An introduction to the six types of learning, with Professor Diana Laurillard

*The below text is a transcript of a* [*video on the UCL Media Central website*](https://mediacentral.ucl.ac.uk/Play/4358#!)*.*

Everyone who teaches wants their students to have a good experience of learning because that's what would drive their future learning. In this video we look at what it takes to learn in the context of formal education and then we can think about how to make that happen.

The conversational framework is intended to help teachers think about teaching and learning from the student's point of view. Basically it's a distillation of the main educational literature on the key findings and principles about learning. This is the full framework. It's complex but it has to be - the process of teaching and learning is a highly complex activity and this diagram is about as simple as it could possibly be.

It starts with the learner at the centre. Learning is an activity that develops both concepts and practices. It's what we will do throughout life. We develop a concept which generates an action and a feedback on that action then modifies the concept to generate a better action that then gets better feedback. And so concept and practice each assists the other to develop over time. But that fundamental process of developing and integrating concepts and practices is what we try to use for learning in formal education. So here the learner can get help from the teacher on the one hand and from other learners on the other hand. At the upper level of the framework teacher and learner communicate about concepts and learners do the same with each other. And every interaction is an opportunity for concepts to develop. At the lower level teachers and students model and share their practice through actions and feedback in a special learning environment. And again, all those interactions are an opportunity for practices to develop. If the learning environment is quite challenging then to get the best feedback the learner has to integrate concepts and practices and that's when the learning process really begins to benefit the learner for the long term. And with that framework in mind we can identify some recognizable learning activities which together cover all of it.

If the learner is listening to the teacher or watching a video or demo or reading a book website that's learning through acquisition. It's very common in education it creates the opportunity for the learner to develop concepts but it doesn't require them to do anything all, the other types of learning activity do.

If the learner is going to the teacher or the library or the internet to find out something that's learning through inquiry. It's a different way of reading a book more under the control of the learner and they have to come up with a question, evaluate what comes back, search again. It's a more active learning process enabling that conceptual process to keep developing.

If the learner is asking questions of other learners or answering their questions exchanging ideas challenging each other's arguments that's the learning through discussion - listening and responding articulating and arguing there are all opportunities for the concept to develop and if the teacher sets up a learning environment where the task goal the learner then has to generate an action interpret the feedback and maybe think about the relevant concept and try again to get nearer the goal. This is learning through practice. And suppose you've got the students working together on a project where they have to produce a shared output maybe a diagram or a definition or design or report. This is learning through collaboration. It's different from discussion having to produce a shared output means they have to negotiate their ideas in practice until they agree so in the process they're challenging each other and providing peer feedback to develop the best output they can even more opportunities for integrating and developing concepts and practice.

And finally when students are producing something for the teacher to evaluate that's learning through production. Again, it may be a plan, a website, a performance, a theory, an analysis ... but having to produce a public presentation of what they've learned is as important as getting feedback from the teacher - many opportunities for integrating and developing concepts and practice.

Together all six types of learning activity cover most of what you're ever like you to ask of students and together they cover the whole Conversational Framework.

So to summarise, the best possible learning experience comes from using all those types of interaction - a rich mix of learning activities is likely to be the most effective.