jonassen, et al. (1995) “meaning making, according to constructivists, is the goal of learning processes; it requires articulation and reflection on what we know. The processes of articulation and reflection involve both internal negotiation and social negotiation” (pp. 10-11). OCL “focuses on collaborative learning, knowledge building, and Internet use as a means to reshape formal, nonformal and informal education” (Harasim, 2011, p. 81). For me today, meaning making vs. knowledge building appears on the surface the same as tom*aa*to vs. tom*ah*to. For now, I’m chalking it up to the fact both theories share the same constructivist epistemology.

While I was pondering this I wanted to do a comparison between the “working parts” of each theory to see if this provides further verification of the similarities noted above:

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| **Jonassen et al. (1995)** | **Harasim (2011)** |
| Articulation of understanding via Internal Negotiation: “debate, wrestle, and argue with ourselves over what is correct” (p. 11) | Idea Generation: ”individual students contribute their ideas and opinions to the group” (p. 93) |
| Social Negotiation and Reflection: “negotiate with each other over the correct meaning of ideas or events.” (p. 11) | Idea Organizing “beginning of convergence as participants confront new or different ideas, clarify and cluster these new ideas” (p. 93) |

The final step in OCL is idea convergence where the group actively engages in co-construction of knowledge, group members synthesize knowledge into explicit points of view or positions on a topic (Harasim, 2011). Hence, the words “next step” in the title of this post. The final step in OCL, idea convergence, expresses the next step in describing constructivist epistemology.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 2 Learning Objectives Revisited (#8) |
| Date | 13-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 2 |
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*Image courtesy of Image courtesy of*[*http://www.clipart.com*](http://www.clipart.com) *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brain*

**Define behaviorist and cognitivist theories of learning and explore their strengths and weaknesses for online teaching and learning**

“Under behaviorism, the definition of learning was reduced and simplified to simple conditioning: the stimulus and the response” (Harasim, 2011, p. 31). E-learning courses that focus on the content and are presented in a modularized format, with stated learning objectives and end-of-unit assessment tools to provide positive or negative feedback, are an effective and efficient way to teach students according to Behaviorists (Kanuka, 2008). Weaknesses of behaviorism for online teaching and learning: 1) stated behavioral objectives cannot predetermine the end product of a learning experience, 2) discounts other types of learning, 3) Can be said to dehumanize students and inhibit their creativity, and 4) fragmenting the curriculum into bits and pieces while overlooking the whole (Kanuka, 2008).

“The key difference between behaviorist and cognitivist theories of learning was the importance accorded to what goes on between the stimulus or input and the resultant behavior. Cognitivists were interested in modeling the mental structures and processes that operated in the mind in order to explain behavior” (Harasim, 2011, p. 47). Robert M. Gagnè started as a behaviorist researcher and evolved to cognitivist research (Harasim, 2011). Strengths of Gagnè’s theory to determine what skills and knowledge are required for someone to perform effectively at a particular task or job and how to determine how these requirements might best be learned (Harasim, 2011). These are strengths that can be transferred to the online environment. Weakness of cognitivism: 1) problems with the concept of a machine as an intelligence, 2) Researchers began to reconsider their own work, 3) Researchers and scholars had little contact with education practice or practitioners, and 4) Technologies developed by cognitivist researchers isolated from classroom realities (Harasim, 2011).

**Demonstrate how behaviorist and cognitivist theories can inform pedagogical and technological choices**

The pedagogy of behaviorism revolves around punishment of undesirable behaviors and reinforcement of desirable behaviors (Harasim, 2011). Behaviorist technology starting with the Pressey Testing Machine through Computer Aided Instruction revolves about testing on content (Harasim, 2011).

The pedagogy of cognitivism is based on Gagnè’s theory:

* **Learning outcomes** define each category leading to a different type or class of human performance
* **Specific conditions for learning** are building blocks for instruction, each learning outcome has associated conditions of learning; different learning outcomes call for different learning conditions
* **Events of instruction** are intended to promote the transfer of knowledge or information through the stages of memory (Harasim, 2011).

Cognitivist technology is a further evolution of behaviorist technology encompassing Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS), which also presents content and uses branching to provide more individualized feedback, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), which posited that computers should be able to solve the problems, achieve human-like cognitive performance; these thinking computers can then acts as instructors (Harasim, 2011).

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| Entry Title (Number) | Where has all the Synthesis Gone? (#7) |
| Date | 5-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 2 |
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Click on this link to get in the mood for this reflection: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Qt57c7rnHM>

Per Harasim (2011) the order of Bloom’s taxonomy from lowest cognitive level to highest cognitive level appears below:

**Classic Version Definition**

Knowledge Recall or bring to mind

Comprehension Individual knows what is being communicated & can make use of the materials/idea without necessarily relating it other materials or seeing its fullest implications

Application The use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations

Analysis Breakdown of a communication into its constituent parts

Synthesis Taking parts and arranging/combining them in such a way as to constitute a pattern or structure not clearly there before

Evaluation Judgments about the value of materials/methods for a given purpose

The new version of Bloom’s as curated by Overbaugh and Schultz (n.d.), again from lowest cognitive level to highest cognitive level appears below:

**New Version Definition**

Remembering Can the student recall or remember the information?

Understanding Can the student explain ideas or concepts?

Applying Can the student use the information in a new way?

Analyzing Can the student distinguish between the different parts?

Evaluating Can the student justify a stand or decision?

Creation Can the student create new product or point of view?

So I went through to do a 1:1 correspondence to make sure they both lined up. As you can see for the first 4 levels we have roughly a 1:1 correspondence:

* Knowledge (knowledge recall) = Remembering (information recall)
* Comprehension (knows what is being communicated & can make use of it) = Understanding (explaining)
* Application (use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations) = Applying (use the information in a new way)
* Analysis (breakdown of a communication into its constituent parts) = Analyzing (distinguish between the different parts)

So being a fan of the process of elimination, it was easy to see that evaluation might have something to do with evaluating. It is worth noting that they are in different order. Evaluation is at the top of the classic hierarchy while Evaluating is second from the top in the new. Are they different? Why the change in order?

Evaluation in classic Bloom is about making judgments about the value of materials/methods for a given purpose. Evaluating in the new Bloom is about justifying a stand or decision. For many years, there was *no* Surgeon General’s Warning on cigarette packs talking about how dangerous smoking is to our health. I am sure that previous Surgeon Generals were able to *justify* their position for not issuing the warnings. But would we think today that their *judgment* was sound?

Given the move from objectivist epistemology which was the prevailing educational thought of the time when Bloom’s original work to constructivism which was a prevailing education thought during the revision, some changes make sense. Getting back to Evaluation/Evaluating, judgments can be thought of as authoritative and absolute, similar adjectives that can apply to objectivism (Haraism, 2011). Justifications can be thought of as more subjective as is more in line with constructivism (Harasim, 2011).

The final changes between classic and new Bloom’s involves Synthesis versus Creating. The synthesis in classic Blooms seems to encourage active brainstorming to arrange and re-arrange parts to discover a new pattern *prior* to making a judgment. However, in my opinion, creating in the new Bloom’s seems to encourage the creation of a single end product without the brainstorming implied by classic Bloom’s synthesis.

In my opinion, the new Bloom’s encourages less deep thinking while encouraging justifying a point of view through artifact creation. So, what is gained as we move from the classic taxonomy to the new which signals the underlying move from objectivism to constructivism? What is lost? In truth, only time will tell.

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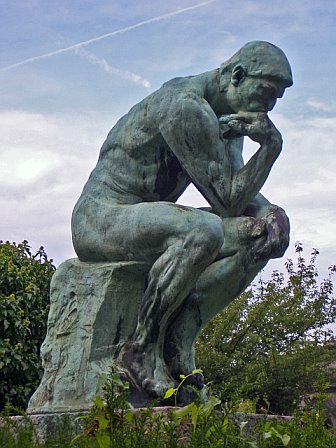
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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 2 Learning Objectives to Explore (#6) |
| Date | 1-Oct-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 2 |
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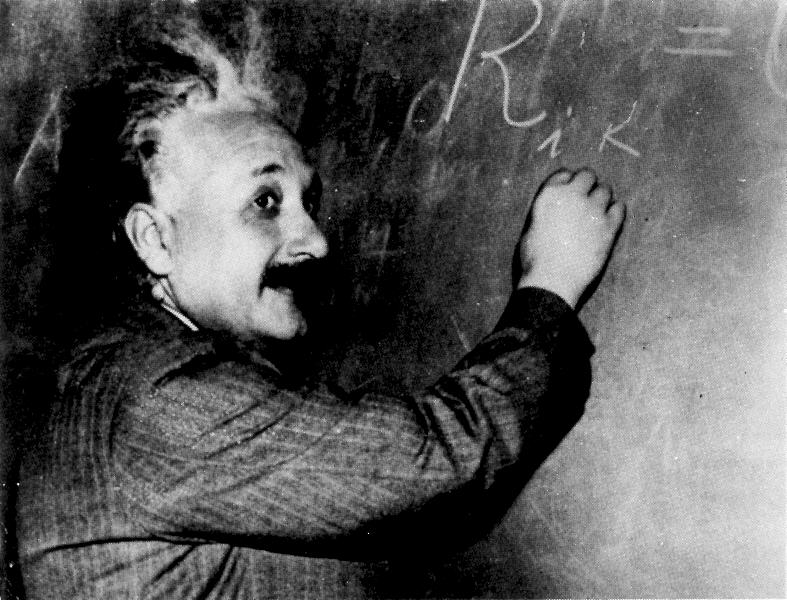
*Image courtesy of Image courtesy of*[*http://www.clipart.com*](http://www.clipart.com) *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brain*

The two learning objectives that I set out to learn the most about where: 1) Define behaviorist and cognitivist theories of learning and explore their strengths and weaknesses for online teaching and learning and 2) Demonstrate how behaviorist and cognitivist theories can inform pedagogical and technological choices.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 1 Learning Objectives Revisited and a sidebar (#5) |
| Date | 25-Sep-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 1 |
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[](http://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=1&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&docid=apsNs1f-g4SyUM&tbnid=2r28xQEpSPMuoM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://freelyassociating.org/2011/08/reading-on-the-riot-act/the-thinker/&ei=qTY_UvKyFLXc4AOetoDYBA&bvm=bv.52434380,d.dmg&psig=AFQjCNGBj5zk_n4lgjlSw8sk_bq35_pNxQ&ust=1379960824084867)

*Image courtesy of http://freelyassociating.org/2011/08/reading-on-the-riot-act/the-thinker/*

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*Image courtesy of http://scipp.ucsc.edu/theory/theoryhomepage.htm*

So to revisit what I learned from Module 1 readings and their applicability to my two learning objectives.

**Explain how learning theory can be useful in informing pedagogy, policy, and technology choices**

In Chapter 1 of the Harasim (2011) text, the related concepts of epistemology and theory are examined. Epistemology is about the philosophy or the approach to learning while it’s related theories are concerned with the measureable and the practical. This relationship makes perfect sense, just if I was given a packet of vegetable seeds and planted them, I would expect only vegetables to grow, not some of other form of plant life. In the same way, if my mindset is objectivist and I am following behaviorist theory, I would not include a Community of Inquiry in the design of my course or curriculum.

I am still searching for how learning theory influences policy and technology choices. I can guess that the learning theory embraced by an institution would have an impact on the institution’s policies. I will be curious to see how further readings play into this.

**Identify the contribution of distance education theory and practice to online teaching and learning**

Ally (2008) did a great job of explaining implications of online practice based on behaviorist, cognitivist and constructivist theories. He does touch on connectivism but this is a newer theory than the others so the implications are still unfolding. Obviously, this is not just distance education theory but theory that can also be applied in the traditional classroom. However, Harasim (2011) does encourage us to consider that theories should not be considered as distinct silos, independent and distinct from each other.

Saba (2003) discusses how systems theory can be a sustainable theory in the postindustrial or online learning world. DE practice needs to respond to individual difference and make instruction as diversified as possible (Saba, 2003). The goal is to fuel the engine of postindustrial culture, the survival of which depends on innovation, not uniformity (Saba, 2003).

**Sidebar**

As a side note, I really love the Harasim text. I find her narrative to be logical and succinct. I especially enjoy the graphics in this text. Even Peters (2010) acknowledges that “we accept and even demand this type of visual support because the influence of television has greatly altered our visual habits” (p. 144). The cliché, “a picture is worth a thousand words” is a cliché for a reason ☺ I’m really glad that we’ll be reading this book cover to cover in this class.

**REFERENCES**

Ally, M. (2008). Foundations of educational theory for online learning. In T. Anderson (Ed.), *The theory and practice of online learning* (2nd Ed.) pp. 15-49. Athabasca, CA:Athabasca University Press. Retrieved from http://www.aupress.ca/books/120146/ebook/99Z\_Anderson\_2008-Theory\_and\_Practice\_of\_Online\_Learning.pdf

Harasim, L. (2011). *Learning theory and online technologies*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Peters, O. (2010). Digitized learning environments: New chances and opportunities. In O. Peters, *Distance education in transition: Developments and issues* (5th edition) (pp. 141-153). Oldenburg, Germany: BIS-Verlag der Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg. Retrieved from http://www.box.com/shared/ktx7ipccetotqrr11mct

Saba, F. (2003). Distance education theory, methodology, and epistemology: A pragmatic paradigm" In M. Moore & W. Anderson (Eds.) *Handbook of Distance Education* (pp. 3-19). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Saba Challenges and Coping Strategies (#4) |
| Date | 20-Sep-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 1 |
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**CHALLENGES**

There were **three challenges** I encountered with the Saba reading for Module 1. The **first challenge** was that I found the **organization of Saba’s article to be choppy**. At the beginning, it was very clear to me the direction of the discourse. It started to break down for me at the section titled “Emergence of Post Industrial Education.”

**Weak transitions** were my **second challenge**. There are numerous germane headings but the relationship between the content of each section were not always clear to me. One very tenuous transition in my mind was from “Pragmatism Applied” to “Systems as Philosophical Reconcilers”.

My **third challenge** was the **logic** of even using pragmatism in the reading. Pragmatism was stressed in the introduction but seemed to me to have a smaller portion of discussion than systems theory. To me, it was as if Saba needed to say “Well I want to use systems theory to form a basis of post-industrial DE theory but I can’t seem to get from industrial theories to systems theory without some sort of bridging theory…hmmm…how about pragmatism?”

**COPING STRATEGIES**

There were **two coping strategies** that helped me understand the Saba reading betters. The **first strategy** was **bringing my own** **logical order** to the text so that I could understand better what was being said. Since I felt sure of the discourse up to the “Emergence of Post Industrial Education”, I started there my noting my summation of the previous section. For me, the reading falls into roughly 3 main sections: 1) setting the stage regarding industrial DE theory 2) Discussing complexities and/or dichotomies that are either internal to DE subsystem interactions or imposed externally on DE systems by other influences 3) Pragmatism/Systems Theory discussion as robust, sustainable post-industrial DE theory.

The **second** coping **strategy** was one of **summation**. Once I started summarizing the complexities/dichotomies in a table, to describe them from a “mile-high” perspective, it was easier to see some of the inter-relationships among and between them.

**REFERENCES**

Saba, F. (2003). Distance education theory, methodology, and epistemology: A pragmatic paradigm" In M. Moore & W. Anderson (Eds.) *Handbook of Distance Education* (pp. 3-19). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

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| Entry Title (Number) | Module 1 Learning Objectives to Explore (#3) |
| Date | 17-Sep-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 1 |
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The two learning objectives that I set out to learn the most about where: 1) Explain how learning theory can be useful in informing pedagogy, policy, and technology choices and 2) Identify the contribution of distance education theory and practice to online teaching and learning.

So I had to start out figuring out what “informing” means in the first objective listed above. So dictionary.com to the rescue: “to give evident substance, character, or distinction to; pervade or permeate with manifest effect.” So the first objective could also be expressed as “Explain how learning theory can be useful in giving evident substance, character or distinction to pedagogy, policy, and technology choices.”

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| Entry Title (Number) | Human Nature and Learning Theory (#2) |
| Date | 15-Sep-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Module 1 |
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So our challenge then as educators is finding a way to value and to foster that human need that we have to be express about our ideas and to focus less on trying to bring knowledge into the mind of a person and more on developing the skills of our learners so that they are able to go out in fairly complex knowledge environments today and function in a distributed manner (Siemens, 2007, minutes 3:01 - 3:23)

While I agree with many of the things George Siemens said in his YouTube video *The Conflict of Learning Theories with Human Nature,* especially the quote above, I did have two areas of contention with some of the statements made in this video.

The first area of contention is the assertion that constructivism is at odds with the human need to externalize thought (Siemens, 2007). If we distill the basic tenant of constructivism as just the act of assigning meaning happens in our minds, I can see how Siemens comes to this conclusion. However, **social** constructivism *does* include the externalization of learners’ internal thoughts through social negotiations with others. Siemens (2007) talks about human nature, specifically 1) the human desire to externalize our thoughts in order for us to have the ability to connect with other individuals and 2) the human desire to present ourselves in social spaces is incredibly strong. For the life of me, I cannot see how those statements are opposed to social constructivism. Rather these statements seem to me to be in line with the need for social negotiation with others that is part of social constructivism theory.

The second area of contention I have is related to Siemens’ (2007) assertion that learning and knowledge creation is the function of a network. We just have to be careful *how* we define network. In my own life raising my children and helping to raise the children of others, it really *does* take a network or community of family members, friends, and the greater community where we live to raise and educate a child. However, if our “network” is a *computer* network of knowledge, we must proceed with caution. There are videos on YouTube showing people doing truly stupid things like trying to skateboard off a porch roof WITHOUT going to the hospital. Some of them actually start saying “I’m sure you have seen the video when so-and-so tried this stunt but now *I’m* going to try it.” This is a situation where a solid “dose” of behaviorism might provide a better learning solution than one that could be gained over a computer network. Obviously, there is also high quality, academic content that can be found on the web. However, we must use caution as to *which* information we use for learning on computer networks.

**REFERENCES**

Siemens, G. (2007). The conflict of learning theories with human nature [YouTube Video]. Retrieved from http://youtu.be/xTgWt4Uzr54

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| Entry Title (Number) | Community of Inquiry Revisited (#1) |
| Date | 13-Sep-2013 |
| Course/Module | OMDE610, Getting Started |
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When I had read the original paper in OMDE 601, it didn’t register to me that “some of the language we used perhaps elevated cognitive presence to a higher status within the CoI than it should have had” (Garrison, Anderson, Archer, 2010, p. 6). Personally, I felt that all three presences were evenly discussed in the original paper. Maybe it was a case of authors know their inner thought processes and motivations while writing the work but it was not necessarily visible to their readers. Or it could be the case that I am not very good at “reading between the lines”. Regardless, I missed it!

One of these interesting insights that were new to me was the interpersonal relationships formed between the authors earlier contributed to the development of the framework through the “triggering” event of developing a new online graduate program at the University of Alberta.

**REFERENCES**

Garrison, D.R., Anderson, T., Archer, W. (2010). The first decade of the community of inquiry framework: A retrospective. *Internet and Higher Education, 13*, 5–9. doi:10.1016/j.iheduc.2009.10.003

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| Entry Title (Number) | What should be in my learning journal? (#0) |
| Date | 5-September-2013 |
| Course/Week | n/a |
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## NOTE: Color is #8614e2

## This is not a journal entry but rather a reminder of what should be included here:

**Drs Whitesel & Kerby OMDE 610**

Essentially, the Learning Journal is a reflective journal that chronicles your learning experiences with: (a) the course objectives, (b) assigned readings, (c) individual assignments, and (d) community of fellow learners.

You are the expert on your own learning, and this class should be a kind of journey. The Learning Journal is intended to give you an opportunity to reflectively capture that journey. Please do not hesitate to chronicle the problems and failures (e.g., readings you had difficulty with, concepts that didn't make sense, assignments that didn't seem to work for you) as well as the successes.

In this class, we will use the discussion forum area for our Learning Journals. Each class participant will have his/her own thread and will be responsible for making regular posts.

Other class members will be able to read your Journal. You are expected to make a minimum of two submissions per module. However, you may contribute as many entries as you like to your LearningJournal.

* Early in the module, identify what you want to learn. Near the end of the module, describe this learning journey.
* What 'big idea,' concept or issue from this module had the greatest impact on your thinking?
* Why?
* How will this idea, concept, or issue influence your practice as a DE Professional?
* What questions remain for you from this module? How will you resolve these questions?

**Dr. Walti’s Original Post OMDE 601**

* Report on what you have learned within each course module and in the course overall
* Examine, analyze, and critically reflect upon the new knowledge acquired through this course, for example, by relating the knowledge gained to personal experience or applying that knowledge to current situations (e.g., within the work environment)
* Make connections between the course topics and how the course topics relate to what you have learned and how you have learned (i.e., your individual learning process)
* Explore your evolving ideas about and understanding of distance education, and relate these to the course content
* Describe if/how you have achieved module objectives and overall course objective

**John Marsden (youtu.be/IWk80rjgFNA)**

* Reflective journals are a way of developing a skills base
* How to keep a journal
  + Step 1 – record experience accurately
    - What’s happened? Where? When? Who is involved? What emotions has it brought up for me? How did I behave?
  + Step 2 – What have I learned as a result of this experience?
    - What do I know now that I didn’t before? ? What would I do differently? What would I do well? What did I do badly? What was the result of my behavior? Does anything constitute a repeat pattern of behavior?
  + Step 3 – Action plan
    - As a result of what I learned, what would I do differently next time? What goals do I need to set myself? How do I know when I’ve achieved those goals?

Kolb’s Learning Cycle: 4 categories of learners: Experience/Reflection/Theory/Planning

Per Kolb the most successful learners use all 4 strategies