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**ETEC 512-Assignment- Thought Paper 3**

What if all knowledge was made up of established ‘truths?’ To evaluate our own knowledge, we would have to compare what we have learned with these ‘truths.’ This situation places all learners in a paradoxical situation noted here by Glasersfeld, “... to assess the truth of your knowledge you would have to know what you come to know before you come to know it”. A constructivist teaching approach removes the blockage that this paradox creates. There is a ‘notion of a second type of knowledge’ (p. 38) that being ‘a knowledge that human reason derives from experience’ (p. 38). Constructivists believe involving students actively in the learning process allows learners to construct their own meaning through exploration and reflection, making this an efficient method of imparting knowledge.

Early schools of thought about knowledge and learning viewed the knower and the learner as ‘separate and independent entities’ (p. 35). The traditional role of an educator was a holder of knowledge. Knowledge was passed on with the goal being a ‘student’s “correct” replication of what the teacher does’ (p. 39). Constructivists view the teacher-learner relationship differently, as is stated by Glasersfeld when he notes that “... it appears that knowledge is not a transferable commodity and communication not a conveyance” (p. 48). Knowledge gained through rote memorization and knowledge gained by learners immersed in experiences that allow them to construct their own meaning, differ greatly. Essentially, when using a constructivist approach ‘the goal of the teacher’s guidance is to generate understanding, rather than train specific performance’ (p. 48). Constructivist teachers create rich tasks for students that provide them with opportunities to shape their own learning with teachers guiding and

facilitating. Conveying information that students will regurgitate at a later date to demonstrate their understanding has no place in the constructivist classroom.

**References:**

Von Glasersfeld, E. (2008). Learning as a Constructive Activity. *AntiMatters*, 2(3), 33-49.