My Three Favorite Learning Styles

Samuel Razink

University of Mary

Humanism is the focus on giving students freedom to choose in order to help them learn responsibility and their potential. Of course there cannot be a laissez faire attitude towards students making decisions. As well as the focus on freedom to choose, humanism also focuses on the development of the student's sense of worth and self-esteem. Humanism also strives to have positive teacher-student relations in order to help create a positive classroom environment and effective classroom management. The humanistic learning theory endeavors to have a classroom were the learning is geared towards student centered and is personalized for students. The teacher then becomes a facilitator of the students education and learning. In the classroom the humanistic learning theory would be giving the students the choice of what citation their papers should be done in, or when cellphones would be allowed in class.

The second learning theory that will be focused on is twenty first century skills. Twenty first century skills is a learning theory that focuses on the seven c's of collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, computing, character, and cultural/global awareness. The disciplines that are focused on within the twenty first century skills are: English- reading and language arts, the arts, science, math, economics, history, geography, world languages, and government/civics (P21, 2007). Interdisciplinary skills are seen as important within twenty first century skills because there is a recognition that making connections between different subjects helps to increase the learning of students. The learning theory strives to help prepare students for life after school, whether it is college or a job, by helping to cultivate the skills of flexibility and adaptability, being self-directed, responsibility, leadership, social skills that are also cross-cultural, and productivity (P21, 2007). The twenty first century skills in the classroom would be having science, history, and English all teach about World War Two at the same time and having technology, collaboration, and creative project assessments.

The third learning theory is cognitivism. Cognitivism believes that humans need to be active participants in order to learn. Cognitivism also views the actions of someone as the consequence of their thoughts. An analogy that is used is that the mind is like a computer. Information comes in, is processed, and then it will lead to certain outcomes. In order to help facilitate the best learning possible, one needs to elaborate, be organized in what they are saying and teaching, and make what is being taught meaningful to the students. In a classroom setting, cognitivism would look like a history teacher elaborating on how to analyze primary and secondary sources. A teacher would also attempt to help move information from the short term memory to the long term memory by a mentioning of something twenty eight times over a three week period (Richard Culatta, 2011).

The teaching philosophies that are closest to my personal teaching philosophy are humanism, twenty first century skills, and cognitivism. Humanism fits in with my personal teaching philosophy because I do believe that it is important to give students choices because it helps keep students engaged by giving them a say within the function of the classroom. Also I believe that if given the chance to take responsibility, students will do so and they will do the right thing. By allowing students to chose rules, it also creates a safe and fun environment that students want to come to. I want to help prepare my students for life after school by giving them the chance to take responsibility for their own learning and actions. I also believe that students towards the end of their high school career do desire to be treated as adults and once they graduate, the world will treat them as adults. I will use this learning theory in lessons by having options for projects and even assessments.

Twenty first century skills also fit my teaching philosophy because of the seven c's. The reason why the seven c's fits my teaching philosophy is because they help bring students to class

and, as with humanism, create a positive classroom environment. The main four c's: creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking are to me the most important because they incorporate the other three c's of computing, cultural/global awareness, and career learning. Creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking do need to be a part of curriculum because otherwise we are shortchanging our students of a quality education. For my future classroom practices, I want to do my best to make sure assessments are creative and involve collaboration and critical thinking. Often tests are used to test students knowledge, but some students have test anxiety and therefore a test is not the best way to test them. However, that does not mean that I will never do a test. Testing is important because it helps prepare students for the ACT and SAT.

The cognitive learning theory works well in regards to history because there is a need for memorization. The movement of information from short-term to long-term is beneficial for any class, but in history there is a need to memorize dates and the importance of the dates. Such as the Battle of San Juan Hill, which happened on July 1st, 1898. The reason why it is an important date is because it was the decisive battle between Spain and America during the Spanish-American War. I want to incorporate cognitive learning into my future classroom by having putting dates to songs and tunes to help move information into the long-term memory. I tend to elaborate in to great detail in order to make sure that those who I am teaching and I have the same foundation to work with and to build up with knowledge.

References

(2007). *Framework for 21st Century Skills*. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/our-work/p21-

    framework

Culatta, R. (2011). *Cognitive Theories of Learning*. Retrieved from

    http://www.innovativelearning.com/educational_psychology/cognitivism/index.htm