

La meta

Antonietta De Angelis *Stili di apprendimento: La meta...scegli il percorso giusto*, "Proteo fare sapere" del 31.10.2004 in

http://www.proteofaresapere.it/rubriche/mah.asp?id_rubrica=39&id_articolo=202

The following abstract is from the original article "The Goal Choose the Right Path" by A. De Angelis in Italian:

Every person differs in age, attitudes, sensory effectiveness, motivations and learning styles from others. Some people easily acquire pieces of information related to concrete objects (facts, comments, experimental data), others are more at ease with abstract concepts and mathematical models. Those who find it easier to remember images, colours, shapes have a visual style, those who easily remember words, sounds, voices have an auditory style, while those who are more impressed by tactile sensations and movements have a kinaesthetic style.

Once we are aware of our own learning style, if we want to enhance and improve it, we should not forget that it is not made only by cognitive aspects, the favourite ways we elaborate pieces of information, but it includes social and emotional aspects too, which have a major role in learning. By many theorists human behaviours are considered as the results of the interaction of cognitive and emotional aspects.

In Rogers' view human beings are intrinsically able to learn, all our life is made of learning, we learn how to walk, how to talk, we achieve results and though we may experience failures or have difficulties, nonetheless we keep on learning.

Once teachers' task was essentially to "transmit" knowledge while today learning is seen as process requiring students' active participation and students are not considered as passive subjects recipient of teaching. Building concepts, solving problems, achieving particular skills require an active learner, which means that the student is the protagonist of his education, both in terms of knowledge and skills. So the teacher's role is not "to give lessons", explaining predetermined topics, presenting concepts but to create the situations, the learning paths, identifying the activities which may allow students to work at a cognitive and psychological level, building concepts and achieving knowledge and skills.

Learning paths represent a track, an operational scheme to be modified in the process, if needed; guidelines, lines of action to achieve a goal and avoid working at random. Learning paths should not be imposed, so they should include strategies to motivate and encourage students in their interest (need) in learning and building up concepts.

Teachers should know which tools are more appropriate to their students' level and choose between concrete, iconic and symbolic tools.

Practical experience is the starting point as the iconic level implies a previous concrete experience, as well as symbolic representations imply practical and iconic experiences. A learning path is a problematic situation students have to solve with adequate tools.

There is an obvious difference between a learning path and a "programmed educational package" which analytically describes the process to be developed.

To conclude .. "learning paths are sequences of activities students are motivated to and guided to develop, when the teacher has the courage *to say nothing* and resists the temptation to explain concepts before students have discovered them"