

What are the basic ideas of each theory?

The four C's theory: („21st century learning” or “21st century skills”)

With **critical thinking**, students don't just learn a set of facts. Since the goal of learning is not to achieve a predetermined set of knowledge but the ability to solve problems. Instead, they learn how to discover the facts. They ask questions and help others to think critically. Critical thinking shall lead students to develop skills like a higher level of concentration, analysis and thought processing. (key qualifications: use systems thinking, make judgement and decisions, solve problems)

Creativity allows students to embrace their inner strengths, and as a student learns about their creativity, they also learn how to express it in productive ways. They also become motivated to share their creativity with others. Successful people also need to be able to continuously create and innovate to meet the future challenges of society and workforce. (key qualifications: creative thinking, evaluate ideas, being open and responsive to new ideas, implement innovation)

Collaboration: The world has become interconnected: not only in private life but also in work life. Due to the demands of globalization and the rise of technology the ability to collaborate has become essential for employees. That implies exchanging information and ideas to finish projects. Generating knowledge together includes the acceptance of other people's ideas, not holding back information for selfish purposes and speaking up when having an idea. Skills students need to train. (key qualifications: work effectively and respectfully in diverse teams, flexibility, valuation of individual contributors)

Communication: We are now in an age of text-based communications — SMS, emails, social media, etc. — it's never been more important for students to learn how to convey their thoughts in a way that others can understand them. That's because in a written text it is critical to understand the context of someone's words. Furthermore everybody is exposed to a huge amount of information. So students need to have the ability to decide whether a source of information is accurate and which not. Nowadays the communication is global so skills like intercultural communication and the ability to communicate in diverse environments (multilingual, multisocial and multicultural) have become significant. Students need to learn how to communicate effectively. (key qualifications: articulate thoughts, listen effectively, use of multiple media and technologies, communication in diverse environments)

Connectivism:

Connectivism is a learning theory, focused on connecting specialized information sets which are more important than the current state of knowing. Learning therefore is “the ability to construct and traverse [...] networks” (Downes, 2007). This is necessary since society is changing very fast. Everything becomes interconnected and information are exchanged in a fast way. Ideas and opinions are exchanged globally outside school or university. Learning has to adapt to those new opportunities.

Principles of connectivism:

Learning is a process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources. It is like a mind map rather than a linear progression of ideas.

Learning may reside in non-human appliances.

Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known

The ability to see connections between fields, ideas, and concepts is a core skill, because linking information and ideas give students an advantage and lead to progression.

Accurate, up-to-date knowledge is the intent of all connectivist learning activities.

Decision-making is itself a learning process.

It is hard to compare these two theories. Both theories try to explore the most important skills and qualifications students need to be successful in the 21st century taking the fast developments in technology into consideration. Both theories show similar to constructivism enabling students to adapt their knowledge to current demands.

From my point of view, both theories can foster communication and collaboration in my work area.

Without communication and collaboration the learning outcome is not that good. When students notice, that collaboration and communication will increase the results, they will use these tools for the next time.

I'll give them a try, 4Cs to learn from each other and connectivism to increase the actionable knowledge (Tom).

Since I train people (aged 21-45) in occupational rehabilitation I need to raise awareness to the changing requirements in workforce. Whereas my younger students got some of the 4C-skills in school, the older students lack it and need to be trained. (Katharina)