



# Constructivist Learning Theory

Siti Soleha<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, Indonesia.

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Corresponding Author:

Siti Soleha

[sitisoleha0411@gmail.com](mailto:sitisoleha0411@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** This article examines constructivist learning theory from an educational psychology perspective. The purpose of this paper is to explain the definition, principles, and role of constructivism in motivating students. The method used is a literature review that gathers various expert opinions on constructivism and analyzes its application in the learning process. The results show that constructivism encourages students to actively construct their own knowledge, shifting the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered. Constructivism-based learning enhances 21st-century skills, deepens understanding, and encourages active student engagement. However, its implementation faces challenges, such as the need for teachers to transform into facilitators and create a supportive learning environment.

**Keywords:** Active Learning; Constructivism; Student Motivation

## Introduction

Learning is a process in which humans understand, through thoughts, feelings, and actions, that they want to produce skills or knowledge, behavior, knowledge or technology, or any form of human work and initiative to improve their future (Zajda, 2021). This includes personal development so that their lives can be better than before. Learning also means adapting to the environment and human interaction with that environment.

Constructivism was developed based on this view. Essentially, students' knowledge and skills are acquired bit by bit from a limited context. Constructivism is a philosophical school of knowledge that emphasizes that our knowledge is the result of our own construction (Arifah & Marzuki, 2021; Manurung et al., 2022). Constructivism, as a philosophical school, focuses on scientific concepts, learning theories, and teaching and has had a significant impact. Constructivism provides a new paradigm for the world of learning. Constructivism, as the foundation of the learning paradigm, requires students to actively participate in the

learning process, fosters students' ability to learn independently, and fosters students' ability to develop their own knowledge.

Therefore, the direction of classroom learning has changed. The orientation of learning has shifted from teacher-centered to student-centered learning, and students no longer wait to be filled like empty vessels. Students readily accept teachers' messages with a resigned attitude. Students, in this way, accept the teacher's knowledge. Students are now positioned as learning partners with the teacher. Teachers are not the sole source of information; they are the ones who know best. Teachers are merely learning resources or sources of information. Other learning resources can include peers, libraries, nature, laboratories, television, newspapers, and the internet (Torre et al., 2021).

As facilitators, teachers are responsible for classroom learning activities. One of their responsibilities in learning is to inspire and motivate students. They diagnose and address student difficulties and provide experiences to enhance student understanding (Cahyanto & Pabrawati, 2019).

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Therefore, teachers must provide and enable students to learn actively. This way, students can create, construct, discuss, compare, collaborate, and experiment in their learning activities (Efgivia et al., 2021).

## Method

This research was conducted using a literature study method, an approach that relies on searching and reviewing various written sources to obtain data and information relevant to the topic. This method was chosen because it provided the researcher with the opportunity to explore in-depth various theories, concepts, and previous research findings related to constructivist learning theory in education. Through this method, the researcher did not collect data directly from the field, but rather analyzed available literature.

The data collection process involved searching for secondary literature from various scientific sources, such as textbooks, journal articles, proceedings, and credible online sources. This literature was obtained through access to scientific portals such as Google Scholar and various official websites of academic institutions that provide open publications. Sources were selected selectively based on topic relevance, author authority, and publication freshness. Search keywords were tailored to the focus of the discussion, such as "constructivist learning," "constructivist theory in education," and "active learning strategies."

The collected data was then analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach, namely through the process of understanding the content, categorizing ideas, and synthesizing various theoretical perspectives (Furidha, 2023). This analysis aims to develop a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of constructivist principles and their application in the learning process. Furthermore, the researcher compares and contrasts various sources to gain a broader and more comprehensive perspective.

## Result and Discussion

### *Understanding Constructivist Learning*

Constructivism theory is a well-known theory in the world of education. Before delving deeper into constructivism, it's best to first understand constructivism itself (Darmawan & Ramli, 2025). Constructivism means constructive. In the context of educational philosophy, constructivism is an effort to build a modern, culturally structured way of life. Based on the explanation above, constructivism is a theory that is constructive in nature, building on abilities and understanding in the learning process. By having a constructive nature, it is hoped that students' activeness will increase their intelligence.

It feels incomplete to understand constructivism theory without understanding the opinions of experts, including: Hill, who defines it as generative learning, namely the act of creating meaning from what is learned. According to Tan & Ng (2021), constructivism is how to produce something from what is learned. In other words, how to combine learning with doing or practicing it in one's life so that it is useful for the benefit of others. Shymansky said constructivism is an active activity, where

Students build their own knowledge, look for the meaning of what they learn, and is a process of completing new concepts and ideas with the framework of thinking they already have. Based on the opinion above, it can be understood that constructivism is how to activate students by providing as much space as possible to understand what they have learned by applying the concepts they know and then putting them into practice in their daily lives. Based on the opinions of the experts above, a conclusion can be made, namely that constructivism is a theory that provides students with breadth of thinking and requires students to practice the theory they already know in their lives.

### *The Influence of Constructivism*

Constructivist theory has a significant influence on learning, encouraging students to actively construct their own knowledge, rather than simply receiving information (Cakir, 2022). This shifts the teacher's role from a transmitter of information to a learning facilitator who assists students in the process of exploring and constructing knowledge.

Constructivist theory shifts the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered. Students become more active in the learning process, engaging in exploration, inquiry, and reflection to construct their own understanding. Learning using a constructivist approach can train and enhance 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. Constructivist-based learning can improve student understanding and learning achievement. Students can understand concepts and information more deeply and meaningfully because they are actively involved in the learning process. Constructivism theory provides opportunities for students to gain new experiences, develop their thinking, and construct new ideas based on their own experiences. Assessment focuses not only on the final outcome, but also on the learning process and student understanding.

### *Assumptions of Constructivism*

Constructivism emphasizes the interaction of people and situations in the acquisition and refinement of skills and knowledge. Constructivism shares the same assumptions as social cognitive theory, which suggests

that people, behavior, and the environment interact reciprocally. The assumptions of constructivism are: first, that humans are active learners who develop their own knowledge.

Students are given the freedom to develop their acquired knowledge, whether through exercises, experiments, or discussions with others. This allows their knowledge to grow and expand. Second, teachers should not teach in the sense of delivering lessons in a traditional manner to a limited number of students. Teachers should construct situations in such a way that students can actively engage with the subject matter through material processing and social interaction.

This means that educators or teachers are required to be more active and engaging in their explanations, and they must also be able to use media in the learning process. Don't just use outdated or outdated methods, such as lectures and exhaustive note-taking. Teachers must teach in a way that engages students actively and engages them in the learning process. Learning activities include observing phenomena, collecting data, formulating and testing hypotheses, and collaborating with others. Another activity is taking students to locations outside the classroom. Teachers from various disciplines are needed to plan the curriculum collaboratively. Students need to be guided to self-regulate and take an active role in their learning by setting goals, monitoring and evaluating their progress, and going beyond the standards required by them by exploring their interests.

Perspectives in constructivism, First, exogenous constructivism refers to the idea that the acquisition of knowledge represents a reconstruction of different structures in the external world (Nurhasnah et al., 2024). This view relies on the strong influence of the external world on knowledge construction, such as experiences, teaching, and observing models. Second, endogenous constructivism emphasizes the coordination of prior actions, not directly from environmental information; therefore, knowledge is not a reflection of the external world but is acquired through experiences, teaching, or social interaction.

#### *Perspectives in Constructivism*

First, exogenous constructivism refers to the idea that the acquisition of knowledge represents a reconstruction of different structures in the external world. This view bases the construction of knowledge on the strong influence of the external world, such as experiences, teaching, and observation of models.

Second, endogenous constructivism emphasizes the coordination of prior actions, not the direct ingestion of environmental information; therefore, knowledge is not a reflection of the external world acquired through experiences, teaching, or social interaction. Knowledge

develops through cognitive activity from abstraction and follows a generally predictable sequence.

Third, dialectical constructivism argues that knowledge can be acquired not only through school but also through interactions with peers, teachers, neighbors, and even our immediate environment. Furthermore, its interpretation is not tied to the external world. In fact, knowledge or understanding arises from the mental contradictions of interactions between the surrounding environment and an individual. Each of these three perspectives has its own advantages, such as exogenous constructivism, which is used to accurately and in detail determine the extent of a student's knowledge of a particular subject. Then, endogenous constructivism is used to determine the extent of mastery of the material in a structured manner, starting from the lowest to the highest. Meanwhile, dialectical constructivism is used when teachers or educators want to plan interventions to encourage student thinking and to direct research to find the effectiveness of social influences such as exposure to models and collaboration with peers.

#### *Strengths of Constructivism*

In life, nothing is perfect; there are good and bad sides, and the same goes for theories. No theory is perfect, but they complement each other, and constructivism is no exception. The advantages of constructivism theory include:

First, the teacher is not the sole source of learning. This means that in the learning process, the teacher is merely a provider of knowledge. Students are required to be more active in their learning, through exercises, asking questions, practicing, and so on. Therefore, the teacher merely provides direction and provides whatever students need. In constructivism, knowledge is not only acquired through the learning process but can also be gained through discussion, experience, and the surrounding environment.

Second, students (in learning) are more active and creative. This means that students are required to understand their learning, both in school and outside of school, so that they can relate the knowledge they gain effectively and thoroughly. Furthermore, students are required to understand new knowledge and connect it with existing knowledge.

Third, learning becomes more meaningful. Meaningful learning means integrating information into other learning structures. This means that learning involves more than just listening to the teacher; students must be able to relate their personal experiences to information they receive from friends, neighbors, family, newspapers, television, and so on.

Fourth, learning has freedom. This means that students are free to connect the knowledge they gain

both in their environment and at school, thus creating the desired concepts. Fifth, individual differences are measured and valued. Sixth, teachers consider the process of constructing new knowledge, students think about solving problems, and making decisions.

### *Disadvantages of Constructivism*

First, the conceptual process of constructivism learning is not a one-way acquisition of information from the outside to the inside of the student's experience through assimilation and accommodation processes, which ultimately lead to the updating of cognitive structures. Second, the role of the student. According to this view, learning is a process of knowledge formation. Third, the role of the teacher. In this approach, the teacher or educator plays a role in facilitating the smooth process of knowledge construction by students. The teacher does not apply existing knowledge but rather helps students construct their own knowledge. Fourth, learning tools. This approach emphasizes that the primary role in learning activities is the student's activity in constructing their own knowledge. Fifth, evaluation. This view suggests that the learning environment strongly supports the emergence of various views and interpretations of reality, the construction of knowledge, and other activities based on experience.

## Conclusion

The functions of a theory include: first, providing systematic findings. Second, generating hypotheses. This means that every research requires a hypothesis, because without one, the research is less effective, as hypotheses have their own function in every research. Third, making predictions. This means that a theory must be able to generate tentative predictions from our assumptions as researchers. To prove these assumptions, a theory is needed to provide or prove whether they are correct or in accordance with the researcher's thinking, and finally, to provide an explanation. Constructivism theory is a theory that is familiar in the world of education. Before learning more about constructivism theory, it would be better to first understand constructivism itself. Constructivism means being constructive. In the context of educational philosophy, constructivism is an effort to build a modern, culturally structured life..

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest related to this study.

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