

Cultivating Qualitative Traits through Experiential Learning: An Experiential Journey

MonsoonSIM Partner Conference – Bali, Jan 2019

Outline

- Introduction and Apologies
- “The Future of Jobs”
- Problems in Education
- What is Experiential Learning?
- Connecting The Dots
- Q&A

The Future of Jobs

World Economic Forum Report (16 Jan 2016)

“Top 10 skills to thrive in 2020”:

- Complex problem solving
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- People Management
- Coordinating with others
- Emotional Intelligence
- Judgement/decision making
- Service orientation
- Negotiation
- Cognitive flexibility



**Quantitative or qualitative?
Older skills important?**

“Yes, but how?”

Common Teaching Process

- Teacher elaborates theories
- Student attempts exercise and obtains erroneous output
- “Oh, look, you made a mistake.”
- *Shows theory to detect where mistake was, and what an ideal parameter or application would have been*
- Redo – hopefully with desired output!



Straightforward, efficient, polished! 😊

But...?

Problem #1



- Modern education systems don't support these traits
- Long-term influence on:
 - Methods of teaching
 - Assessments
 - Linear, unidirectional learning process
- Instructors are not always suited/equipped for other systems of teaching
- "Can XYZ or ABC be taught?"
 - See also: other skills.

“How did we learn other skills?”

Let's pay a visit to our past...

History: The Apprenticeship Model

- Every trade has a craft
- Every craft has three components
 - **Object** – the thing to be manipulated
 - **Objective** – the end product of manipulation
 - **Skill** – how manipulation of the object is done

Carpentry

- **Object:**
 - Wood (of one kind)
- **Objective:**
 - Bench (a final shape)
- **Skills:**
 - Hammering
 - Chiseling
 - Carving
 - Sawing
 - Sanding
 - Etc...



Other Traditional Crafts

- Medicine
 - Health
 - Nutrition
- Physical movement
 - Combat
 - Athletics
- Material crafting
 - Woodworking
 - Stonemasonry
 - Metalworking
- Different frame of conceptualisation
 - **Different processes!**

Roles & Process

○ Student

- Absorb
- Attempt
- Listen to correction
- Repeat attempt

○ Teacher

- Narrate
- Monitor/Detect
- Correct
- Repeat



Roles in Apprenticeship

- Master
 - Perform the craft
 - Supervise/Guide
- **Apprentice**
 - **Assist (e.g. prepare the fire)**
 - **Observe (often while assisting)**
 - **Emulate (via natural mimicry)**
 - **Attempt (with supervision)**
 - **Ask/Refine**

Mode of instruction and transfer of information is different!





... I forget. I see an
member. ... and I understand

Confucius

不闻不若闻之，
闻之不若见之，
见之不若知之，
知之不若行之；
学至于行之而止矣。

- 荀况

(Xun Kuang, also known as "Master Xun")

Listening is better than not listening;
Seeing is better than merely listening;
Knowing is better than merely seeing;
Doing is better than merely knowing;
Only when action sprouts, can it be said to
have been truly learned.

- 荀況

(Xun Kuang, also known as "Master Xun")

“Do to learn” ≠ Experiential Learning!

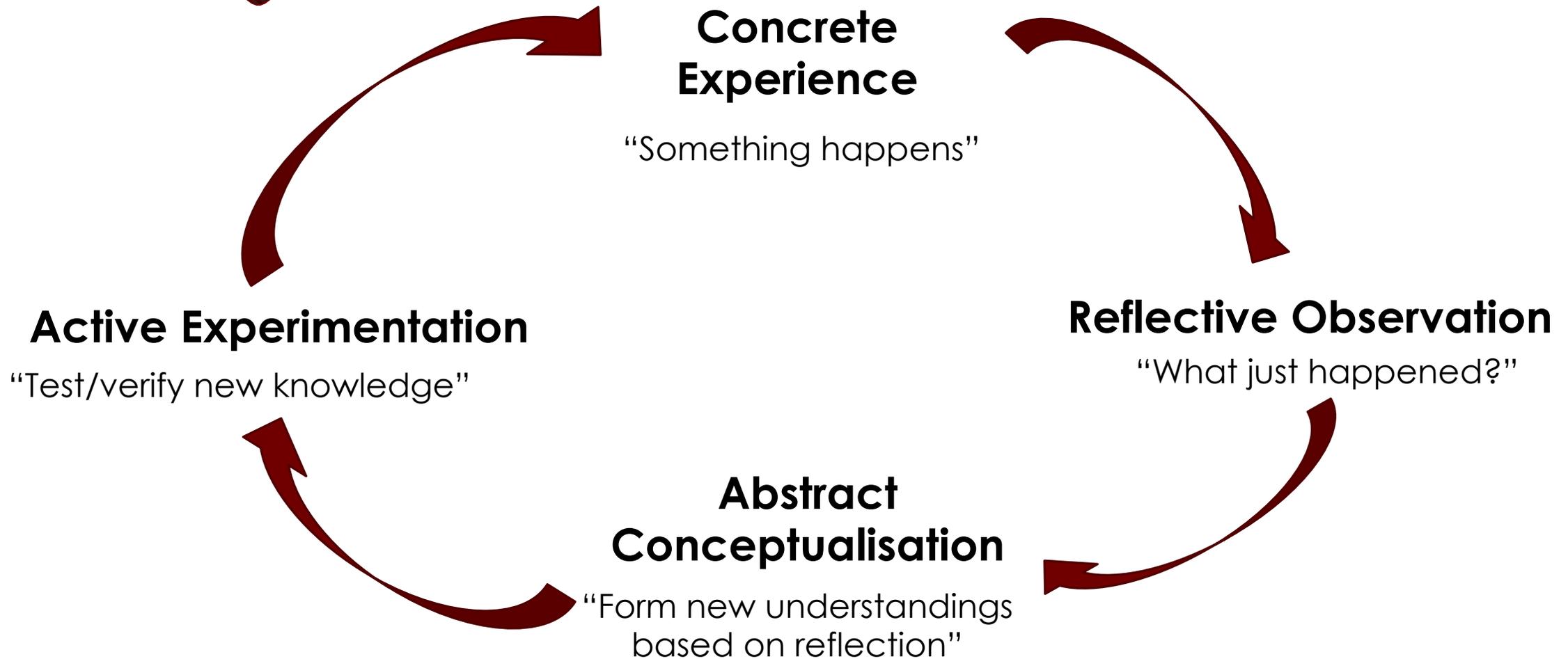
Do to Learn

- Trying of various factors (systematically) until one works
- Possible (but not always) retrospective analysis
- Often linear path, correlational, sometimes even reductionist!

Experiential Learning

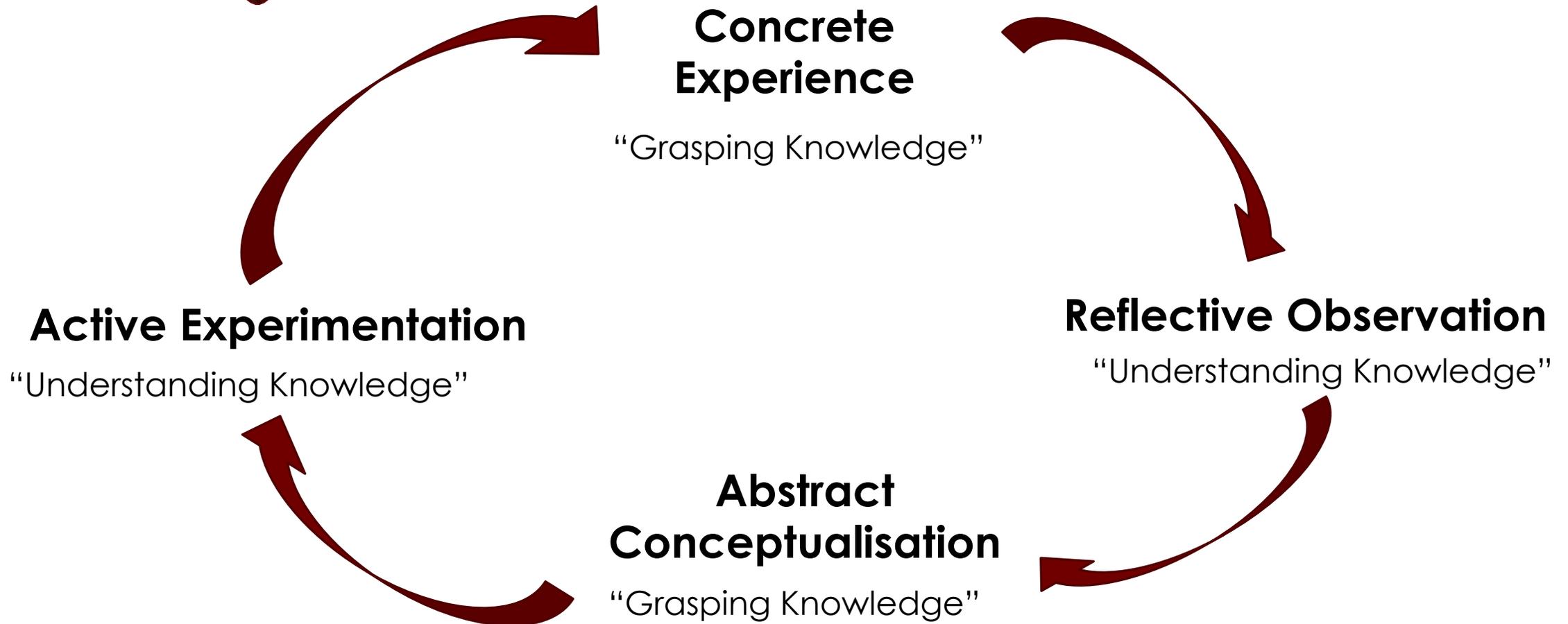
- Differentiated by an iterative **object-objective** relationship!
 - Objective of craft -> object of reflection
 - Objective of reflection - > object of conceptualisation
 - Objective of conceptualisation -> object of experimentation
- Cyclical – formation and re-formation of ideas
- Extension into other fields (portability!)

Kolb's Experiential Learning Model



Kolb's Experiential Learning Model

...can be further customised by various learning styles!



I hear and I forget.
I see and I
remember.
I do and I
understand.



Only when
action sprouts,
can it be said to
have been truly
learned.

= Experiential Learning!

The Future of Jobs

World Economic Forum Report (16 Jan 2016)

“Top 10 skills to thrive in 2020”:

- Complex problem solving
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- People Management
- Coordinating with others
- Emotional Intelligence
- Judgement/decision making
- Service orientation
- Negotiation
- Cognitive flexibility



“So, where does
MonsoonSIM come
into the picture?”



Economics



- Object
 - The “market”
- Objective
 - ...?
- Skills
 - ?
 - ??
 - ???
 - ?!?!?!?

Economics (} monsoon SIM



- Object
 - The “market”
- Objective
 - To maximize profit
- Skills
 - Control of market share
 - Control of supply/demand
 - Cost/revenue balancing

(...note that these are expressions of the earlier top 10 skills, put into context)



- We already have:
 - Multiple factors to play with
 - Ease of use of platform (native digital generation)
 - Various objectives to consider and assign
- We can:
 - Throw them in the deep end!
 - Create learnable scenarios
 - Add in a bit of drama and showmanship for calculated, constructive failures
 - Toss things up and throw a monkey wrench into the system!
 - Measured amount of guidance

Can we return to the traditional
apprentice model for education?

Sadly, no. Not completely.

Problem #2

- Pace of learning does not match pace of world
 - Speed and frequency of society's demands
 - Density and connectivity of world
 - Rate of expansion of knowledge and domains
 - **We can't keep up!**



Modern Systems vs. Apprenticeship

Modern Education Systems

- Direct/straightforward
- Theory – then put into practice
- Quick, concise, correlational

BUT

- Limited
- Often Reductionist/Isolationist/Compartmentalist
- Unable to adapt quickly to variations and changes

Learning through Apprenticeship

- Lengthy, tiring, drawn out process
- Practice first, theory later (or simultaneously)

BUT

- Holistic
- Accounts for contexts and nuances
- Cultivates ability to learn, unlearn, relearn
- Flexible

BUT WE CAN...

- Cultivate new learning habits and approaches to “failure”
- Teach “theoretical processes” in an “experiential way”
- Change perceptions of skills and tasks
- Inculcate iterative reflection and questioning of assumptions
 - Not conclusions or hypotheses!

DISCLAIMERS AND WARNINGS

- People are not going to like it.
- It will not be easy.
- *There is some strange irony in me giving this talk.*

Cultivating Qualitative Traits through Experiential Learning: An Experiential Journey

MonsoonSIM Partner Conference – Bali, Jan 2019