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## **Rethinking Pedagogy, Andragogy and Heutagogy**

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### **Abstract**

Twenty-first Century engagement with pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy impacts differentiated learning understandings from a recognition of learner needs and knowledge base readiness. Yet, to what extent could theories of knowledge, learning and acquisition of information shift philosophies around defining the learner? Rethinking epistemological understandings towards the adult learner may lead towards enhanced differentiation and understanding in the realms of learning, focus, power and control, learning, learning design, and development.

### **Introduction**

As we progress deeper into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century understandings of digital realms, the impact upon teaching and learning swiftly shifts and reshapes in curiously intriguing new and different ways. Every week, there are touted critical skills and knowledge that impacts the effectiveness of the learning process, reflecting upon the level of insight and awareness associated with the role of technology in 21<sup>st</sup> Century education. Although these are important discussions, deeper understandings in the developing frameworks of curricular design are viable ways through which to frame knowledge acquisition and informational engagement. 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital impacts are understood through the realms of pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy, through the lens of adult learners and with differentiated engagement levels clearly understood. Embracing a deeper understanding of differentiated learning is a curious task in this digital world, as social media and social learning have embraced concepts around communities of learning and learning in landscapes of practice (Wenger-Trayner, Fenton-O'Creevy, Hutchison, Kubiak, & Wenger-Trayner, 2014; Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Through this lens, pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy have been developed, designed and rethought through mirrored understandings and depths of experiential engagement (Blaschke, 2012; Cochrane, Antonczak, 2014; Ekoto & Gaikwad, 2015; Gerstein, 2014; Halupa, 2015; Henschke, 2015; Smith, 2017)

while continuing to be topics of curiosity, scholarly discussion and real world implementation. The cognitive supports and associated advantages associated with heutagogy are also highlighted as current areas of significance (Carr, Balasubramanian, Atieno, & Onyango, 2018; Gregory, Bannister-Tyrrell, Charteris, & Nye, 2018). Understanding the digital impacts upon 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning and acquisition of information emphasize a differentiation of theory, practice and process.

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Digital Impacts**

Different methods and understandings frame the theory and practice of the educational process, reflecting the learner's needs through and relationship between knowledge attainment and skill development. Of interest, is that the traditional understanding of pedagogy is through the lens of younger learners, andragogy is viewed through the lens of adult learners, and heutagogy through the lens of more creative, self-directed learning efforts. However, what would it look like if the lens through which to view each learning method and understanding were an adult learner focus. The following differentiated areas of consideration support an enhanced differentiation and understanding:

- Learning
- Focus
- Power and Control
- Learning
- Learning Design
- Development

This is an intriguing question that frames the discussions around learning engagement, focus of the instructional process, wherein the power and control may lie, how learning occurs, the learning design, as well as developmental focus of the experience.

### **Pedagogy**

Pedagogy has traditionally been viewed as a younger learner's style of knowledge engagement. Commonly referring to the learner as a blank slate, or tabula rasa, the underlying belief is that the learner has no prior understanding, knowledge is absent, and that knowledge is derived from both the instructor and experience. Yet what if, instead, pedagogy is merely an epistemological understanding that the learner lacks a knowledge base around specific subject matter. If this were the recognition, then pedagogy may also frame an adult learner's recognition of engagement with new knowledge.

How might one frame pedagogy, from a new knowledge learning experience? A simplistic response could be presented as:

- Learning: Instructor-Directed Learning
- Focus: Knowledge-Focused
- Power and Control: Instructor-Directed
- Learning: Single-Loop Learning (goals and rules)
- Learning Design: Linear Learning Design (modular)
- Development: Knowledge Development

Looking at the learning that occurs within the pedagogical realm, the instructor-directed learning engagement reflects an understanding around the assurance of a knowledge base is presented and

framed by the instructor. As the learner does not have a level of prior subject matter understanding, the instructor's focus is towards the assurance of a viable knowledge base development. From a knowledge-focused engagement throughout the learning process, based upon the learner attainment of a knowledge base, the power and control within an instructional environment is clearly within the realm of the instructor, as an instructor-directed setting.

The style of learning engagement is framed around the goals and rules of the subject matter knowledge base, referred to by Argyris (1990, 1999) as single-loop learning, attempting to move away from knowledge-based mistakes. Single-loop learning is framed around only understandings that engage in specific goals and specific rules, which one may consider the stimulus-response understandings of Pavlov (1897/1902, 1928, 1955), but from an informational actions-results learning effort. Further understanding this process may be reflected through a learning design engagement, framed as a progressive linear learning design that may be modular in nature. More specifically, modular components of actions and subsequent results define the learning process, with the results achieved prior to progressing to the next learning action and associated result effort. Knowledge may be learned in unconnected manners of understanding. As such, the development of learner understanding is knowledge-focused, only the development of knowledge.

### **Andragogy**

Andragogy has been traditionally viewed as an adult learner's style of knowledge engagement, wherein the learner has more real world experience and understands information in new and different ways. Basic subject matter knowledge has been achieved and the learner looks towards the instructor to lead the adult learner's understanding of the subject matter in new and enhanced ways of understanding. Yet what if, instead, andragogy is merely an epistemological understanding that the learner already has attained a knowledge base of understanding, with the learners looking towards the instructor as conceptually developing a deeper understanding of the subject matter within more real world levels of engagement and understanding.

How might one frame andragogy, from an enhanced information learning experience? A simplistic response could be presented as:

- Learning: Self-Directed Learning
- Focus: Content-Focused
- Power and Control: Instructor-Learner Coordinated
- Learning: Double-Loop Learning (modification)
- Learning Design: Cyclical Learning Design (spiral)
- Development: Competency Development

Looking at the learning that occurs within the andragogical realm, the learner develops more control over the learning environment and the subject matter, wherein the instructor allows a level of self-directed learning wherein the learner has more control over the process of learning. The focus of the learner is upon the content; meaning, having already learned the knowledge, the learner must develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter within a connected and content-driven focus. Vygotsky's conceptual framework of understanding (1934/1987, 1962, 1978) is one way to describe the andragogical content-focused approach to learning, recognizing that there is an inter-connectedness amongst learned information that is bound within the

socialization and culture that helps to frame the information for the learner. As the learners already have a subject matter knowledge base, the power and control structure within the learning environment is one of an instructor- and learner-coordinated engagement and metaphoric dance wherein the instructor accepts the role of a facilitative instructor who easily moves between the instructor as leader within the instructional environment, towards a collaborative support and guiding coach.

The style of learner engagement is framed around the concept of modification of the subject matter information, referred to by Argyris (1990, 1999) as double-loop learning. Double-loop learning is framed around an enhanced understanding that proactively engages beyond the avoidance of mistakes and looks towards meaning-making from a deeper understanding of the knowledge, towards better understanding underlying expectations, conventions, intentions and applications of the information in new and different ways. The learner takes upon her/himself the responsibility for the learner, also supporting reflective practices associated with subject matter recognition of deeper and more meaningful framing of the information. Through this understanding, the learning design may be one of cyclical learning, meaning a spiraling understanding wherein the learner addresses and re-addresses the same information numerous times and in different manners of engagement, recognizing that the purpose of re-engaging and reworking the information in new and different ways as moving from lower-order thinking skills towards higher order thinking skills (Anderson, Krathwohl, Airasian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintrich, Raths & Wittrock, 2001; Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956; Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964) in a spiral effect. Engaging with subject matter information in these differentiated ways reflect a developmental focus that highlights a level of competency that each learner displays as vital towards a depth of informational engagement and attainment of new and differentiated expertise around the knowledge acquisition that highlights a more analytical, evaluative and creative synthesis of knowledge construction and formulation.

### **Heutagogy**

Heutagogy has traditionally been viewed as a focus upon self-directed learning and self-determined learning, with an interest in challenging traditional ideas around the teaching and learning process. The underlying belief is that the learner is knowledgeable as regards the subject matter, but enhanced revelations can be attained and comprehended through the learner's ability to choose aspects of the subject matter that are intriguing and desires further investigation. This epistemological understanding is embedded in andragogical ritualistic procedures and routines as well as principles of understanding, with an enhanced focus upon learner choice and preference while engaging with the subject matter in new and different ways.

How might one frame heutagogy, from an experienced, accomplished subject matter comprehension? A simplistic response could be presented as:

- Learning: Self-Determined Learning
- Focus: Process-Focused
- Power and Control: Learner-directed
- Learning: Spiral-Loop Learning (transformation)
- Learning Design: Holistic Learning Design (mastery and trustworthiness)
- Development: Capability Development

Looking at the learning that occurs within the heutagogical realm of understanding, the learner is in charge of their own self-determined learning processes. This may be designed as multiple styles of informational engagement from which the learner may choose their own desired focus option, the learner may realize an open-ended prompt or problem that allows for the freedom to journey in new and different ways towards a creatively innovative new outcome, or perhaps the learner has the opportunity to self-select and develop a contractual arrangement with the facilitative instructor. The self-determined learning is significantly more controlled by the learner, although the facilitative instructor retains the guiding engagement and reflective questioning that may help support and steer the learner's progression forward. An interesting shift in curricular focus is the movement from content-focused towards a process-focused engagement with the subject matter, recognizing the creative freedom to *think outside the box* and realize innovatively new and differentiated subject matter results by following different processes than might be considered as traditional thought process journeys. A new understanding within the instructional environment is that the power and control within the instructional venue is in the hands of the learners; the instructional process is learner-directed, with the facilitative instructor taking on the role of a supportive guiding force such as a touch point along the learner's journey towards transformational understandings of the information in new and different ways, focused upon procedural outcomes. The result may be inspirational in nature, changing integral understandings of the experiential subject matter while converting prior understandings in new and different ways.

The style of learning management is reflective practice, clearly articulated as actively and continuously engaged in active reflections that embed the ability to be alert and present throughout the learning process, developing a cognitive flow while metacognitive approaches towards mental engagement actively participates on numerous levels of analytic performance. When considering the learning process, the work of Argyris (1990, 1999) progressively suggests the engagement in the conceptualization of a next-step approach that may be labeled as triple-loop learning; however, although this term is mentioned in literature and appears to be inspired by the work of Argyris, there is no clear origin. As such, a transformational understanding of the learning process may be designated as transformational in nature, coining the term spiral-loop learning due to the progressive continuation of reflection, analysis and engagement in metacognitive understandings that embeds the subject matter in the midst of the learner's process. The learning design may be considered holistic, as the learner's self-determined nature of learning engagement suggests the specialized nature of the learning that occurs, embedding a mastery approach that supports a natural learner trust in the progressive nature of the learning journey, highlighting one's metacognitive conviction and confidence, faith, belief, hope and consignment towards the ability to entrust one's learning in the process while also relegating anxiety-laden apprehensions to a mere corner of one's thought process. As such, the development of learner understanding is capability-focused, only the development of the learner's capability to work with the subject matter in transformational ways.

### **Final Thoughts**

The labels that teaching and learning epistemologies embed within our curricular understandings may no longer be viable as reflections of 21<sup>st</sup> Century instructional efforts, as well as learner engagement with the subject matter at differentiated levels of knowledge-driven, content-driven and transformational process-driven ways through which to design positional and situational

instructional involvement and connection for learners. As teaching and learning professionals begin to recognize the differentiation of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner needs, the knowledge base readiness of learners must also be better understood. Rethinking the epistemological understandings around pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy may support the curricular design and enhanced differentiation of learner engagement and associated subject matter acquisitional needs by understanding the realms of learning, focus, power and control, learning, learning design and development, from basic rules-based knowledge acquisition to informational framing and modification within conceptual supports, towards transformational ways that learners can more fully master subject matter through self-determined learning control.

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