

Class Session 11: Theory in Distance Education

Since 1974, experts in distance education have been mentioning the importance of theory in distance education. Theory is defined as a plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain a phenomenon. It is more than a hypothesis, because the hypothesis is an assumption made before any research has been completed.

The video explained the six theories about distance education. One of them is the Guided Didactic Communication of Holmberg. The theory stated that distance education serves individual learners who cannot or do not want to make use of face-to-face education. This theory also sees learning as guided and supported by noncontiguous means. It also mentions the importance of relations between instructors and students which are fundamental to succeed in this form of learning.

Richard Keegan 1996 developed the theory of Reintegration of teaching acts. According to his theory a variety of teaching and media should be incorporated in distance education, for example: communication by correspondence, telephone tutorials, online computer communication, comments on assignments by tutors or computers. It also adds the need of incorporating some of the face-to-face experiences. As distance learner I have had the opportunity to see these elements of the theory.