

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSTRUCTIVIST TEACHING AND COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

MỐI QUAN HỆ GIỮA DẠY HỌC KIẾN TẠO VỚI DẠY HỌC PHÁT TRIỂN NĂNG LỰC Ở CẤP TIỂU HỌC

Phan Thị Nở*, Huỳnh Thị Ngọc Lan*, Trần Văn Tuấn*

**Khoa Sư phạm - Trường Ngôn ngữ - Văn hoá - Nghệ thuật*

Khmer Nam Bộ và Nhân văn - Đại học Trà Vinh

Received: 10/5/2026; Accepted: 20/5/2026; Published: 18/6/2026

Tóm tắt: *Dạy học kiến tạo được xem là một trong những lý thuyết dạy học hiện đại có nhiều điểm tương đồng với định hướng phát triển năng lực. Bài viết tập trung phân tích cơ sở lý luận của dạy học kiến tạo, đồng thời làm rõ mối quan hệ giữa dạy học kiến tạo và dạy học phát triển năng lực trong giáo dục tiểu học. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy hai cách tiếp cận này có sự thống nhất về mục tiêu giáo dục, vai trò của người học, phương pháp tổ chức dạy học và môi trường học tập. Trên cơ sở đó, bài viết khẳng định dạy học kiến tạo là nền tảng lý luận quan trọng góp phần nâng cao hiệu quả dạy học và phát triển năng lực cho học sinh tiểu học trong bối cảnh đổi mới giáo dục hiện nay.*

Từ khóa: *dạy học kiến tạo; dạy học phát triển năng lực; giáo dục tiểu học; học sinh tiểu học.*

Abstract: *Constructivist teaching is considered one of the modern educational approaches that shares many characteristics with competency-based teaching. This article analyzes the theoretical foundations of constructivist teaching and clarifies its relationship with competency-based teaching in primary education. The findings indicate that the two approaches share common orientations regarding educational goals, learners' roles, instructional methods, and learning environments. Based on these similarities, the study confirms that constructivist teaching provides an important theoretical foundation for enhancing teaching effectiveness and fostering competency development among primary school students in contemporary educational settings.*

Keywords: *constructivist teaching; competency-based teaching; primary education; primary school students.*

1. Introduction

The current trend of educational reform emphasizes the development of learners' competencies to meet the demands of the twenty-first century. In primary education, teaching is expected not only to provide knowledge but also to help students develop essential competencies such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and self-learning.

Constructivist teaching is considered one of the learner-centered approaches that supports competency development. Based on the principles of constructivist theory, learning occurs when students actively construct knowledge through experience, interaction, and reflection. Therefore, constructivist teaching encourages active participation and meaningful learning rather than passive knowledge acquisition.

In Vietnam, competency-based education has become a central goal of the 2018 General Education Curriculum. Understanding the relationship between constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching is essential for improving teaching practices in primary schools. Therefore, this study examines the theoretical connection between these two approaches and discusses their implications for

primary education.

2. Research Content and Discussion

2.1. Theoretical Foundations of Constructivist Teaching and Competency-Based Teaching in Primary Education

Constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching are two important educational approaches that have significantly influenced contemporary educational reform. Although developed from different theoretical perspectives, both approaches emphasize learner-centered education and the active role of students in the learning process.

Constructivist teaching is based on Constructivist Theory, which views learning as an active process of knowledge construction. According to Piaget, learners develop knowledge through the processes of assimilation and accommodation, whereby new experiences are integrated into existing cognitive structures. Vygotsky further emphasized the role of social interaction in learning, arguing that knowledge is constructed through communication, collaboration, and participation in meaningful social activities. From this perspective, learning is not the passive reception of information but the active construction of understanding through experience and reflection.

In constructivist classrooms, students are encouraged to explore, inquire, discuss, and solve problems. Teachers act as facilitators who create meaningful learning environments and support students in constructing knowledge.

Competency-based teaching, on the other hand, focuses on developing learners' ability to apply knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values effectively in various situations. This approach emphasizes learning outcomes and the practical application of knowledge rather than the mere acquisition of subject content.

In primary education, competency-based teaching aims to foster essential competencies such as communication, collaboration, self-learning, creativity, and problem-solving. These characteristics are closely aligned with the principles of constructivist teaching.

Therefore, constructivist teaching provides an important theoretical foundation for competency-based teaching in primary education.

2.2. The Relationship Between Constructivist Teaching and Competency-Based Teaching in Primary Education

Constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching are closely related approaches that share common educational goals and learner-centered orientations. Although they originate from different theoretical perspectives, both approaches emphasize the active role of learners in the learning process and aim to improve educational outcomes through meaningful learning experiences.

One of the most significant relationships between the two approaches lies in their educational objectives. Competency-based teaching focuses on developing learners' abilities to apply knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values in various situations.

Similarly, constructivist teaching encourages students to actively construct knowledge through experience, inquiry, and interaction. In both approaches, learning is not limited to memorizing information but involves applying knowledge to solve problems and address real-life challenges.

Another important connection concerns the role of learners. Constructivist teaching views students as active participants who construct their own understanding through exploration and reflection. Likewise, competency-based teaching requires learners to take responsibility for their learning, engage in meaningful tasks, and demonstrate their competencies through authentic performance.

The relationship between the two approaches is also reflected in instructional methods. Many teaching methods commonly used in competency-based

education, such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, cooperative learning, and experiential learning, are grounded in constructivist principles. These methods provide opportunities for primary school students to interact with peers, investigate problems, and apply knowledge in practical contexts, thereby supporting competency development.

In addition, both approaches emphasize the importance of learning environments. Constructivist learning environments encourage communication, collaboration, and active engagement in learning activities. Similarly, competency-based teaching requires learning situations that enable students to practice and demonstrate competencies in authentic contexts.

In primary education, where students learn best through active participation and concrete experiences, constructivist teaching offers effective strategies for achieving competency-based educational goals.

Therefore, constructivist teaching can be regarded as an important theoretical and pedagogical foundation for competency-based teaching in primary education.

2.3. Implications for Teaching and Learning in Primary Education

The close relationship between constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching provides important implications for educational practices in primary schools. Understanding this relationship can support teachers in selecting appropriate instructional approaches that promote both knowledge construction and competency development among students.

First, teaching activities should be designed to encourage active learning. Instead of focusing primarily on knowledge transmission, teachers should create opportunities for students to explore, investigate, and discover knowledge through meaningful learning experiences. Learning tasks should be connected to students' prior knowledge and everyday life situations so that they can actively construct understanding and apply what they have learned.

Second, classroom instruction should emphasize student participation and interaction. Constructivist teaching highlights the importance of communication and collaboration in the learning process. Therefore, competency-based teaching in primary education should incorporate group discussions, cooperative learning activities, and peer interactions. These activities help students develop essential competencies such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving while enhancing their understanding of subject content.

Third, teachers need to adopt the role of facilitators rather than knowledge transmitters. In competency-based classrooms, teachers guide students in exploring problems, asking questions, and reflecting on their learning experiences. By providing appropriate support and feedback, teachers can help students gradually develop independence and confidence in learning.

Another implication concerns assessment practices. Competency-based teaching requires assessment methods that focus not only on learning outcomes but also on learning processes. Constructivist principles suggest that assessment should be integrated into learning activities and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding in authentic contexts. Performance tasks, projects, portfolios, and classroom observations can be effective tools for evaluating students' competency development.

Furthermore, learning environments should be organized to support active engagement and meaningful learning. Primary school students learn most effectively when they participate in hands-on activities, collaborate with peers, and connect learning to real-life experiences. Therefore, schools should create flexible and supportive environments that encourage exploration, creativity, and reflection.

Overall, the integration of constructivist principles into competency-based teaching can enhance the quality of primary education. By promoting active participation, meaningful learning, and authentic assessment, teachers can create favorable conditions for developing the competencies required for lifelong learning and future success. These implications demonstrate the practical value of constructivist teaching in implementing competency-based educational reforms in primary schools.

3. Conclusion

Constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching are two important educational approaches that have significantly influenced contemporary educational reform. Although they originate from different theoretical foundations, the analysis in this study indicates that they share common orientations regarding educational goals, the role of learners, instructional methods, and learning environments. Both approaches emphasize active learning, meaningful knowledge construction, and the development of learners' abilities to apply knowledge in practical situations.

The findings show that constructivist teaching provides a strong theoretical foundation for

competency-based teaching in primary education. Through learning activities that encourage exploration, interaction, collaboration, and reflection, students are actively involved in the learning process and gradually develop essential competencies. These competencies include communication, cooperation, problem-solving, creativity, and self-learning, which are considered fundamental requirements for learners in the twenty-first century.

The study also highlights the importance of applying constructivist principles in the implementation of competency-based educational reforms in primary schools. Teachers should create learner-centered learning environments, employ active teaching methods, and use authentic assessment strategies to support students' competency development. Such practices not only improve learning outcomes but also contribute to students' holistic development.

In conclusion, the close relationship between constructivist teaching and competency-based teaching demonstrates their complementary roles in improving the quality of primary education. Understanding and effectively integrating constructivist principles into teaching practices can provide valuable support for achieving the goals of competency-based education and promoting sustainable educational development in contemporary primary schools.

References

- [1] Catherine Twomey Fosnot (2018). *Constructivism: Theory, Perspectives, and Practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- [2] Suleiman Hassan Mohammed & Laszlo Kinyó (2020). *The Role of Constructivism in the Enhancement of Social Studies Education*. Journal of Critical Reviews, 7(7), 249–256.
- [3] Dương Giáng Thiên Hương (2018). Dạy học khám phá theo mô hình 5E – Hướng vận dụng lý thuyết kiến tạo trong dạy học ở tiểu học. *Tạp chí Khoa học Trường Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội*, 62(1), 45–52.
- [4] Đặng Thị Hồng Thắm (2020). Vận dụng lý thuyết kiến tạo xây dựng quy trình dạy học bài học kiểu câu kể cho học sinh tiểu học. *Tạp chí Giáo dục*, 476(2), 35–39.
- [5] Lê Thị Lan Anh (2018). Xây dựng quy trình dạy học khám phá theo lý thuyết kiến tạo trong giáo dục tiểu học. *Luận án Tiến sĩ*, Trường Đại học Sư phạm Hà Nội.
- [6] Nguyễn Văn Cường & Bernd Meier (2016). *Một số vấn đề về đổi mới phương pháp dạy học ở trường phổ thông*. Hà Nội: Nhà xuất bản Giáo dục Việt Nam.