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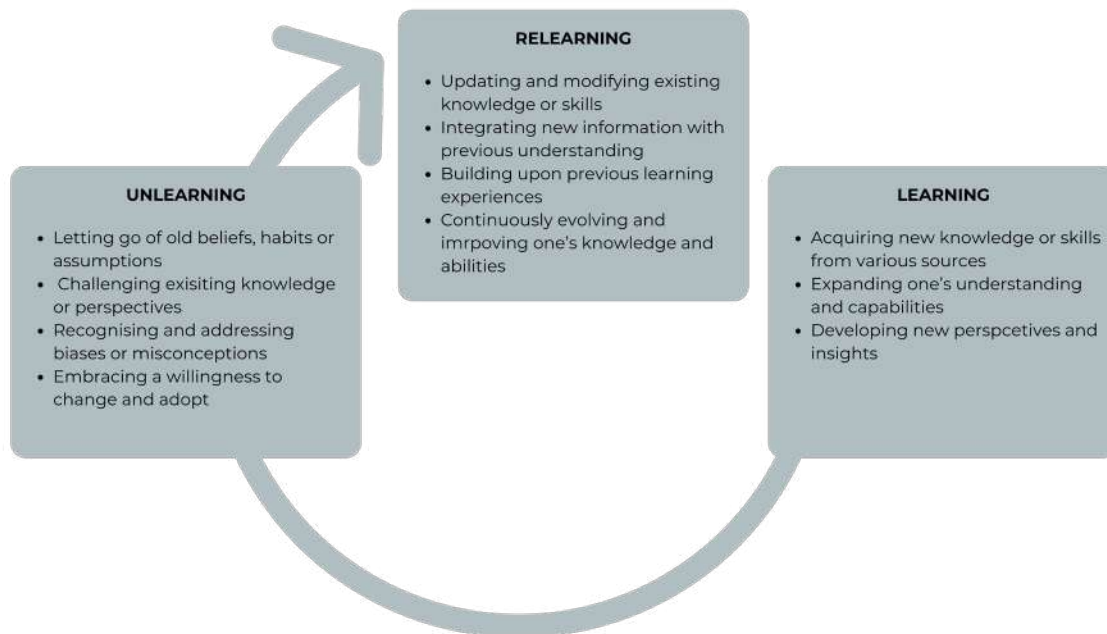
Published by ERRCD Forum.

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Menya-Olendo, R. A. & Mawang, L. (2024). Learning, Relearning And Unlearning. In E. O. Adu, B. I. Omodan, C. T. Tsotetsi, & B. Damoah (Eds.), *Pedagogical strategies for 21st-century classrooms* (pp. 106-113). ERRCD Forum. <https://doi.org/10.38140/obp1-2024-15>

15.1. Concept Map



15.2 Learning Outcomes

After going through this chapter, readers should be able to:

- explain the concepts used in the LUR.
- identify guiding principles for preparing a productive LUR.
- outline the advantages and disadvantages of LUR.
- describe techniques for an effective LUR.
- discuss the Dos and don'ts in LUR.

15.3 Clarification of Key Terms

The key concepts in this chapter, Learning, Unlearning, and Relearning (LUR), are explained below:

- In this chapter, learning is contextualised as the continuous ability to acquire competencies relevant for the 21st century. This form of learning enables people to continuously improve their performance, expand their horizons, and equip themselves for the future. It further allows individuals to grow and develop personally and professionally throughout their lifespan. Turk (2023) observes that this type of learning occurs in various contexts, such as formal education, informal learning, and experiential learning.
- Unlearning means leaving behind old, outdated, and obsolete knowledge that is deemed inefficient in addressing current challenges. It therefore entails questioning one's assumptions and beliefs, and opening up to new perspectives that can help solve present problems. No wonder Turk (2023) postulates that the unlearning process may be challenging, as it necessitates confronting personal biases and preconceptions.
- Relearning is the process of learning something again, often in a new or different way. It involves building on previous knowledge and experiences to gain a deeper understanding of a subject or skill. Relearning is important because it allows individuals to update their knowledge and skills in response to new information and changing circumstances (Turk, 2023).

15.4 Introduction to LUR as a Learning Strategy

In the current dynamic and changing world, knowledge gaps are an everyday reality. Being aware of these gaps is critical for growth and development, requiring courage and a willingness to address them. LUR, as a learning process, has features that aid in filling these knowledge gaps since it is an endless cycle of learning. It is essential for individuals to remain relevant and significant (Talerngsri, 2014), which Dunlop and Lowenthal (2011) refer to as lifelong learning, an important concept for retooling and reskilling. Lifelong learning empowers learners to engage in LUR, as it involves reexamining and scrutinising the significance of learned material against incoming information while discarding what is irrelevant. Survival in the 21st century, therefore, requires people to learn, unlearn, and relearn, as long projected by futurist Alvin Toffler, who observed that illiteracy in the 21st century consists of those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn—not necessarily those who cannot read and write (Bhwalka, 2021).

According to Klein (2008), LUR exposes individuals to new techniques, activities, and skills, enabling learning in a completely holistic way. This experience has the ability to transform and enhance practice. Talerngsri (2014) explains that this strategy occurs in a circular manner, allowing individuals to adapt to constantly changing technology, methods, and attitudes without insisting on knowledge accumulation and storage for future use. This book chapter will explore LUR as a learning strategy for 21st-century classrooms.

15.5 Preparing a Productive LUR

For learning to occur, unlearning must create space for relearning (Rozzetti, 2023). The following are steps for producing a productive LUR.

1. Design activities that offer varied learning experiences: Learning, unlearning, and relearning align with constructivism as a theory of learning. This theory posits that exposure to and engagement with varied experiences provide learners the opportunity to construct their own knowledge as they reflect upon existing schemas. In designing productive LUR, it is essential to set clear goals and formulate objectives to drive the process. At this stage, critiquing existing knowledge, beliefs, biases, assumptions, and misconceptions concerning the topic is vital for progress. This can be achieved through the use of credible resources with updated information to verify facts. Furthermore, to implement these, one must create a manageable guide that outlines which tasks and skills are to be acquired. This is in line with Talerngsri's (2014) proposal that LUR begins with a learning phase that involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and strategies, allowing newly acquired knowledge to be assimilated and accommodated for daily use.

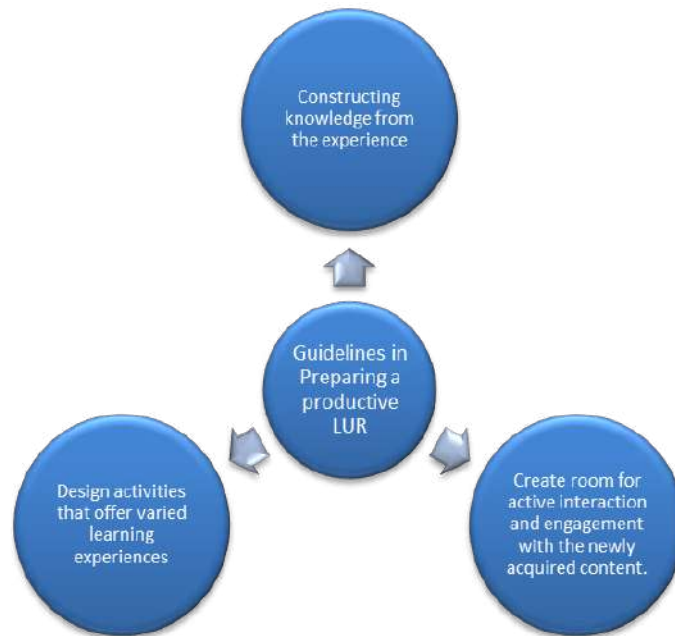


Figure 15.2: Guidelines in Preparing a Productive LUR

2. Create room for active interaction and engagement with the newly acquired content: Providing opportunities for interaction and engagement facilitates unlearning. It involves letting go of old, obsolete knowledge, skills, and attitudes. According to Rozzetti (2023), this process demands an objective critique of acquired knowledge and an evaluation of it against emerging beliefs and assumptions to ensure relevance to current ideas. To achieve this, space must be created for active involvement through activities such as summarising and note-taking, communication, collaboration, and the use of technology. Participation in such activities diversifies one’s ideas, expands understanding, and challenges existing beliefs. At this point, it is important to have activities that allow for personal assessment and reflection on learning progress and understanding of new concepts. These can involve critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and innovation to aid in identifying gaps, questioning, analysing, and making necessary adjustments. Furthermore, feedback from mentors, facilitators, and peers can significantly enhance valued perspectives and contexts essential for improving learning progress. According to Macleod et al. (2020), “... the unlearning process is both influenced by the individual’s private world, their personality, beliefs, and experiences, and by their professional context and its nuances” (p. 193).



Source: Etraing (2024) *A portrait of old people embracing technology*

To successfully undergo unlearning, McLeod et al. (2020) proposed five critical principles:

- i. **Anticipating the discomfort of disruption:** The process of disintegrating what is already held involves some physical and emotional struggle. The individual must be prepared to anticipate the physical and emotional reactions that may accompany the unlearning of deeply held knowledge and skills.
- ii. **Making small acts towards contexts that matter.** It is important to acknowledge settings that matter but are outside the area of interest in a collaborative context. While these may provide a wide range of learning opportunities, the illustrations and comparisons used in such settings can become vital sources of reflection, insight, and fresh understanding. Consequently, they may contribute to a better comprehension of the idea when it is finally presented.
- iii. **Shifting attention to unlearning encounters:** This belief posits that in a collaborative setting, the environment and materials presented are relationally co-constructed to create opportunities for individuals to experience unlearning encounters. Engagement with varied reflective activities in a collaborative context, for instance, evokes a new and uncomfortable reconfiguration of what it means to ‘practice’ collaboration. In this process, unlearning begins as an act of balancing between experts and novices.
- iv. **Attuning to the potential of the new.** This principle requires individuals to be transformed in ways that enable further collaboration, resulting in the awakening of practice. According to Macleod et al., this is similar to unlearning, as unlearning unfolds within awakening practice, leading to ecological and sustainable growth, as evidenced in professional identities.
- v. **Accepting the ongoing mix of un/learning.** In this principle, the ‘unlearner’ adapts to the ongoing process of combining learning and unlearning to accommodate new ideas. This may require blending some familiar notions with incoming ones to facilitate acceptance, as stated by McLeod et al. (2020).

The production of an effective LUR thus requires an environment that allows for interaction with the knowledge, including asking and answering questions, critiquing the applicability and significance of the knowledge to the context, weighing the new knowledge against existing interests, and ultimately letting go of previously held beliefs, which results in unlearning.

3. Constructing knowledge from the experience: This step allows for relearning and involves incorporating what has been acquired from the unlearning process. Klein (2008) explains that relearning encompasses embracing new and emerging skills that can be utilised to more proficiently address 21st-century problems through active learning processes.

In the preparation for the LUR process, creating opportunities for real-life application of newly learned knowledge aids in reinforcing and developing practical skills. This requires adopting a growth mindset (Suntantro, 2014), which enables one to embrace challenges, accept failures as learning experiences, and focus on potential improvement and the creation of new skills. While demonstrating a growth mindset, a painting student’s experience while using LUR included the following:

“While the extreme immersion experience in relearning how to paint did not alter her entire approach to painting, she acknowledged that meshing these new ideas with her original concepts of painting would make her a different painter. In the marathon course, she had unlearned her deeply held ideas about how to see and paint, relearned these concepts as understood by her teacher, and in doing so, learned new strategies for painting” (Klein 2008, p. 79).

Even though the student acknowledged she would return to her painting work, she claimed that her new outlook would never be the same, stating, “... some of what I have absorbed in the last few weeks will now permeate everything I paint” (Klein 2008, p. 79).

At this stage of LUR, staying motivated is critical. One must, therefore, be resilient and persistent, focusing attention on the rewards of LUR to remain on course. It is important to celebrate any small achievements and progress as motivation.

The LUR methodology employs active learning techniques, which are discussed in other chapters of this book, that facilitate the development of competencies and skills for the 21st century.

15.6 Advantages and disadvantages of LRU

The LUR has the advantage of engaging more critical thinking skills and encourages individuals to continuously analyse, appraise, and test knowledge to ensure its relevance and currency. Murray (2021) succinctly states: “our ability to unlearn and relearn comes down to neuroplasticity — the foundation of a growth mindset” (p. 2). Taylor and O’Reilly (2021)) further emphasises that unlearning is vital for continuous performance, as it enables teams to collaborate effectively and build a shared future. In companies, it fosters innovation and helps them stay ahead of the curve.

Suresh (2023) adds the following advantages:

- It allows for the expansion of individuals’ horizons and innovativeness, subsequently creating room for more prospects and opportunities.
- It enhances one’s adaptability to changing circumstances due to its dynamic nature, leading to personal growth and the relevance of knowledge.
- It enables the development of skills and abilities for the achievement of success, ensuring forward movement towards goal attainment.
- It improves a person’s problem-solving skills as a result of the continued relearning and unlearning of relevant skills and knowledge
- It improves critical thinking, as the process of unlearning requires evaluating information, critiquing assumptions, and confirming decisions against logical reasoning.
- It instills resilience in learners, enabling them to counter problems and difficulties, making them sharper, more relevant, and time-wise.
- It develops and improves one’s communication skills, leadership, management abilities, negotiation, persuasion, and influence.
- Personal Growth: LUR, as a lifelong process, stimulates personal growth and self-improvement. It expands knowledge, broadens perspectives, and enhances overall intellectual and emotional well-being.
- Enhances professional development: The new skills and knowledge acquired enable one to remain updated and relevant, thereby improving their career paths.
- It can be inculcated through imitation and modelling of personal proficiencies and observations of others who have undergone similar transitions.

The disadvantages of LUR include:

- Discarding obsolete knowledge can be difficult due to attachment.
- Learning Unlearning and Relearning (LUR) requires engagement with various resources, attending classes, or seeking out mentors, which can be time and energy-consuming.
- Inadequate resources may prevent many disadvantaged individuals from embracing new ideas.
- LUR can be challenging due to personal resistance. Attachment to old knowledge, habits, and beliefs may hinder progress
- Given the fast-paced nature of the world and technology, keeping up with LUR can be overwhelming, leading to stress and burnout.
- Without caution, there is a risk of using unreliable information that may mislead, compromising the goal of being well-informed
- This may result from the realisation that previously held beliefs or knowledge were incorrect, or from a fear of failure among learners due to uncertainty about success with the new knowledge.

15.7 Techniques in effective LRU

Learning, unlearning, and relearning strategies are essential for adapting to new information, changing circumstances, and evolving knowledge. Here are some techniques that can be helpful in these processes:

- **Self-directed learning:** Take ownership of your learning by setting goals, developing learning plans, and seeking out resources and opportunities for growth. This can involve reading books, taking online courses, attending workshops, or participating in relevant communities or forums. Similarly, engage in regular self-reflection on your learning, unlearning, and relearning experiences. This involves analysing your thoughts, actions, and assumptions to identify areas for improvement and growth. Continuously updating your knowledge and skills must go hand in hand with regular practice. This is the best way to ensure you retain information and improve proficiency.

- **Commit to lifelong learning and cultivate growth mindset:** A growth mindset will enable the learner to become aware of their existing beliefs, biases, and mental schemas. This awareness will help them recognise when unlearning and relearning are necessary, allowing them to approach new information with an open mind. Continuous learning supports the LUR approach, encouraging learners to consistently seek new knowledge and update their understanding of various subjects.
- **Critical thinking and questioning:** Develop a habit of asking critical questions to challenge your existing knowledge and assumptions. This involves questioning the validity of information, seeking alternative perspectives, and exploring different possibilities. LUR as a technique requires learners to pay deliberate attention to the unlearning process by critically analysing new content and the competencies needed to accomplish new tasks (Klein 2008). Likewise, challenging existing ideas will create space for information that does not fit into existing mental schemas, as one reconceives old knowledge in the context of new information.
- **Collaborative learning and seeking diverse perspectives:** Engage in collaborative learning experiences where you can learn from others and share your knowledge and experiences. This can involve participating in group discussions with individuals from different backgrounds, reading diverse literature, engaging in cross-cultural experiences, joining study groups, or contributing to collaborative projects. The learner should actively seek out diverse viewpoints and perspectives to broaden their understanding and challenge their existing beliefs.
- **Discovery learning and experimentation:** Embrace curiosity and experimentation as a means to test new ideas, strategies, and approaches. Seek feedback from others to gain insights and make necessary adjustments in your learning and unlearning processes.
- **Embracing discomfort:** Recognise that unlearning and relearning can be uncomfortable and challenging. Embrace this discomfort as a sign of growth, and push yourself to step out of your comfort zone to expand your knowledge and perspectives.

15.8 Dos and don'ts in LRU

When approaching learning, unlearning, and relearning, it is important to keep in mind certain dos and don'ts to ensure an effective and productive process. Here are some guidelines to consider:

The Dos in LUR:

- **Cultivate an open mindset:** Approach the learning process with an open mind, willing to consider new ideas, perspectives, and information that may challenge your existing beliefs or knowledge. A growth mindset supports LUR through the development of learners' curiosity and experimentation with a variety of new learning resources.
- **Actively engage in questioning:** Inquisitiveness and seeking clarification enliven learners' discussions and thinking processes (Maryville University, 2023). Essentially, it unearths new information and expands an individual's perspective, which helps deepen learning. Ask questions to enhance your understanding and challenge assumptions.
- **Seek diverse perspectives:** Seek out diverse viewpoints and perspectives to broaden your understanding. Engage in discussions with individuals from different backgrounds and cultures to gain new insights.
- **Self-reflection and self-assessment:** Engage in regular reflection on your learning progress and conduct a self-assessment of your understanding and skills. Identify areas requiring improvement and establish goals for further development.
- **Continually practice:** Encourage learners to apply what they have learned and put it into practice. Take action to reinforce your learning and gain practical experience.
- **Embrace discomfort:** Accept challenges with a flexible and open mind. Recognise that the learning process can be uncomfortable, especially when it involves unlearning and relearning. Embrace this discomfort as a sign of growth, and push yourself to step out of your comfort zone.
- **Seek feedback:** Seek feedback from others, such as mentors, peers, or instructors, to gain diverse perspectives and insights. Use this feedback to make necessary adjustments and improvements.

The Don'ts in LUR

Das (2020) postulates that unlearning can be hindered by certain don'ts outlined herein. These include:

- **Don't be resistant to change:** Avoid being resistant to change or clinging to outdated or incorrect information. Don't hold onto self-limiting beliefs that deter you from pursuing the unfamiliar. Embrace the need for unlearning and be open to new ways of thinking and doing.
- **Don't be afraid of failure:** Learning, unlearning, and relearning can be challenging, so teachers should create

learning environments where students can make mistakes, learn from them, and grow without the fear of failure. Students should be persistent and embrace failure as a normal part of the learning process.

- **Don't rush the process:** Be patient and persistent in your pursuit of knowledge and growth. Learning, unlearning, and relearning require time and effort. Avoid rushing the process or expecting immediate results.
- **Don't rely solely on one source:** Refrain from relying exclusively on a single source of information or perspective. It is essential to consult multiple sources, consider diverse viewpoints, and utilise credible resources to acquire a comprehensive understanding. Furthermore, it is advisable to avoid restricting oneself to interactions with like-minded individuals, as this may hinder the process of unlearning.
- **Don't fear making mistakes:** Mistakes are an inherent aspect of the learning process. Individuals should not fear making errors or being incorrect. Rather, such experiences should be perceived as opportunities for personal growth and intellectual development.
- **Don't isolate yourself:** Avoid working alone; instead, collaborate with other teams or communities of practice to receive continued support in achieving your goals. Do not isolate yourself during the learning process. Engage with others, participate in discussions, and seek support from mentors or peers. Collaboration and interaction can significantly enhance your learning experience.
- **Don't be afraid to unlearn:** Unlearning can present significant challenges, as it necessitates the relinquishment of previously held beliefs or knowledge. Individuals should not hesitate to engage in the process of unlearning and to critically examine their own assumptions. Embracing this process can serve as a substantial avenue for personal growth and improvement.

15.9 Case Studies in LRU Learning

The following informal learning context represent a case of LUR.

Case Study 1

Son: Mum what is the spelling of the word receive?

Mum: Is it "receive or recieve?" as the mother gazes into the air

Daughter: Mum what is troubling you?

Mum: I am trying to recall the spelling of the word "recieve". The daughter quickly types the word in a word document and through the spelling check quickly confirms the correct spelling of the word "receive" to the mother. The mother is impressed by the speed and ease with which the answer is obtained. She requests the daughter to show her how she went about this and henceforth uses a word document to compile her reports.

It is significant to note that the entire process of LUR is dependent on reevaluating stances and weighing their suitability (Ohiri, 2023). The mother was able to embrace technology as it helped to solve the problem they were confronted with in a shorter and more relaxed way. This reaffirmed McLeod et al. (2020)'s assertion that LUR, as a strategy, brings about a transformational role by deconstructing and interfering with the individual and the work environment norms that instigate growth and the uptake of new approaches (McLeod et al., 2020). Therefore, the daughter was able, through the application of the computer, to help the mother discard old thinking and embrace the use of modern technology.

Case Study 2

Evaluation of the Case Study on Personalized Language Learning and Educational Technology (Maheswara & Rifai, 2023)

The study used LUR as a technique to aid University Language students in moving from conventional pedagogy to embracing Personalized Language Learning (PLL). The success of PLL can be attributed to the flexibility allowed in assignment submission and the pace at which individual students completed the course. In this context, the course facilitators acted as mentors and coaches, customising technology and teaching to suit each student. Additionally, the availability of varied technological tools, websites, and resources improved students' networking and interaction, enabling them to select what, when, and how they wanted to learn.

It is worth noting that not all students were able to fully embrace PLL. This was attributed to a number of reasons. For some, its individualised nature acted as a demotivating factor, while others held the belief that conventional methods are the best for learning due to the anticipated success at the end of semester examinations. Additionally, some students experienced mistrust in the communications received from lecturers or lacked confidence in using technology.

15.10 Conclusion

Embracing LRU in the education sector yields better teaching and learning and may help both teachers and learners stay current and conversant with the latest innovations relevant to the 21st century. LRU is the most appropriate tool for advancing individuals to the next level, given that its dynamism suits the fast pace of the 21st century. All that is needed is for one to accept and embrace LRU as the vehicle for competing in this dynamic world.

15.11 Reflective Questions

1. Explain the key concepts used in the LUR.
2. What are the guiding principles for preparing a productive LUR?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of LUR?
4. Describe at least six techniques for an effective LUR.
5. What are the Dos and don'ts in LUR?

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