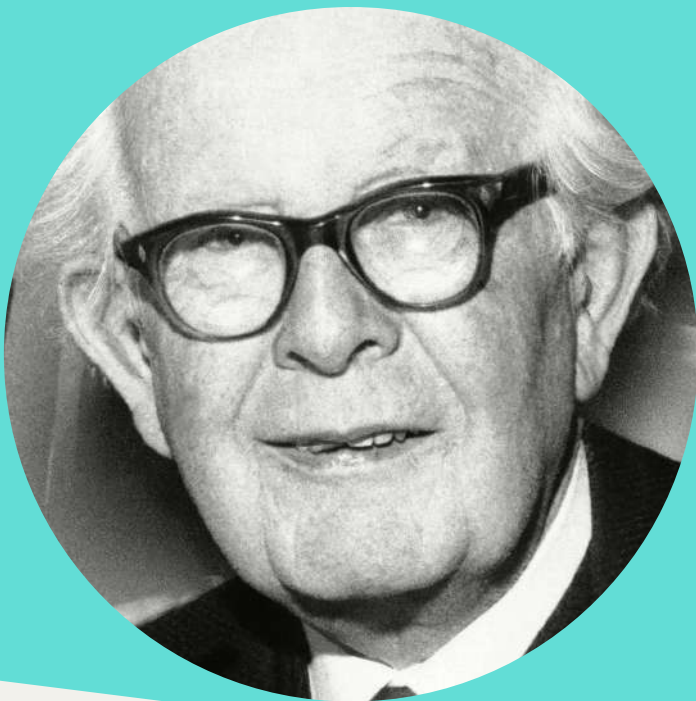


CONSTRUCTIVISM

BRIEF RESUME OF THE MAJOR
EXPONENTS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM
AND THEIR THEORIES



Jean Piaget 1896-1980



He is the founder of the experimental study of cognitive structures and processes related to the construction of knowledge during development.

Piaget breaks with the constructivism schemes. His observations on children's learning lead to hypotheses about the biological phases of natural learning.

The development of the psyche is guided and influenced by the social context, therefore by the culture in which the individual is living, which develops through "tools" (such as language) that the environment makes available.

Unlike Piaget, for Vygotsky the environment plays a central role. This is the Social Constructivism.

Lev Vygotsky 1896-1943



According to Bruner, instructions are a central element of learning. By accepting the zones of proximal development, the role of the teacher is fundamental. He must support and guide the learning process, but giving the learner the necessary space to experiment, hypothesize, make mistakes and learn.

Jerome Bruner 1915-2016



CONSTRUCTIVISM

Social constructivism

The construction of knowledge is both an internal process of the learner (through his own conscience) and an external one (through the inputs of the environment in which he acts) and these two worlds dialogue and interact with each other. In particular, interaction with other people is fundamental, which takes place through the tool of language. Cooperative work becomes knowledge.

Zone of proximal development

If for Piaget learning occurs through phases of biological development, for Vygotsky learning can precede development. This happens particularly in areas of proximal development, i.e. learning phases in which we can carry out tasks but only with the help of external people who guide us in the process.

Scaffolding theory

According to Bruner, the teacher must be the guide, the "facilitator" of learning. This occurs particularly within zones of proximal development. The teacher/facilitator guides students with his/her instructions to learn. The teacher gradually removes the supports from the students, so that they do not rely too much on them but learn to work independently. From this point of view, the process is more important than the final product.

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Strengths and limitations in education



Strengths:

- Is student centered
- Is collaborative
- It favors a deeper understanding
- Intrinsic motivation of learners

Limitations:

- Is hard to implement
- Is not totally clear the role of biology
- Doesn't give enough importance to emotions
- Requires active learner participation

For Instructional Design



In Instructional Design, especially if learning takes place online, constructivism pushes us to pay attention to facilitating active learning through tools such as discussion groups, teacher and classmate feedback (peers review), personal reflections, presentations.

It is essential to offer opportunities for interactions between peers and between students and teacher/facilitator. Tasks and assignments must also be based as much as possible on concrete and real needs and problems.

