

# Students' understanding of learning

- Learning as a quantitative increase in knowledge. Learning is acquiring information or 'knowing a lot'.
- Learning as memorising. Learning is storing information that can be reproduced.
- Learning as acquiring facts, skills, and methods that can be retained and used as necessary.
- Learning as making sense or abstracting meaning. Learning involves relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to the real world.
- Learning as interpreting and understanding reality in a different way. Learning involves comprehending the world by reinterpreting knowledge.

(Säljö 1979 quoted in <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-learn.htm>)

# What is learning?

- a relatively permanent change in behavior, capability, knowledge or understanding

✓ *Is the manifested changing an effect of learning or it is instinctive?*

“Many researchers have already cast much darkness upon this subject, and it is probable that if they continue, that we shall soon know nothing at all about it”

Mark Twain

# Four kinds of knowledge

- Facts – to collect and remember information
- Skill – ability to do or to perform something that you have learned
- Familiarity – confidence in using knowledge in new and different situations
- Understanding – ability to interpret, evaluate and use information

# Learning as

- A product (an outcome)
  - the **end product** of some process. It can be recognized or seen.
- A process
  - **what happens** when the learning takes place

# Four orientations to learning

1. the behaviourist orientation to learning
2. the cognitive orientation to learning
3. the humanistic orientation to learning
4. the social/situational orientation to learning

# Behaviourist

## **View of the learning process**

- Change in behaviour

## **Locus of learning**

- Stimuli in external environment

## **Purpose in education**

- Produce behavioural change in desired direction

## **Educator's role**

- Arranges environment to elicit desired response

## **Manifestations in adult learning**

- Behavioural objectives
- Competency -based education
- Skill development and training

# Cognitivist

## **View of the learning process**

- Internal mental process (including insight, information processing, memory, perception)

## **Locus of learning**

- Internal cognitive structuring

## **Purpose in education**

- Develop capacity and skills to learn better

## **Educator's role**

- Structures content of learning activity

## **Manifestations in adult learning**

- Cognitive development
- Intelligence, learning and memory as function of age
- Learning how to learn

# Humanist

## **View of the learning process**

- A personal act to fulfil potential.

## **Locus of learning**

- Affective and cognitive needs

## **Purpose in education**

- Become self-actualized, autonomous

## **Educator's role**

- Facilitates development of the whole person

## **Manifestations in adult learning**

- Andragogy
- Self-directed learning

# Social and situational

## **View of the learning process**

- Interaction /observation in social contexts. Movement from the periphery to the centre of a community of practice

## **Locus of learning**

- Learning is in relationship between people and environment.

## **Purpose in education**

- Full participation in communities of practice and utilization of resources

## **Educator's role**

- Works to establish communities of practice in which conversation and participation can occur.

## **Manifestations in adult learning**

- Socialization Social participation
- Associationalism
- Conversation