

How you are creating an inclusive environment education essay



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Learning is very complex and there are many theories relate to how students learn. The different theories demonstrate the different ways students learn. The teachers use a variety of theories in practice as this allows enhancing the learners' experiences of learning. I will look at these learning theories in more detail and how I could apply in the classroom. I will explore three theories of learning that I have chosen which are – the behaviourist approach, the cognitivist model and constructivism approach.

Behaviourism is a stimulus and response theory and about how teachers can control the learning. The teacher will have to use reinforcement to encourage and motivate learners by using prompting techniques. To use the positive and negative reinforcement that skinner emphasis that this concept is agreeable as says it can shape the behaviour. It will be appropriate to use this theory for developing new skills for learners especially for those who find it difficult to speak out in class. For instance, if I nominate a student that I know has difficulty speaking in front of peers and they answer a question correctly I can use this theory by giving them verbal praise. This will then give them the confidence to answer questions in the class without the fear of getting it wrong. Also result in them in participating in group discussions and answering questions without teacher asking them to. Behaviourist propose we learn in response to external stimuli and these actions need to be reinforced by either praised or punishment. This theory appears to be effective for acquiring new skills and active learning in the classroom. This will be ideal for students on my course who are in placements in health setting.

Scale is against the behaviourist approach as he says it promotes learning without understanding. It's not allowing students to think or discover concepts such as the cognitive approach. However, I like the idea of positive reinforcement as students are rewarded or either punished depending on their response. Behaviourist make the assumption that the behaviourist approach is linked to how all behaviour are learned through experiences an individual has in their environment.

Behaviourists look at the human behaviour how it is measured and observed. Behaviourists believe that learning is brought by “ association between the response and reinforcement.”(Reece & Walker, 2000) This theory is about how specific stimuli that have a certain response. This idea was from the study of Watson and his views on human behaviour. Operant conditioning interlinks with Watson idea which was expanded by Skinner. Skinner talked in great detail in his theory of positive reinforcement. Classical conditioning is a good starting point as it's a simple form of learning. Pavlov demonstrated his model of classical conditioning which was the Pavlovian dog experiment. Reece & Walker (2000) state that the behaviourist learning theories suggest students learn by receiving a stimulus which causes a response.

Behaviourist approaches can be a useful approach in the area of health and social care. The nature of reinforcement is to encourage and reward and students. I will consider marking with ticks and positive feedback to enhance students learning also making them to work towards a higher level award such as a certificate or giving them verbal praise in front of the group.

However many critics argue and disapprove of the behaviourist approach <https://assignbuster.com/how-you-are-creating-an-inclusive-environment-education-essay/>

dislike the idea of rewarding all learners. Avis has suggested using rewards with learners' who are motivated may distract the learners' interest in the subject. Pritchard (2005) suggests the most effective behaviourist approach is when a particular learner has a history of academic failure, low motivation and "high" anxiety. On the plus side, this approach has indicated that rewarding aid promote appropriate classroom behaviours, discourages students to misbehave which makes the learning more conducive.

Behaviourists critique one another and argue about which behaviour is learnt better through positive or negative reinforcement. For example if I used the positive reinforcement by giving praise/reward the strength of this is that the individual will repeat the action again, but a limitation is that the individual will expect the reward every time. The same would apply if I had to discourage bad behaviour by punishing the learner by using the negative reinforcement to stop the behaviour, but a limitation is that it might provoke the individual to continue the bad behaviour

Behaviourist's ways of learning are in forms of stimulation and response, with the aid of repetition, reinforcement and conditioning. To be an effective teacher, I will have expectations that I expect the learners to have learnt by the end of the lesson; that the learning process involves different stages; feedback is given at each step; that the learning will end with a reward or positive feedback to keep learners motivated.

To use the behaviourist approach for my teaching I will include in my Lesson planning reinforcement with frequent feedback on learning, delayed feedback allowing trial and error, and praise, marks and prizes. (Reece,

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Walker, 2000). In my lesson plan I should include short tasks with frequent feedback for reinforcement and praise. Although to be critical, learning cannot be reduced to processes of conditioned reflexes, inputs and outputs. Behaviour observed is not the same thing as knowledge. Over defined objectives can limit learning, and lead to triviality and criteria for learning in some subjects result from learning, in a more qualitative and dynamic relationship. (Reece, Walker, 2000, 107). This takes away the didactic method of teaching for the behaviourist approach and results the lesson not being practical application of teachers but is rather mainly student centred.

I have tried adopting the behaviourist approach of Skinners theory. Starting placement late was daunting and students had other tutors with different ground rules. I wanted to monitor the behaviour of learners during the lesson and then modify ways to promote positive behaviour. I did this by holding my hand up and waited for silence when I needed the learners' attention and did this for a number of weeks. There were times; I had to remind them that I was waiting for silence. This did not work for the disruptive students therefore I put sanctions into place and kept students behind or not give them a break. However on the days students behaved and were quiet whilst I was teaching I would praise them and reward them with a choice of a game or quiz at the end of the lesson. Eventually the disruptive students have changed they behaviour as it reflected on the class as a whole and peer group pressure had reduced bad behaviour. Bandura's Social Learning Theory would say that the students were not only being conditioned to respond to the teacher, but also learning from their peers actions as to what was appropriate behaviour in the classroom.(Atherton 2009)

It's been my 5th week on placement and students respond to signals without being hesitant and reminded that I am waiting to speak to them. It is evident that this approach has worked and that the students prefer the positive response rather than the negative response that was followed by a sanction. This has been beneficial as it leaves me in control and has changed the lesson atmosphere as it allowed me to continue with whatever activity I had planned without any disruption.

Cognitive theorists focus on human behaviour, how students gain and organise their knowledge, how they digest and store new information. Cognitivists are insistent that students were taught to think for themselves and how to solve problems in order for them to become independent learners. In other words they want students to think about what it will take to solve a problem and to resolve the problem in order to learn. (Olsen & Hergenhahn, 2009). Cognitive learning is the process how learners digest new information in a way that makes it significant to them. Reece & Walker (2000) describe the three stage theory to cognitive learning. These three stages include cognitive, associative and autonomous. Cognitivist is the process of linking pious knowledge in order to learn. Cognitivist theory is mainly looking at how the brain is focused for learning, how the learners can relate to the learning from past experience.

Firstly the cognitive stage, this is when the learner is given verbal instruction on the task in hand which includes them to using personal perception and decision making how to perform the skill correctly. The second stage, associative being when the skill is repetitively performed to correctly

performs the task. And the final stage when the performance can be altered due to both positive and negative influences.

Reece & Walker (2000), state that Bruner sees the teacher's role as facilitating and taking control of the learning. To use this strategy in my subject I will engage all learners to be active and motivate them to seek new information and participate in the teaching methods. To use the cognitive theory strategy on my lesson plans, I will have to allow them time to discover concepts and principles for themselves and to relate to what they might already know. Feedback is essential element in this process. It allows the teacher to check the entry level of the learners own knowledge and ideas and what they need to know. This is transforming students' learning with regards to existing knowledge and then verifying it and checking it against the new knowledge.

The teaching strategies I can use that are associated with cognitivist theory are videos, class presentations and debates that students have the responsibility to lead. I will have to arrange the learning for the students to discover things for themselves. I will promote students in my class to be active learners and participate in discussions and encourage learners to review what they know about a topic before teaching the new subject.

According to Piaget's theory, all the students in the 14- 19 classroom have reached the Formal Operational stage of cognitive development. He also says they are capable of understanding the concept and that the learners should be able to apply their understanding and be able to demonstrate in a given context. From my own experience at college, the two classes I teach at

different levels; it's apparent that these boundaries are not precise as Piaget believes. As there are students that may never reach the formal operation stage. When using the cognitive theory I am aware that all students are different stages with their learning and I will have a majority of learners with different abilities. Therefore the material I teach would not be suitable for all the class, I could plan for materials that are inclusive for all learners such as visual aids, hand-outs or video etc. Another method would be to group the class closely by attainment levels so I know what groups to focus on and what type of learning method is suitable for them.

Vygotsky theory is looking at the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This is the boundary between a learner's Zone of Actual Performance and their potential level of understanding also known as scaffolding. It has moved from the didactic approach and is more student-led. Learners are encouraged to use an active approach to learning. Bruner believes that learners build knowledge from their past experience and can apply to the current curriculum by extending their understanding. He mentions that the teacher should be the guide by aiding learners by scaffolding their learning with the correct resources so that when the students had moved on there was less scaffolding is required. (Burton 2001, p. 241)

To practice scaffolding, I would have a variety of support materials such as writing frame or a list of words to help in completing an exercise to assist understanding.

In the classroom, I have observed my students are at different stages of learning. Some learners have better understanding than others which puts

them in a different ZPD or stage in their scaffolding learning to those learners that aren't as able. My level 2 groups are challenging as there were learners aiming from pass to merit and it I find it hard to see where they were with their performance. I have now tried to use the didactic approach as I can cover the basic level of knowledge so they were engaged and understood what message I'm trying to convey. It was difficult to find the middle ground, as the students who were ahead with the learning seemed tensed as they had to wait for the lower attained learners to fully understand the task and to complete within the time limit.

Constructivism theory is focused on how learning happens, whether or not students are using their experience to understand the content. The theory of constructivism suggests regardless of whether the student is using their experiences the learner can still construct knowledge out of their experiences.

Constructivist theory promotes learners to construct new meaning to something they already know. It encourages learners to be active. The process starts with what the learners will learn. Therefore it is the teacher role to check the entry level of what students already know about the topic. This also allows the student to prepare for new ideas and promote high levels of learning.

Constructivists rely on students' experiences and how they apply their pre-existing knowledge to understand the new information. I would argue here that some learners may have limited experience to others. Therefore the understanding or meaning of prior knowledge will be dependent on

individual experiences and some learners may find it difficult to establish understanding to other learners in the classroom.

To use this approach I need to the links between learners pre-existing knowledge to the new subject knowledge to facilitate and form bridges between both. These way learners can recall pre-existing knowledge, to use as a foundation to build new ideas and concepts. When developing understanding or constructing new ideas, the important aspect will be to review and reflect what has already been learnt helps learners to establish and secure previous knowledge (Wray & Lewis, 1997). For example before introducing new learning materials it would help by asking learners what they understand about the subject which will form links between pre-existing to new knowledge. Reece & Walker (2000) identify that the learners own previous idea may well have to be modified before the learner can construct new meaning to the subject being taught. Learning is not a passive method and may well involve conceptual changes. The learning of this theory is an active process and depends on the individual to take responsibility to learn.

As Wright (2008) mentions how constructivism emphasise that learners accept new information by relating to existing ' ideas'. This theory gives student the opportunity to explore knowledge rather than being teacher led. If I had to adopt this approach, I would act as a guide and allow my students to be imaginative and exploratory thinkers. I also would use representations and examples that include the information/ material that will enable students to understand the subject. I will also relate the content to a specific thing/material/object can make it more interesting and easy to understand.

The group work activities will definitely be promoted in my lessons. The <https://assignbuster.com/how-you-are-creating-an-inclusive-environment-education-essay/>

students can try their ideas in a new situation which I will design appropriate practical activities or discussions. My role would be to lead and facilitate this approach. Finally, I would get students to reflect upon their own ideas and the changes they have noticed from the start of the learning. I would use the questioning technique and promote problem solving or enquiry based question and then elaborate on learner's response. This will allow learners to find answer for themselves by experimenting with new ideas and share and discuss with peers. Collaborative discussion can aid and establish learners' profound understanding. To help progress learning I will provide clear objectives that the learners can construct their ideas using previous knowledge so they know the progression of their learning. I will be prepared to respond to diverse range of learner's answers, misconceptions, thoughts and problems.

This could be done at the starter allowing learners to visualise their own progression. Learning is effective when learners are engaged, which means teachers need to plan engaging tasks which allows learners to relate to pre-existing knowledge as learners will be familiar with the context. An active learning approach can be achieved by encouraging students to explore concepts and ideas, and to follow their instincts (Wray & Lewis, 1997).

Constructivist theory is more student-led and integrated with experiences and tasks that involve collaborative work. This is my least favourable theory as I find it difficult to plan for a diverse group of learners as I could not relate to their experience as every learner is at a different stage with their learning and to shape the delivery approach and teaching style would be difficult to meet the learning needs of all the learners in the class.

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“ Assessment refers to all those activities undertaken by teachers and by the students in assessing themselves that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and activities. Such assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching to meet students’ needs.” (Black and William 1998) The assessment is important part of a learners learning and its important role for teachers to assess what learners have learnt. By doing this, teachers will discover what methods of teaching would be beneficial for the learner and motivate learners to do better. This can be achieved by both formative and summative assessments. Assessment is useful as it is also a form of learning which can improve performance (Jarvis, 2002)

The formative assessment provides feedback and informs student about their learning and the opportunity to modify correct errors to enhance their learning. Formative assessment process is to assess learning. Whereas summative assessment is to check understanding by doing a test or final submission and is normally graded rather than monitored for improvements. The assessment process involves “ gathering, interpreting, recording and using information about pupils’. (Lambert and Lines, 2000)Assessments have many purposes and reason why they are used. Assessment plays a role of measuring understanding and learning. There are different types of assessments which measure the depth of learning. Using assessment, allow to evaluate learning needs and improve outcomes. Fawbert (2003) says assessments are also “ means of promoting or denying learner achievement and autonomy”. Teachers can make adjustments to the assessment so that learners can meet the learning outcomes and meet the criteria.

Part of the learning process it is vital to evaluate learning. Formative evaluation is done during instruction. The idea of this is to look at what students are learning towards specific objectives. Whereas summative evaluation, is done after instruction and provides information on what students have learnt towards general objectives. They are two different forms; they differ on what material needs to be learned to meet objectives, the type of assessment/test and when the evaluation takes place and if there is a specific deadline set. Summative assessment differs from formative and is used for a wider audience such as other teachers, management, parents and learners. This allows teachers to gain an understanding of the learners ability overall. Summative assessment normally used at the end of a unit/topic or end of term/year. Many recent researches have shown if assessment is used in the correct manner as part of teaching, it will enable to enhance the students learning which is significant to the learning process (Elwood and Klenowski, 2002).

Many methods are used for formative assessment which allows students to gain knowledge and new skill; to help the learner to set new aims and reflect on their weakness and turn them into strength. Teachers can do this by the form of observation, checking learners understanding throughout the lesson and listen to learner's idea and the reason behind it. Also provide constructive feedback on assessments. Teachers may also need to make changes in lesson planning; for example if the majority of learners found a lesson difficult and didn't understand the concepts then the teacher would have redone the lesson but with different teaching strategies.

Norm referencing is a mode Fawbert (2003) describes as a mode of assessment where the teacher compares the performance of learners against other learners in the same age group. This approach is to rank students' performance to "promote internal and external quality procedures". Also the assessments are graded using a marking criterion. The marks show how the student has performed compared to the "norm, or average" like Petty (2004) mentions norm-referenced works effectively only for examination. It is normally used to decide GCSES, A level and other qualifications. Criterion reference in contrast measures the defined objectives rather than comparing student performance. The assessor awards a pass if they can do it, or a fail if they cannot. To be effective, Fawbert (2003) mentions that the criteria should be referred to by the assessors must "be as explicit." This assessment will provide information which will make clear of the level, range and type of performance expected from students.

Assessment for learning, also known as formative, is seen as integral aspect of teaching and learning cycle instead of being assessment of learning (summative). There are many forms of assessment that are evident of performance of the students' learning. Such as practical, classroom based assessment, self-assessment, portfolios of work and reflective journals. The formative assessment is the importance of processes of teaching and learning, although summative assessment takes place after the teacher and learning. To facilitate learning teachers would need to use the assessment for learning approach to ensure learning is taking place. At the end of the term/year teachers would use the assessment of learning approach where they would mark and grade students work. Both approaches are vital in the

learning process as teachers need to gain an understanding where the student is in their learning and also what the student has achieved end of term/year.

Assessment is a critical element of education and is essential that teachers use assessment to monitor students learning to be aware of where the student is with the learning. Also assessment can be used to see if the teaching methods are useful and helping students to grasp and learn the subject. Learning and teaching are both part of a reciprocal process that depend on and affect one another. There are a variety of assessments that can be used to measure students' performance for teachers to get a better understanding of what the learners knows. The diagnostic assessment is a good way to establish a learner's strengths and weakness. It also allows the teacher to tailor their own teaching methods to suit the needs of learners.

The feedback is a vital part of the assessment especially in areas of development/ changes and positive recognition of achievement/strengths. Scales (2008), states that feedback is essential as it effects communication between teacher and the learner. Teachers should never underestimate the students. Feedback needs to be positive and delivered with consideration, constructive and targeted at the learners' areas of development. Praise helps students to stay motivated and statements like well-done can show the student what was good and a reason to explain why it appealed to the teacher. Overall, feedback shows both the teacher and student how students' learning is progressed; feedback is not used to criticise and should be useful to learners to understand their strengths and weaknesses and use

the feedback to reflect. Feedback should be constructive, neither brief nor extensive. As many students can feel overwhelmed or vulnerable.

In relation to my area of teaching in BTEC Health and Social Care, formative assessment approach is used to assist and help learners to become more competent and meet specific criteria to achieve a Pass or a distinction. There a regular assignment workshop takes place where learners complete written tasks with the assistance of a teacher to aid them.

Summative assessment is usually carried out at the end of the learning, giving feedback on learning achievement. It represents learner's achievement on completion of a particular piece of work; this is the completion of each unit. Assessment and learning enables the learner to fulfil their potential and the teacher to encourage the learner to do so. At the college, the learners have individual tracking sheet that helps the learner and teacher to monitor progress and give constructive feedback where necessary. This allows learners monitor their progress and what they need to meet the pass or merit criteria. This enables the pupil to assess their standard of work against a given criteria or expected standard. Using detailed feedback, learners may understand the expectations on them from any given piece of work more clearly, and use to correct and improve their work. Also the teacher can relate to the feedback for themselves to consider the effectiveness of their own teaching styles whether their learners are meeting the learning outcomes. If there any misunderstandings enables the teacher to consider the effectiveness of their teaching regarding the learner achieving their learning outcomes. If there are issues of concern with

misunderstanding, teachers can highlight the problem and plan an action
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plan or a revised teaching method. The teachers should address learners to evaluate the course and ask questions whether teaching materials were useful. Did the course meet individual learner needs? This will improve the delivery of lesson in the next lesson. Evaluation is about making improvement and having strategies in place in order to meet learner's individual needs.

As a trainee teacher, I may need to be observed assessing and giving feedback. So that the given feedback will show me how I perform and how I could improve. The ways of getting feedback on my assessment and teaching skills could be, asking an experienced teacher to observe me, get feedback-from learners on different types of assessments so I can improve. This can also be done by writing reflections to explore and evaluate the different ways I assess, using information from other teachers and learners, as well as the actual experiences and results related to the assessments I use with learners. Reflective practice will enhance good practice and further improve what I do in my subject area.

The use of Scheme of work is a plan that outlines the course content throughout the academic year. The break down the course into weeks and organises the unit within a time scale so it helps the teacher to plan according. Teachers can use this for future planning to adopt and make changes to if necessary

The scheme of work I have used to produce my lesson plan BTEC National Health and Social Care. It is unit four of the syllabus and its broad aim is to cover the Development through the Life Stages. This scheme of work

includes guidelines and ideas for tutor preparations and is also useful for lesson planning. The scheme of work can be tailored to suit the teachers ideas of perception of what they think are ideal to change or edit. The specific scheme of work that I have chosen, is ideal and therefore I did not make any adjustments. It is structured well and it is constructive with a format to follow. There are guidelines to follow and also options for teachers to use certain strategies or tools. The scheme of work helps the teacher to plan lessons according to criteria and benefits clear learning objectives.

This scheme of work I have is scheduled for 30 weeks, it is a working document and teachers can adopt their own ideas or tweak the activities if needed. If being observed the scheme of work would relate to the lesson plan and the observer would be able to see whether or not the points were covered from the scheme of work. Looking at the first column of this scheme of work is the topic/outcome column which illustrates what learners need to know by each week. The second column which is tutor preparation is guidelines to follow. The student activity section is the task that links to the grading criteria which is the last column. Activities are designed to help students to achieve certain criteria to progress further in the unit. The overview of the scheme of work of the course is adaptable and can change or be altered in case new units are introduced. The college uses this scheme of work as a working document, if needed the staff can add or remove sections, depending if they are suitable for their type of learners or may adapt another approach within the context.

The assessment criteria are not clear on the scheme of work as it only links to the grading criteria. It seems confusing especially for the first two weeks as <https://assignbuster.com/how-you-are-creating-an-inclusive-environment-education-essay/>

being introduction of the course it links to P1, P2, M1 and D1. How could you possible cover these outcomes within two hours of introductory session? It may carry on to the following week but week 3 is looking into another context in detail which is only link to P1, P2. So If I had to adopt this into my lesson planning I would look at the pass criteria only for the first two to three weeks. It allows students to build their own idea and concepts before going into detail. Overall the scheme includes brief information but is structured in a concise layout. The scheme of work could have been more detailed with clear focus on the assignment criteria.

Each lesson should be different and teachers should use a range of teaching and learning strategies that meet the style of the learner's ability. There are barriers that teacher should be aware of as this could affect the learners performance. These barriers can include: lack of confidence, negative attitudes and forms of learning difficulties e. g. dyslexia. When reviewing a scheme of work, Teachers should ensure learners' needs are addressed and that learners are making progress. In order to do this the teacher should acknowledge the learning style that suits the learners they are teaching and use suitable techniques that will benefit the learner. Teacher should plan accordingly and make sure the plans reflect the learning outcomes, which they expect the learners to, achieve at the end of the lesson. A Wright (2008) cites listening to the students builds a good classroom environment. All students learn in a different way as Reece, I& Walker S (2000) mention different learning approaches maybe appropriate for some students and maybe inappropriate for others. Therefore I have used different strategies

such as individual activity, group work, role play and also discussions involving the entire group.

. Daily interaction with staff; individual lesson planning and target setting for learners are all skills that a teacher within the sector is expected to possess. Additionally, an emphasis on the appreciation and utilisation of differentiated learning strategies, and the development of schemes of work, along with the need to reflect upon one's own practice

- Why have you chosen particular learning activities and resources?

I have chosen the specific activities and resources as this I like my class to participate with one another. Group work allows students to express their own views and ideas and share among their peers. This allows student