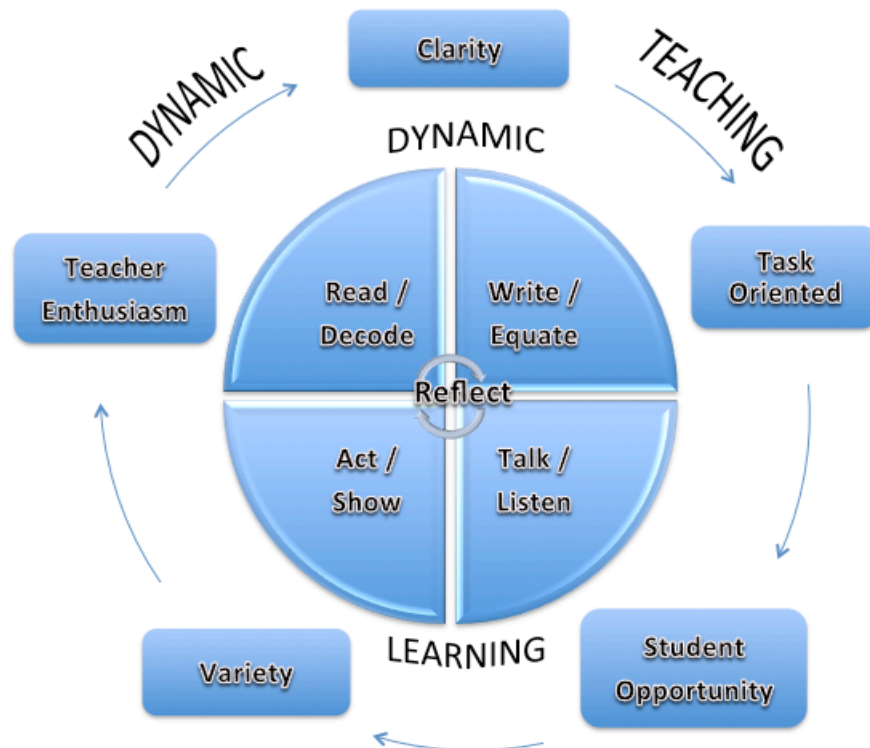


Edward Frison's Learning Model



My model is the result of an examination of which learning theory spoke to me the most in terms of my own pedagogy. Unfortunately, I had to force a stop to the research, as I would still be reading trying to nail this down completely. There are aspects of several theories that have considerable attraction for how I see effective teaching and learning happening; Multiple Intelligences (Gardner), Experiential Learning (Kolb), Constructivism (Vygotsky), and Connectivism (Siemens).

I think that if I could create a model in 3D I would have more success portraying my model. I started with what I feel is at the heart of effective teaching and learning. That is, the tension between active and passive teaching and learning. I do not believe that human beings can learn in isolation and so should not be placed in a learning environment that expects this. This would be the passive side. Here, we see traditional instructional style where the teacher lectures and the student takes notes. The primary activity is passive listening and results in retention of knowledge only as far as the next test. Correspondence courses are another example of passive learning. In the DL world, I think the models that utilize mostly asynchronous methods are also passive as they isolate the learner. Even the best moodle courses with all the flash of embedded video clips and java applets still require the student to rely on their own motivation. I believe this results in little engagement and low completion rates.

I believe that the active teacher and learner is the better way to approach a learning model. I believe that at the heart of good teaching and learning is relationship. We are social creatures and thrive in a dynamic environment. This is what I tried to represent in my model. This is an instructional approach where students engage material they are studying through reading/decoding, writing/equating, talking and listening, and acting/showing. All the while reflecting on what they are doing. This is where my model fails, as I could not represent how reflection is integral to each aspect of the dynamic learning relationships. I think it is best to say that formative assessment, where a learner is allowed to compare their learning against a top-level model and can use multiple opportunities to improve and master, is woven through the reading/decoding, writing/equating, talking and listening components. The summative part, where the learner provides an end statement of learning against expectation, occurs in the acting/showing component. Assessment at this point should inform the learner as much or more than the teacher. The learner needs to decide what is more important – what I know or what I don't know.

The active or dynamic teacher continues to revise their delivery to best meet the learner's needs. Thus the number 1 element in this part of the model is clarity. If instructions, goals, expectations, etc. are not clear, the learner will not be as successful. Task orientation does not mean that the teacher is a dictator, but provides opportunity for the students to be engaged with the learning but is still able to guide them back to the topic. Student opportunity allows for learner engagement, time for interaction, and an opportunity for cognitive engagement of the topic. Variety is an obvious aspect of dynamic teaching. This incorporates differentiation and recognition of multiple intelligences. Finally, teacher enthusiasm. If the teacher is enthusiastic about what they are teaching, students will be enthusiastic about learning it. It is catching.

To conclude, I believe that we cannot separate good learning from good teaching and the best environment for this is a dynamic one. The dynamism comes from the fact that relationships must be explored and developed between the learner, teacher, and knowledge/skill to be learned. My frustration is that my technical/graphic skills leave my model short of a proper representation of this.

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