

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR TUTORING AND OFFICE HOURS

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GROUP DISCUSSION

What are characteristics of good communication in tutoring and office hours? What does it look like/sound like?

What are characteristics of ineffective communication?

What are the barriers to good communication?

SOME BACKGROUND: TUTEE/STUDENT LEARNING

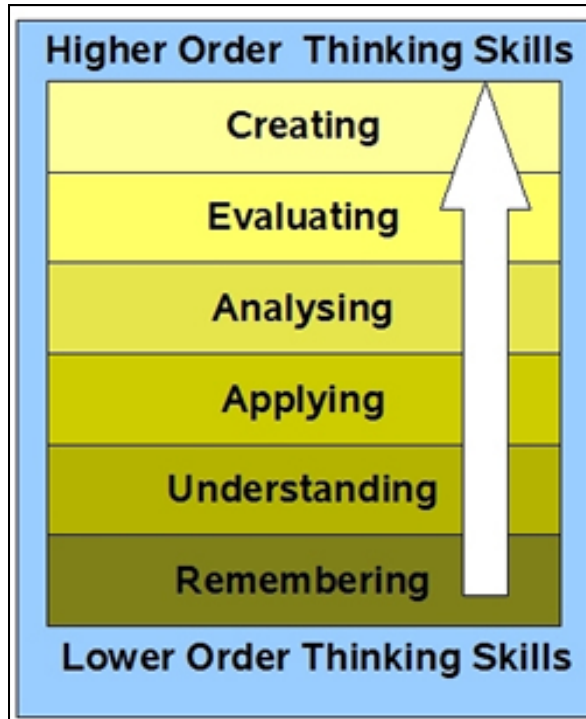


SOME BACKGROUND: TUTEE/STUDENT LEARNING

Bloom's Taxonomy

Cognitive Development

Active Learning: Thinking Aloud



Often, people struggle with transitions to higher order (more complex) forms of thinking.

Bloom's Taxonomy can help you backtrack until you find what they CAN do, and build from there.

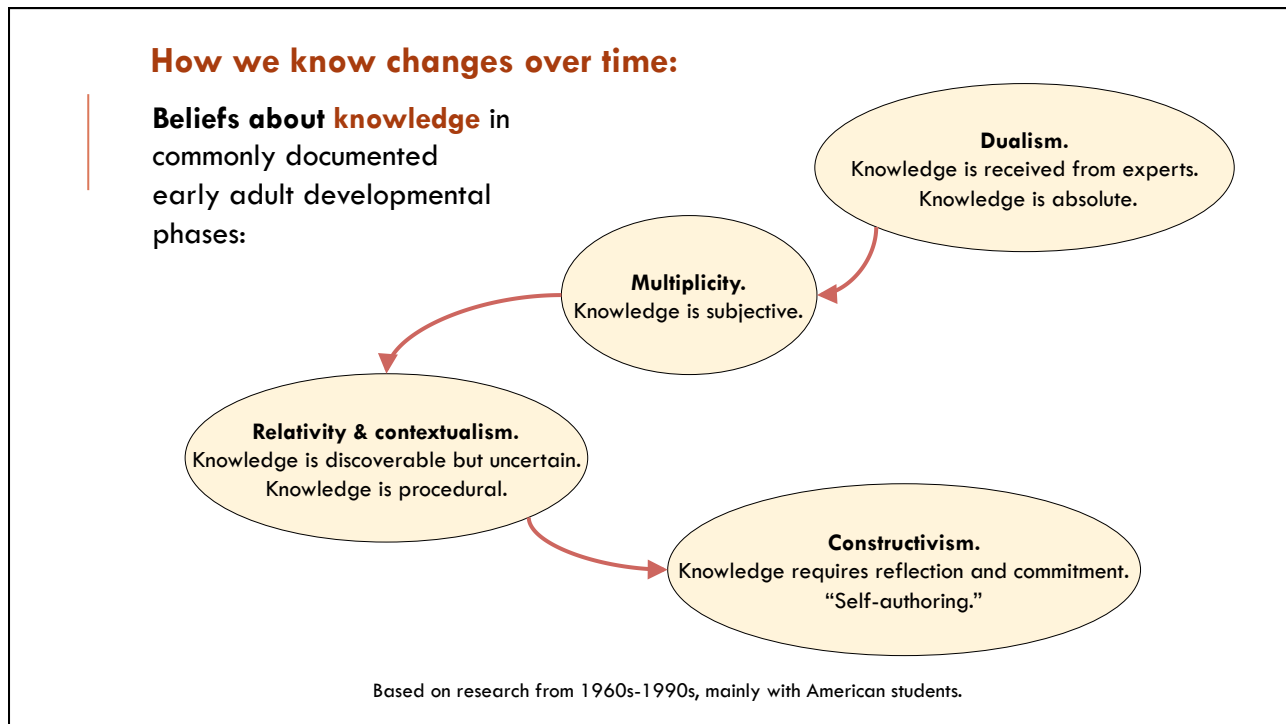
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



"Could you please just show me how to do it the *right way*?"


Dualism.

Knowledge is received from experts.
Knowledge is absolute.




COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Adopting new ways of knowing requires both CHALLENGE and SUPPORT




"Why isn't my way just as valid?!"

Multiplicity



"This problem isn't like the ones we've seen in class, but if I do the procedure, maybe it'll work out."

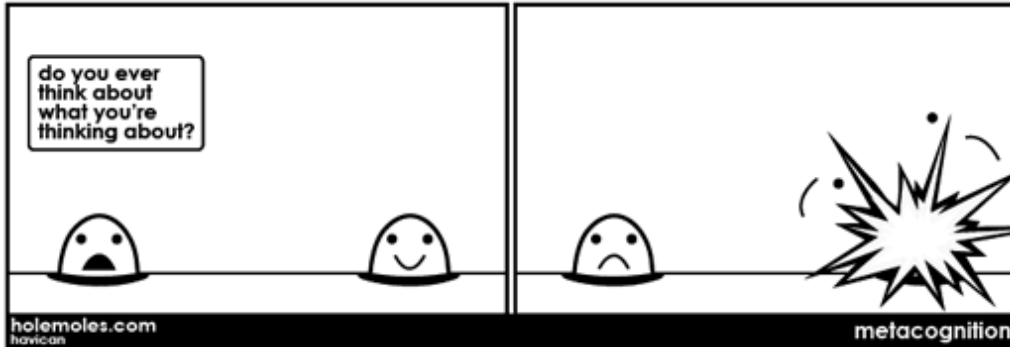
Relativity & contextualism



"Hmm, I'm not sure I get it, but I'll evaluate what I know and look for a reasonable solution."

Constructivism

ACTIVE LEARNING



ACTIVE LEARNING



Learning is a DIY activity. We each have to make it for ourselves.

ACTIVE LEARNING

Thinking Out Loud: “Cognitive Process Instruction”

- * Recognize and correct mistakes
- * Uncover gaps in knowledge and errors in reasoning
- * Reveal areas of uncertainty
- * Confirm procedures and thought patterns that are correct/useful
- * Validate successful strategies and adjust weaker strategies

STRATEGIES & TOOLS

Communication Styles

Generating Questions

Active Listening

Thinking Out Loud

COMMUNICATION STYLES INVENTORY

To what extent did or didn't the inventory validate what you know about yourself?

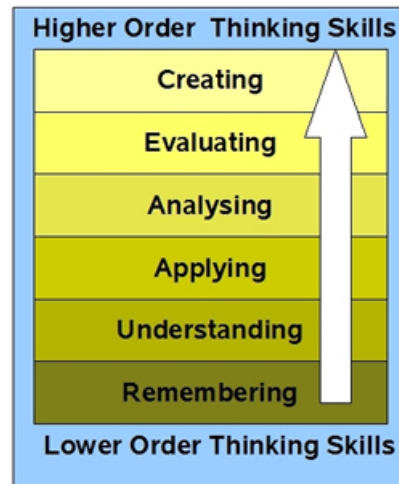
How do you think your style impacts your communication with tutees/students?

GENERATING QUESTIONS

- Focus on open-ended: What, Why, How?
- Probe levels of understanding: Bloom's Taxonomy
- Avoid "Yes/No" (do you understand?)
and closed-ended (Who, When, Where?)

Generating Questions

- Focus on open-ended: What, Why, How?
- Probe levels of understanding: Bloom's Taxonomy



Generate at least five questions you could ask in your tutoring/office hours situation to replace “do you understand”:

ACTIVE LISTENING

Attending: communicate attentiveness.

- Verbal cues: yes, I see
- Non-verbal: eye contact, nodding

Reflection: reflect back what your partner has just said.

- It seems to me that you think...
- So, what I hear you saying...

Paraphrasing or Summarizing: Select main points together into one statement

- Let me tell you what I heard, so I can be sure that I understand you. You said...

Probing: use open-ended questions to prompt further discussion or clarification

- I heard you say...please tell me more about that
- Help me understand...

Self-disclosure: share appropriate personal feelings or experiences

- I can relate to your situation
- I have experienced something similar

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

Stephen R. Covey
(1932-2012)
InspirationBoost.com

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IMPORTANT: "Wait Time"

**Practice with a partner
(2 minutes each)**

→ Partner 1: Share a scenario you encountered in office hours or tutoring that was difficult.

→ Partner 2: Use active listening only.

THINKING OUT LOUD

TA/Tutor:

When you demonstrate solving problems, model the process of thinking aloud by explicitly stating what it means to explain your reasoning. Include all the decisions you make, even the very small ones (e.g., which numbers to work with and what operations to use).

Student/Tutee:

PROMPTS FOR THE THINKING ALOUD PROCESS

- I know that...
- I'm trying to figure out...
- One thing I can try is...
- I want to try ... because ...

THINKING OUT LOUD

Try it (new partner)

Partner 1:

Explain a typical problem or idea to another person.

Prompts to help you:

- And now I am thinking/remembering...
- I chose to do this because...
- Next I will... because...
- How did I know to do that? I thought about (I remembered, etc.)...

Partner 2:

Raise hand whenever they've skipped a step or didn't explain their reasoning.

Give them a chance to fill in the step; nod when they can go ahead.

QUESTIONS?

