

HOW CONSTRUCTIVISTS VIEW LEARNING (Series 1)

Constructivism is a paradigm of learning that describes the process of knowledge formation. There are many faces of constructivism. The most prominent and outspoken philosopher of constructivism is Jean Piaget. In constructivism, a learner constructs his/her own observation of the world. According to Piaget, a constructivist thinker, there are four stages of development in a learning process: From the **age 0-2 years, he calls it *sensory motor development***. In a sensory motor development period, intelligence takes shape in the form of motor actions. Children learn from their mistakes and they should be allowed to do so. **From age 3-7 years, he calls it a “preoperational period”**. In this interval, the cognitive structure takes shape in the form of a concrete operational stage. **Age 8-11 years, is a logical period** but still requires some assistance from the concrete stage. **Age of 12-15 years, is a stage of formal operation**, which involves **critical thinking** and the child, reaches a stage of solving more conceptual problems.

Piaget stressed that learners construct knowledge through a rational combination of internal challenges facilitated by the force of environment he/she lives. These internal challenges are caused by our environment and encourage us to gain knowledge and understand our surroundings. Piaget believed that human is always in constant evolution. We learn something by the help of our past knowledge. In the process, we re-invent a new knowledge. He asserts that, when learners interact with the given environment, unquestionably, they encounter with issues which conflicts with their knowledge. As they process the newly acquired knowledge, if it is consistent, the gained knowledge is integrated and when it is inconsistent, it is accommodated and adopted accordingly. **According to this theory, we are living in a world, which we will never be able to understand, although we struggle to understand.**

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