

## ABSTRACT

An approach to learning concerns the dynamic way in which individuals relate to and organise a learning task, and is influenced by prior experiences and perceptions of the requirements of the learning context (Ramsden, 1987). The concept of learning approaches came from Marton and Säljö (1979) based on their seminal work on 30 graduate students at the University of Göteborg in Sweden. The students were interviewed after completing a reading task and questions were asked about the text as well as about the way in which they completed the task. The responses to the questions suggested a variety of differences in the way the students acquired and processed the information. While some students focussed on the intention of the authors and tried to identify the principle ideas (content), others tried to memorise as much as possible and often recalled the examples (signs) cited by the authors rather than the main ideas. The former was seen as a product of deep-level processing and the students had adopted a holistic approach to their activity whereas the latter was a result of surface-level processing and the students had an atomistic approach to the task.