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Approaches to Training and Learning

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This lecture looks at two issues

First, some principles of learning will be explored

★ *Gerald J. Pine and Peter J. Horn*

Secondly, adult education approaches to training and learning will be examined

★ *Malcolm Knowles*



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Section A

Principles of Learning, Part 1

Learning is an internal process

Learning is a discovery of meaning

Learning is a consequence of experience

Learning involves cooperation, collaboration

Learning is evolutionary, a slow process

Behavior change can be painful

The learner is a rich resource

Learning is emotional and intellectual

★ *“People problems” must be addressed*

Individuals have unique learning styles

Learning is an experience which occurs inside the learner and is activated by the learner

The process of learning is primarily controlled by the learner

Changes in perception and behavior are more products of human meaning and perceiving rather than any forces exerted upon the individual

The learner has to do with something, which happens in the unique world of the learner

Health workers may resist learning new record keeping skills unless these are seen to have meaning



Teaching is seen as a facilitating process that assists people to explore and discover the personal meaning of events for them

No one directly teaches anyone anything of significance

Learning is the discovery of the personal meaning and relevance of ideas

People more readily internalize and implement concepts and ideas which are relevant to their needs and problems



Training patent medicine sellers builds on experience and provides relevant skills

Learning requires the exploration of ideas in relation to self and community so that people can determine:

- ★ *What their needs are*
- ★ *What goals they would like to formulate*
- ★ *What issues they would like to discuss*
- ★ *What content they would like to learn*

Learning (behavioral change) is a consequence of experience

People

- ★ *Become responsible when they have really assumed responsibility*
- ★ *Become independent they have experienced independent behavior*
- ★ *Become able when they have experienced success*

People

- ★ *Begin to feel important when they are important to somebody*
- ★ *Feel liked when someone likes them*
- ★ *Do not change their behavior merely because someone tells them to do so or tells them how to change*

For effective learning, giving information is not enough

People become responsible and independent

- ★ *Not from having other people tell them that they should be responsible and independent— but from having experienced authentic responsibility and independence*



Training can help health workers feel responsible for analyzing and using the data they collect

Learning is a cooperative and collaborative process

Cooperation fosters learning: “two heads are better than one”

People enjoy functioning interdependently

The interactive process appears to “scratch and nick” people’s curiosity, potential, and creativity

Cooperative approaches are enabling

People learn to define goals, to plan, to interact, and to try group arrangements in problem solving



Training should offer opportunities to share and collaborate on problem solving

Paradoxically, as people invest themselves in collaborative group approaches, they develop a firmer sense of their own identification

They begin to realize that they count, that they have something to give and to learn

Problems which are identified and delineated through cooperative interaction appear to challenge and stretch people to produce creative solutions and to become more creative individuals



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Section B

Principles of Learning, Part 2

Learning is an evolutionary process

Behavioral change requires time and patience

When quick changes in behavior are demanded

- ★ *We often resort to highly structured procedures through which we attempt to impose learning*

Whether such learning is lasting and meaningful to the learner is doubtful

Implicit in all the principles and conditions for learning is an evolutionary model of learning

Principle 5: Learning Situations Are Characterized By

Free and open
communication

Confrontation

Acceptance

Respect

The right to make mistakes

Self-revelation

Cooperation and
collaboration

Ambiguity

Shared evaluation

Active and personal
involvement

Freedom from threat

Trust in the self

All evolutionary in nature

Continued

19

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Learning is sometimes a painful process

Behavioral change often calls for giving up the old, comfortable ways of believing, thinking, and valuing

It is not easy to discard familiar ways of doing things and incorporate new behavior

However, the pain of breaking away from the old and the comfortable is usually followed by appreciation and pleasure in the discovery of an evolving idea or a changing self

One of the richest resources for learning is the learner himself

In a day and age when so much emphasis is being placed upon instructional media, books, and speakers as resources for learning, we tend to overlook perhaps the richest resource of all—**the learner himself**

Each individual has an accumulation of experiences, ideas, feelings, attitudes ... which comprise a rich vein of material for problem solving and learning

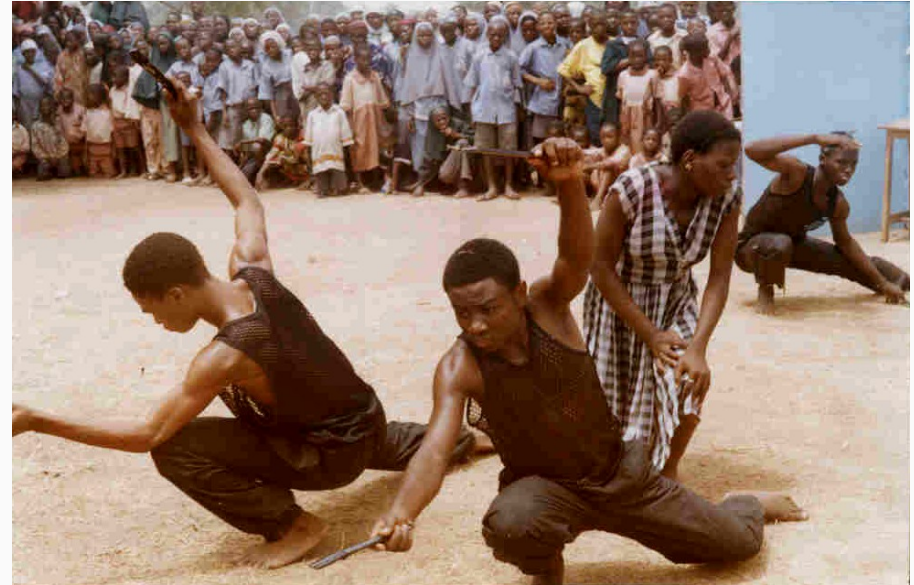


Photo by Olalekan Azeez

Youth learn about violence and sexual coercion through sharing their own experiences and developing drama to educate others

Learning situations need to enable people

- ★ *To become open to themselves*
- ★ *To draw upon their personal collection of data*
- ★ *To share their data in cooperative interaction with others to maximize learning*

The process of learning is emotional as well as intellectual

Learning is affected by the total state of the individual

People are feeling beings as well as thinking beings

★ *When their feelings and thoughts are in harmony, learning is maximized*

To create the optimal conditions in a group for learning to occur, people must come before purpose

Regardless of the purpose of a group, it cannot be effectively accomplished when other things get in the way

Barriers to communication exist in people

- ★ *Before we can conduct “official business,” we need to work with the people problems that may exist in a group*

To maximize the acquisition and internalization of ideas, it seems reasonable that the people problems would have to be dealt with first

The processes of problem-solving learning are highly unique and individual

Each person has his own unique styles of learning and problem solving

- ★ *Some personal styles of learning and problem-solving are highly effective*
- ★ *Other styles are not as effective*
- ★ *Still others may be ineffective*

Learners need recognize the approaches they ordinarily use so that they can become more effective in problem solving



Training experiences should expose learners to different approaches to learning

As people become aware of how they learn and experience new models, they define and modify their personal styles so that these can be employed more effectively



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Section C

Adult Education Approaches

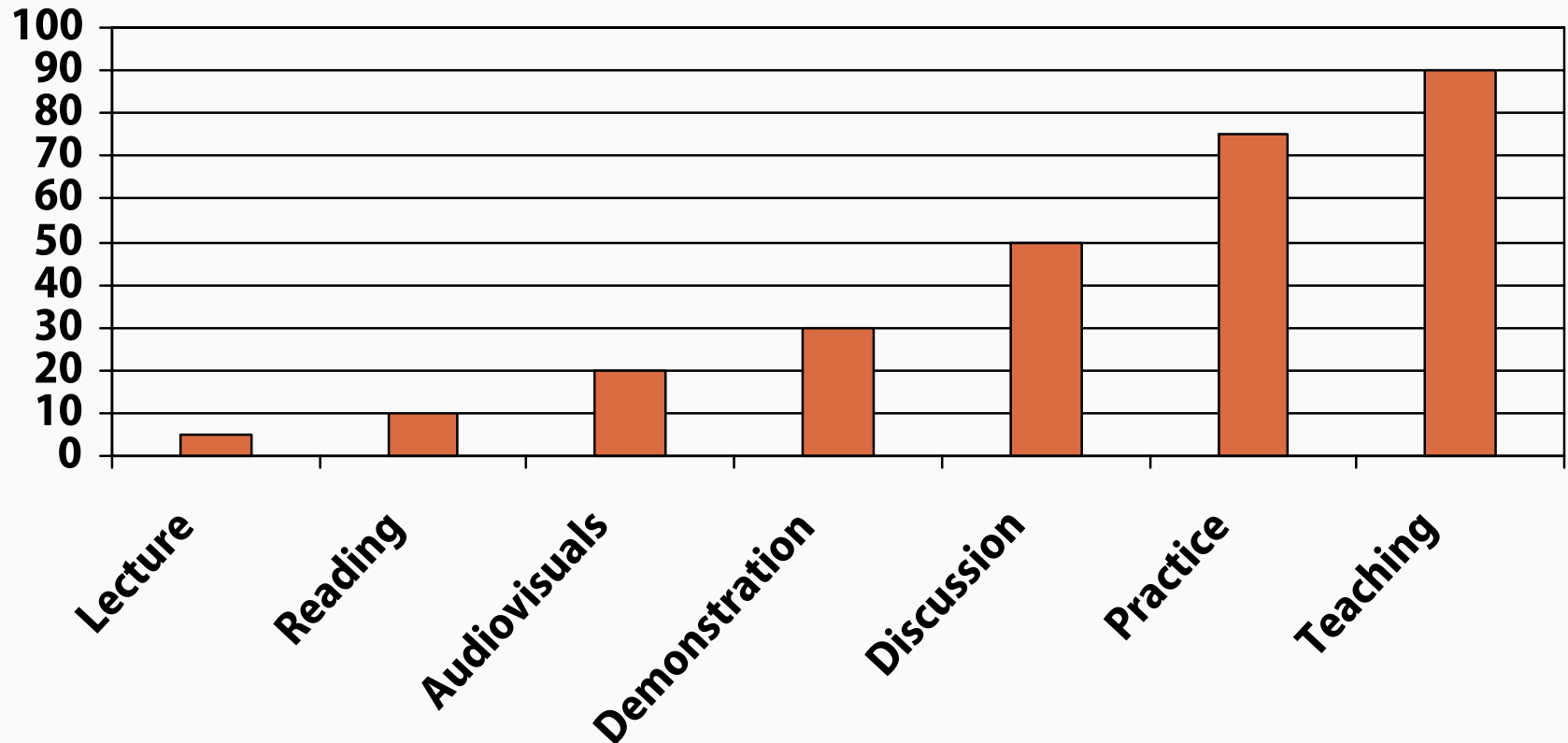
Adult Learning Assumptions

Underlying Assumptions	Pedagogy: Teacher-Directed Learning	Adult Education: Self-Directed Learning
Concept of the learner	Dependent personality	Increasingly self-directed, self-actualizing
Role of learner's experience	To be built on rather than used	A rich resource for learning and to be shared among learners
Readiness to learn	Varies with levels of maturation	Develops from life tasks and problems
Orientation to learning	Subject-centered	Task- or problem-centered
Motivation	External rewards and punishments	Internal incentives and curiosity

Adult Learning Assumptions

Adult Learning Elements	Teacher-Directed	Self-Directed
Climate	Formal, authority-oriented, competitive, judgmental	Informal, mutually respectful, consensual, collaborative, supportive
Planning	Primarily by the teacher-trainer	By participative decision making
Diagnosis of needs	Primarily by the teacher-trainer	By mutual assent
Setting of goals	Primarily by the teacher-trainer	By mutual negotiation
Designing a learning plan	Content units, course syllabus, logical sequence	Learning projects, learning content sequenced in terms of readiness
Learning activities	Transmittal techniques, assigned readings	Inquiry projects, independent study, experimental techniques
Evaluation	Primarily by the teacher-trainer	By mutual assessment of self-collected evidence

Retention in Adult Learning



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