CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACHES IN MODERN PEDAGOGY: SHIFTING FROM TEACHING TO FACILITATING

Samandarova Gulsara Ismatilloyevna
Teacher of Languages Department
Tashkent State Agrarian University

Abstract. *In contemporary educational discourse, the constructivist approach has gained significant traction as a paradigm shift from traditional teacher-centered models to learner-centered facilitation. This article explores the theoretical underpinnings of constructivism, its implications for classroom practices, and the evolving role of educators.*

Keywords: *Constructivism, pedagogy, learner-centered learning, facilitation, active learning, Piaget, Vygotsky, scaffolding, education theory*

Traditional pedagogy has long centered on the direct transmission of knowledge from teacher to student, often emphasizing memorization and standardized evaluation. However, advances in cognitive psychology and educational theory have challenged this model, leading to the emergence of constructivism as a more dynamic and interactive approach. Constructivist pedagogy posits that learners construct knowledge actively, building upon prior experiences, social contexts, and reflective engagement with content.

Constructivism originates from the cognitive theories of Jean Piaget, who emphasized stages of cognitive development and the learner's active role in organizing knowledge. Piaget viewed learning as a process of assimilation and accommodation, where learners interact with their environment to form internal mental models. Lev Vygotsky expanded on this theory with his concept of the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), highlighting the social dimension of learning. According to Vygotsky, learners achieve higher cognitive levels through guided interaction and scaffolding provided by more knowledgeable others, including teachers and peers. Jerome Bruner added that learning is most effective when students discover principles through structured problem-solving, a concept known as *discovery learning*. His spiral curriculum emphasizes revisiting concepts at increasing levels of complexity.

One of the most profound implications of constructivist theory is the transformation of the teacher's role. Rather than delivering content, the teacher becomes a facilitator – someone who creates learning environments that provoke inquiry, dialogue, and collaboration. This includes:

- Designing problem-based learning activities
- Encouraging peer teaching and cooperative learning
- Providing open-ended questions that stimulate thinking
- Offering formative feedback that guides student growth rather than merely assessing outcomes

In this model, students assume responsibility for their own learning, developing skills in self-regulation, metacognition, and critical thinking.

Constructivist pedagogy manifests in various educational practices:

- **Project-Based Learning (PBL):** Students engage in extended investigations, often culminating in presentations or products that reflect their understanding.

- **Inquiry-Based Learning:** Teachers pose questions or problems and students explore solutions through research, experimentation, and collaboration.

- **Flipped Classrooms:** Students absorb content at home through videos or readings, using class time for discussion and active problem-solving.

- **Use of Technology:** Digital tools like simulations, virtual labs, and collaborative platforms (e.g., Google Classroom, Padlet) allow learners to explore concepts at their own pace and collaborate asynchronously.

Conclusion. Constructivist pedagogy represents a paradigm shift from delivering instruction to facilitating exploration. Rooted in robust psychological and educational theories, it offers a learner-centered framework that cultivates deeper understanding, independence, and collaboration. While challenges remain in implementation, especially within rigid systems, the potential for meaningful and transformative learning is significant. For educators, adopting a constructivist mindset means rethinking roles, reassessing outcomes, and placing trust in learners' ability to co-construct their educational journey.

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