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Learning and teaching are key issues in education. Although what “learning” or “teaching” is seems to be quite obvious, the number of theoretical approaches that claim to explain these two activities is overwhelming, especially for young educa-

tional scientists and practitioners. Contemporary theories of learning differ from each other in terms of conceptualization of the person, the underlying cognitive processes, the embedded emotions, the sociocultural context, the society, and others. In 2009, Knut Illeris edited a book wherein 16 contemporary learning theorists, including himself, explained their approaches in their own words. As necessary as it is to study the original sources, the variety and complexity of the academic dispute on learning issues would perhaps be too demanding for young educational scientist in higher education.

The main aim of Henning Pätzold's study guide is to give scholars and practitioners in adult education a comprehensible overview on theories of learning and its implications for teaching adults. The book is organized into two main parts with supporting chapters. Exercises and tasks are included after each chapter, and keywords are explained in special textboxes.

For the first part of his study guide, the author selected a manageable number of key learning theories and simplifies them to a certain degree. The core ideas of each theory are captured, and well-known illustrations are included. He presents Knud Illeris's learning triangle as well as his levels of learning; the phenomenographic approach of Marton, All'Alba, and Beaty; and Bateson's levels of learning. As a comprehensive approach, he focuses on Peter Jarvis's theory of human learning. After that we learn about humanism and pragmatism (Dewey) and their impact on education. The author discusses their core ideas and their influences on learning theory, for example, the meaning of experience. Pätzold claims not only to refer to them as roots for adult education but also as branches of modern learning theories. The first part of the book ends with a brief glance at psychological and biological approaches. Behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and neuroscience are described in a nutshell.

The second part of the book focuses on teaching and addresses didactic challenges but does not intend to present a list of didactic rules based on theories. Central terms of didactics, its difference to instruction, and the German term *Bildung* are explained. Pätzold gives a brief description of Klafki's didactic model and an overview of other models. Another chapter focuses on reflection on learning (and nonlearning) and intends to raise awareness of various aspects of learning by presenting a comprehensive questionnaire on individual learning processes. Readers are supposed to complete this questionnaire on their own to learn about learning by reflecting on their own experience. Pätzold presents time (sequence and gestalt of learning), person (emotion, cognition, and the body), and lifeworld (social and material environment) as further "cornerstones of didactic theory." These complex issues are brought up in a very condensed way.

No doubt, it is a challenging project to write a comprehensive textbook on learning and teaching. And it is even more complicated if you want to give an overview of contemporary theories and simultaneously present cornerstones of one's own emerging approach that combines existing theories like pragmatism and humanism in a new way. Henning Pätzold tackles this task with confidence. By presenting selected theories, he gives insight into his way of thinking about learning and its implications on

teaching. It is much more a book about learning theories than about teaching theories, but it is one that tries to reduce the gap between learning theories and teaching activities.

This book is informative for readers who are not yet familiar with theories of human learning. It might be a helpful resource in teaching adult education, especially when combined with other resources. Some simplifications, necessary as they are, might be questionable, and the chapters in the second part of the book are not very well interconnected. A strength and weakness of this book is the fact that it presents some new and interesting ideas but they still need further explanation and elaboration.

Reference

Illeris, K. (Ed.). (2009). *Contemporary theories of learning: Learning theorist . . . In their own words*. New York, NY: Routledge.
