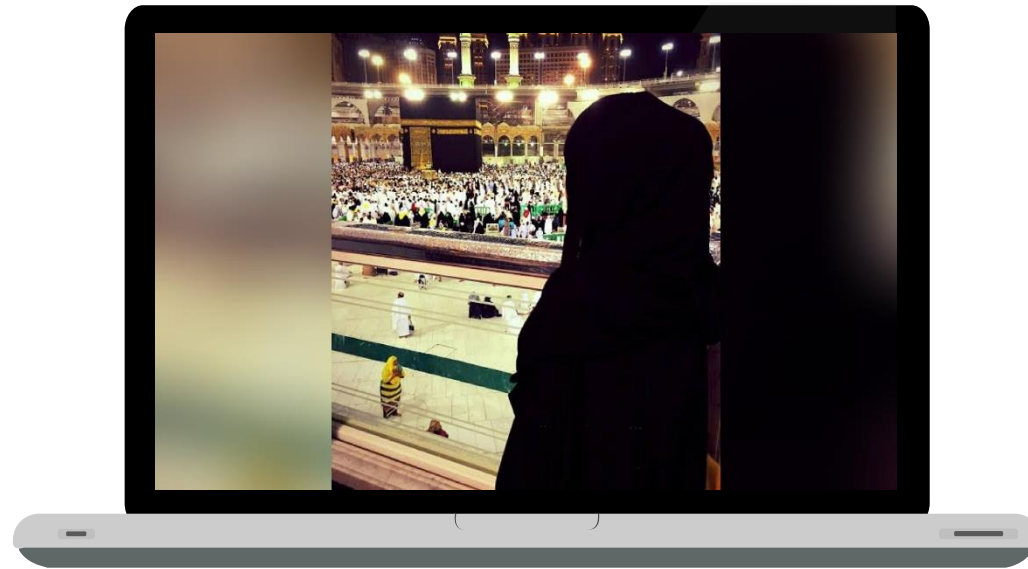


Presented to: Sir Hafiz Moin

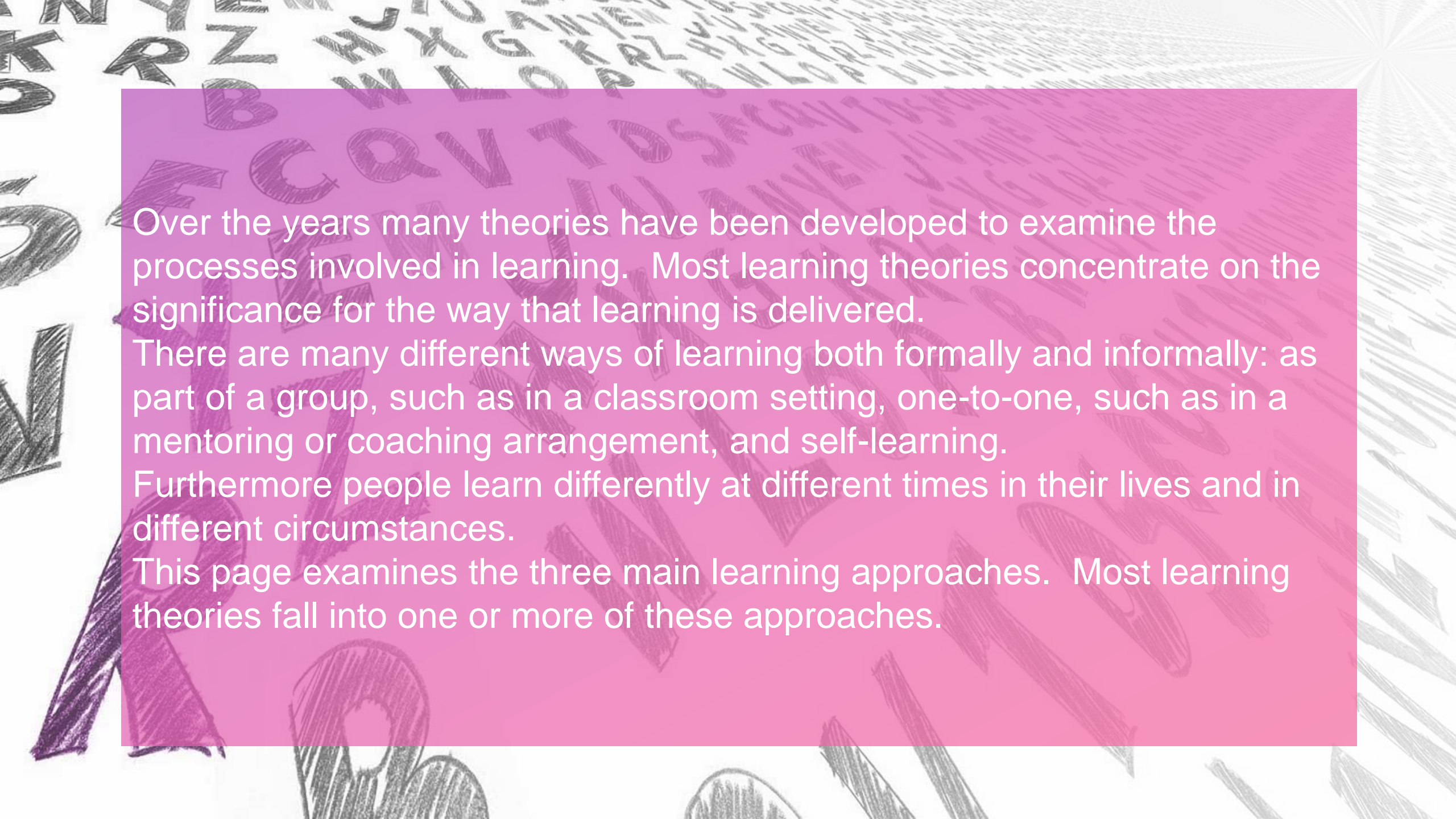


Presented By: Ruma Shafqat





APPROACHES TO LEARNING

The background features a white surface with scattered, hand-drawn letters in various colors (black, purple, green) and orientations. Some letters are bold and stylized, while others are smaller and more delicate. There are also abstract, sketchy shapes and lines scattered across the page, creating a creative and artistic atmosphere.

Over the years many theories have been developed to examine the processes involved in learning. Most learning theories concentrate on the significance for the way that learning is delivered.

There are many different ways of learning both formally and informally: as part of a group, such as in a classroom setting, one-to-one, such as in a mentoring or coaching arrangement, and self-learning.

Furthermore people learn differently at different times in their lives and in different circumstances.

This page examines the three main learning approaches. Most learning theories fall into one or more of these approaches.

These learning approaches are:

The Behaviorist Approach

which is concerned with learners responding to some form of stimulus.

The Cognitive Approach

based on knowledge and knowledge retention.

The Humanist Approach

based on explanations of individual experience.

BEHAVIORIST APPROACH TO LEARNING

This approach to learning is based on the idea that learners respond to stimuli in their environment. The role of the learning facilitator, therefore, is to provide relevant and useful stimuli so that the learner responds to and gains the required knowledge or experience.

The behaviorist approach to learning centers around the belief that appropriate behavior can be taught through constant repetition of a task combined with feedback from the facilitator. Positive feedback encourages and reinforces success while negative feedback and immediate correction discourages the repetition of a mistake or undesirable behavior.

In 1927 Ivan Pavlov conducted a famous experiment with dogs. Pavlov 'taught' the animals to salivate on hearing a ringing bell by linking the time of their feeding to the bell being rung. Later he stopped feeding them in this way, but the dogs continued to salivate when they heard the bell. In other words, the learned behavior was a result of a sequence of events experienced, rather than a conscious thought process. Pavlov discovered what is now termed '**classical conditioning**'.

This kind of conditioning can be used to develop repetitive actions within training, for example looking in the mirror and putting your seatbelt on before driving off in a car.

The association between stimulus-response can be made more effective by reinforcement. It is this idea that underpins the theory later developed by B.F. Skinner (1957). Reinforcement can work in both positive and negative ways. A positive reinforce is anything that strengthens the desired response. In training, where the aim is learning, for example, this might be stimulated by verbal praise, a good mark, or a feeling of achievement. On the other hand, if verbal praise is withdrawn, this will have a negative effect and motivation to learn will decrease.

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with its pages slightly curved. Above the book, a variety of lowercase and uppercase letters, numbers, and symbols (like a question mark and an exclamation point) are scattered in a semi-circular pattern, appearing to float or be projected. The background is a soft, light purple gradient. The text 'R. M. GAGNÉ - THEORY OF INSTRUCTION' is overlaid in a bold, dark purple font across the lower portion of the image.

R. M. GAGNÉ - THEORY OF INSTRUCTION



A more recent proponent of the behaviorist approach can be found in the work of Gagné. In his theory of instruction, Gagné suggests that learning takes place in a hierarchical way. He proposes an eight-stage model, each stage of which is associated with a type of learning that influences the way that instruction is delivered. Gagne says that learning at one level is only possible if learning at a previous level has already taken place.

Gagné's eight types of learning are:

- **Signal learning/recognition** (recognising that something is happening).
- **Stimulus/response learning** (learning the response to the stimulus).
- **Motor chain learning** (learning the sequence of actions necessary).
- **Verbal chain learning** (associating words in sequence).
- **Multiple discrimination** (choosing relevant responses to particular stimuli).
- **Concept learning** (making a common response to a class of stimuli).
- **Acquisition of rules** (concepts joining together to guide behaviour)
- **Problem solving** (combining rules to form a new capability)



COGNITIVE APPROACH TO LEARNING



Behaviorist theories of learning essentially stress the importance of the assertiveness of the tutor, and the passive participant who is not given a great deal of choice other than to respond in a predetermined way.

In contrast **cognitive theories** are concerned with the role of the active mind in processing learning opportunities and developing.

The tutor (if present) and the participant both engage with knowledge; the role of the tutor is choosing the best method to convey understanding.

The work of two well-known classical cognitive theorists is summarised below:

JOHN DEWEY

Dewey (1938) believes learning involves 'learning to think'. He says the process of learning is more than doing a task or activity; it also requires reflection and learning from this. To Dewey, the purpose of thought is attaining a state of equilibrium, enabling an individual to solve problems and to prepare them for further inquiry.

Often associated with 'progressive education', Dewey rejected traditional forms of education based on the reinforcement of information where the student has a passive role, suggesting that this type of learning was superficial. He said that learning only occurs if the student plays an active role in the process. For learning to take place it must be meaningful to each individual, with students critically reflecting on information presented; they have to be able to 'experience' the information and the way to facilitate this is to draw on past experience. It could be argued, therefore, that Dewey was one of the foremost proponents of **experiential learning**.

B. S. BLOOM

Another theorist who developed the cognitive approach, Bloom, considered learning occurred in both the '*COGNITIVE DOMAIN*', that associated with memory and understanding, and the '*AFFECTIVE DOMAIN*', how feelings or emotions change as a result of learning. Bloom suggests that parallel learning between the cognitive and the affective domains takes place in a cumulative way depending of the degree of difficulty. The degree to which learners use the cognitive and affective domains will depend on the individual.

Examples of each type include:

Cognitive	Affective
Knowledge	Receiving
Comprehension	Responding
Application	Valuing
Analysis-synthesis	Conceptualising
Evaluation	Organising



HUMANISTIC APPROACH TO LEARNING

The more recent **humanist theories** take into account the way that, in our society, previously polarized views of right and wrong have dissolved into a variety of potentially equally valuable truths, i.e., a pluralistic approach. The stress on valuing diversity in many organizations and in society generally is a reflection of this ideology.

An emphasis on active learning is at the core of these humanistic approaches to learning. The terms '*ANDRAGOGY*' and '*PEDAGOGY*' highlight the difference between earlier models of training and the more usual approach nowadays.

PEDAGOGY AND ANDRAGOGY

Pedagogy and andragogy are terms derived from the Greek words meaning 'child' and 'man' respectively.

Pedagogy is essentially based on instruction; knowledge is transmitted formally from one who knows to one who does not know. This type of model has often been used in institutional settings, where it can be administratively easier to assume control of the learning experience, while ignoring the ability or needs of the person to engage in self-directed learning – for example in schools and other educational establishments. Unfortunately, this model can engender resistance or rebellion, particularly in older children, adolescents and adults.

It could be claimed that pedagogy actually misses the point: providing training or education does not necessarily mean that the learner will enjoy or remember the experience, even less transfer it to useful settings.

Andragogy, however, provides us with a process model in which the learner discovers knowledge at a pace to suit him/herself, supported by a facilitator, perhaps a coach or mentor.

Anagogical theory is based on four assumptions that define its unique position, as against pedagogy or traditional learning methods:

- The learner needs freedom to develop his/her own learning.
- The existing experiences of the learner are fundamental for understanding and new learning to take place effectively.
- The person needs to be ready to learn, as opposed to being motivated by fear or coercion.
- The orientation to learning is paramount: in other words, it is not subject-orientated but learner centered.

Informal individual support is important in andragogy theory, as is the development of a group environment that is both positive and accepting. Sharing experiences can deepen individual learning, not only for cognitive (intellectual) processes, but also affective (emotional) processes. Participative methods build on both individual and group experiences, aiding reflection, lengthening the span of attention and increasing self-awareness. Learning in this way is often referred to as '**experiential learning**'.

Any Question?

B

