



Understanding and researching meta-learning

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•If **LEARNING** is the process of creating knowledge by making sense of your experience¹,

•Then **META-LEARNING** is the process of making sense of your experience of learning²

Meta-learning can be located within a learner's experience of **directing his/her own learning by constructing, assembling, and/or activating learning dispositions or strategies as a response to current learning demands, or as a strategic plan for future learning. This includes an orchestration of cognition, affect, motivation, and elements of the social and physical context.**

•Which parts of their experience of learning do learners use to direct their own learning?

•How can a learner and, by extension, a researcher locate the sense-making element in the process of experiencing learning?

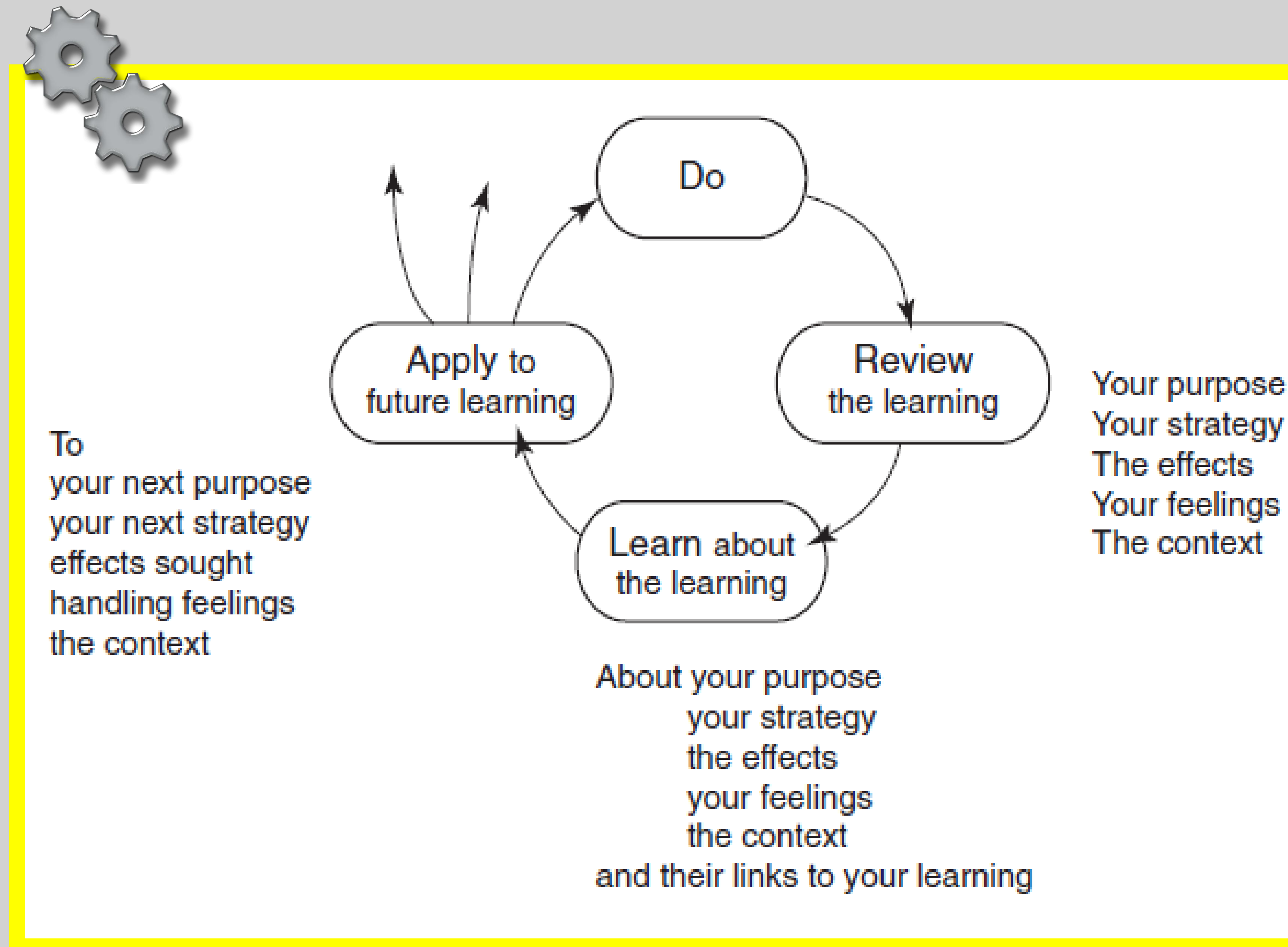
INTERPRETIVIST CASE STUDY

Emphasis on situativity, learning in-context³

REFLECTION: Assigning meaning to situations happens during, but predominantly *after* experiencing the situations. The role of reflection in accessing and creating metalearning is therefore essential.

INTERVIEWS: Access to individual meaning-making processes can be achieved through reflective interviews, especially through **STIMULATED RECALL INTERVIEWS** (the person reflecting can watch a video of themselves doing learning, thus facilitating memory).

Collecting data on experience does not necessarily result in thick descriptions of experience (vis handout)



Watkins, C. et al (2000) p33

DO: The process of metalearning starts with learning. Doing learning is the first step towards making sense of the experience of learning.

REVIEW THE LEARNING: through reflecting on the experience of learning and locating those aspects of the experience which affected the learner the most.

LEARN ABOUT LEARNING: the crux of the process of meta-learning. At this stage, the learner uses the products of his/her reflection to create knowledge. Making sense of the experience of learning is added to a knowledge/strategy inventory with the aim of informing and directing future learning.

APPLY TO FUTURE LEARNING: the learner can now activate specific learning dispositions and strategies to influence future learning.

The process of orchestrating and directing learning in order to plan for future learning fits the definition of **STRATEGY**⁴. This is the main difference between meta-learning and meta-cognition.

Meta-cognition is a process which the learner activates to address specific, **CONTENT-related** demands. Therefore, it is more like a **PLAN**, which includes the stages of planning, monitoring and evaluating, and has a predicted outcome.

-What must I do to design a good poster?
-Which layout should I choose?

Meta-learning is a process activated when a learner experiences learning. Although learning can happen in different epistemic domains, the learner also develops his/her learning as a **personal disposition** towards his/her experiences. Therefore meta-learning is more like a **STRATEGY**, and has a self-development outcome .

“- What do I know after having presented that will help me feel more confident next time?”

“- Should I aim to appear more interesting in my next presentation?”

1, 2 & central diagram **Watkins, C. et al. (2000)** *Learning about learning: resources for supporting effective learning* p5, p 33

3 **Volet, S., & Vauras, M. (Eds.). (2013).** *Interpersonal Regulation of Learning and Motivation: Methodological Advances.* Routledge.

4. **Freedman, L. (2013).** *Strategy: a history.* Oxford University Press.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES-READINGS
(extensive list in handout)



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