



Abstract

Unicist Ontology of the Adults' Learning Context

This is a synthesis on the results obtained from the research on the ontology of adults' learning led by Peter Belohlavek.

Introduction to a strategic approach vs. an operational approach to learning processes

This research is about the nature of the human learning process. When students, pupils or disciples really need to learn in order to find and construct their place in their environment, the problem of learning is simple for counselors or professors.

Understanding the learning process of an individual enables counselors to manage the learning process.

Parents and professors may teach better or worse, but children will grow in spite of their parents, and pupils will learn in spite of their teachers.

But there is a great difference between those that grow based on their parents and on their teachers and those who grow in spite of them.

In the first case, "parents' and teachers' achievements become their children's / pupils' starting point".

On the one hand, operational teaching processes are functional to "starving" learners. In this case, if both the basic stages of communication and the thematic taxonomy of the subject to be learned are fulfilled, results are excellent.

But, on the other hand, when learners are barely hungry, there is a need for a conscious strategic approach to the learning process.

Conscious strategies require the knowledge of the nature of the reality one is influencing.

The nature of the learning process of humans will be described in the following pages to help those who design learning processes. The nature is described by the unicist ontology of human learning.

The ultimate purpose of a learning process can be defined as a better adaptation to reality by adding more value to the environment and by earning the corresponding counterpart.

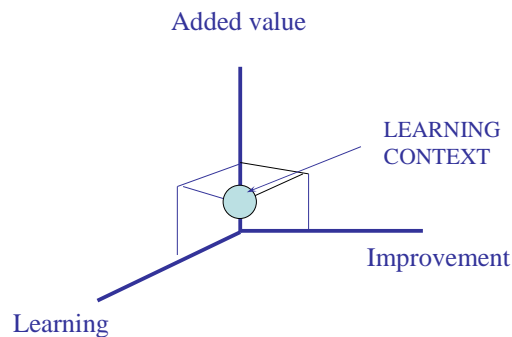


Structure of the adaptive behavior of an individual

The essential structure of adaptation can be defined as the integration of an active function adding value to the environment and an energy conservation function earning value from the environment.

The unicist ontological structure of the value adding action is integrated by the conjunction of an improvement attitude, a learning aptitude and a value adding purpose.

Essential concept of learning context



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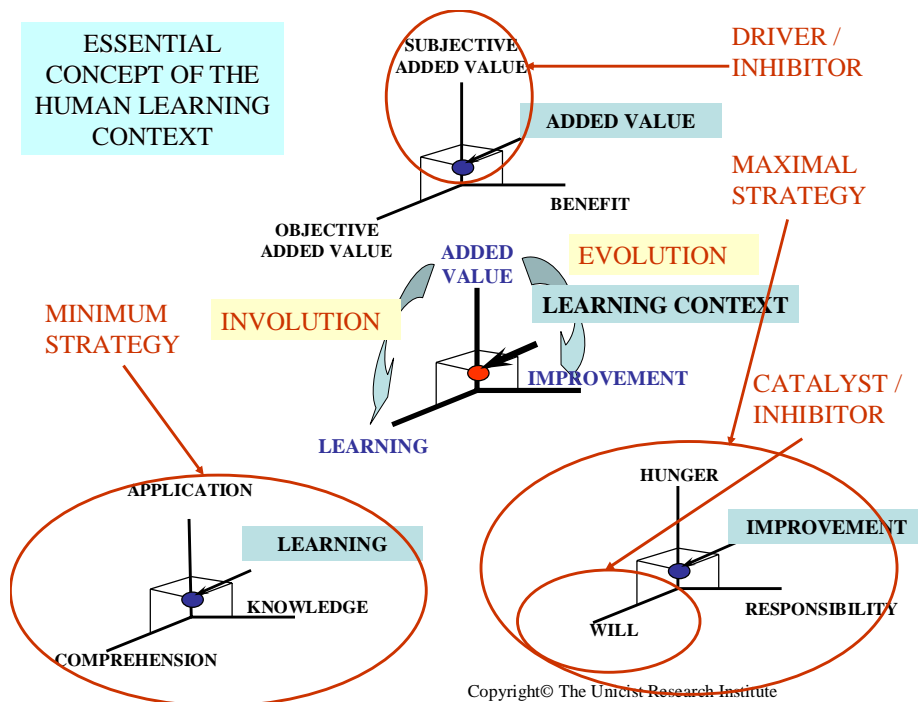
Learning processes are based on the need to increase the value added to the environment so as to gain a better adaptive position for an individual.

Minimum and maximal strategies in an individual's learning process

A learning context is required before a learning process begins. Learning processes in adults require the existence of a real problem to be solved. When there is no real problem to be solved, the learning process has no substance and the “knowledge” cannot be stored in the long term memory because it is meaningless.

The maximal strategy of a learning process is given by the need of improvement. The existence of a driver and the real need for improvement provides the will the individual “uses” as a catalyst in order to face and solve the problems of his/her learning process.

Achieving the minimum strategy implies paying the prices to ensure learning. The price to be paid is that the individual needs to leave things aside in order to access the comprehension of a new approach.



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Learning implies leaving things aside. If the problem can be solved using the preexisting knowledge there is no need for learning because the problem does not exist.

Therefore it is implicit in a learning process for unsolved problems that the individual leaves aside the preexisting approach and enters the comprehension of the new approach without cutting it down to what s/he knew.

Adults only do so when they really need to solve a problem. Improvement is the active function and learning the energy conservation function.

Only people who need to improve will be able to learn. People who enter in a learning process without having a real need to improve in order to solve real problems just enter in self-fulfilling activities.

Involution – “Show me how”

The secure way to avoid the responsibility of learning is to ask how things should be done. If the answer is given, individuals have no need to learn because they do not assume the responsibility of the discovery of the solution and the learning object is meaningless and cannot be stored in the long term memory. Then the learning process is transformed into a hypothetical learning process.

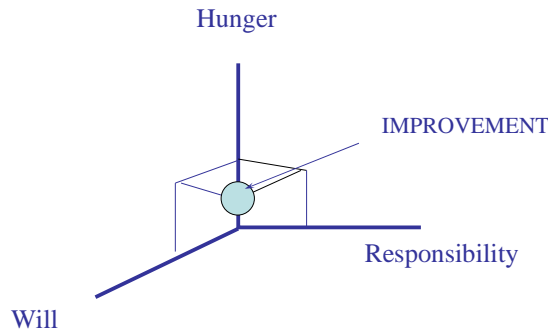
Evolution – “I can solve it”

Evolution implies assuming the responsibility of a personal improvement.



The learning process occurs when an individual considers that s/he is responsible to add value, has the will to assume the consequences of this responsibility and at the same time is “starving” for having the capacity to be able to do so.

Essential concept of improvement



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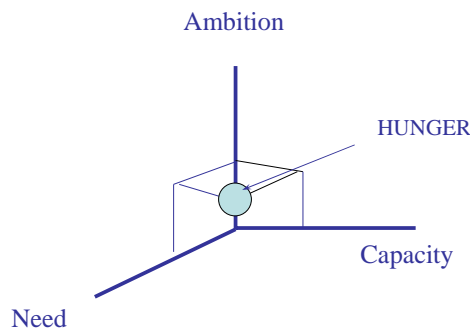
Learning processes may begin once individuals feel the need to improve. An “extreme” need to improve is basic for any learning process.

Hunger means “starving” and implies having the need to overcome the feeling of extreme scarcity.

It requires:

- 1) Self-confidence on one’s capacity to overcome extreme scarcity.
- 2) A deep need to improve the added value delivered.
- 3) Having the ambition to change in order to adapt better to an environment.

Essential concept of hunger



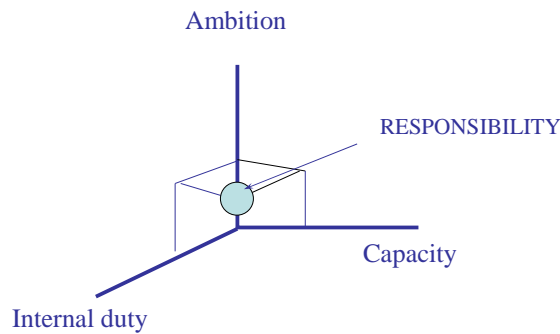
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In order to assume responsibilities individuals have to:



- 1) Consider themselves capable to solve the problems they are facing.
- 2) Feel the “internal duty” to do so. External obligations hinder true learning processes.
- 3) Have the “ambition” to solve the problem.

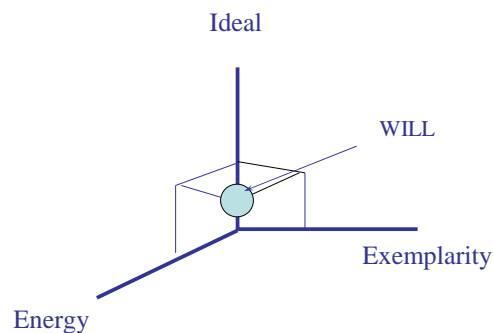
Essential concept of responsibility



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The unicist ontological structure of the necessary “will” to improve is composed by:

Essential concept of will



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- 1) An exemplarity behavior in the field one is improving
- 2) The necessary energy to overcome the unavoidable difficulties. Paying prices implies having the energy to do so.
- 3) An ideal to achieve.



Conclusions

When these conditions are given a genuine learning process can begin.

When these conditions are unfulfilled, learning processes are driven by evaluation and qualification systems, substituting the goal of improving real actions by overcoming an obstacle in order to obtain a personal benefit.

Inferiority and superiority complexes destroy any learning context and drive towards involution (“Show/tell me how”).

The unicist ontology of learning is an approach to personal education when participants have a real need to learn.

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