**Didactics LMD 3 Prof. Semmoud.A**

**Lecture 3**

**Teaching Methods and Strategies:**

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You’ve completed your coursework. Student teaching has ended. You’ve donned the cap and gown, crossed the stage, smiled with your diploma and went home to fill out application after application. Suddenly you are standing in what will be your classroom for the next year and after the excitement of decorating it wears off and you begin lesson planning, you start to notice all of your lessons are executed the same way, just with different material. But that is what you know and what you’ve been taught, so you go with it. After a while, your students are bored, and so are you. There must be something wrong because this isn’t what you envisioned teaching to be like.

Figuring out the best ways you can deliver information to students can sometimes be even harder than what students go through in discovering how they learn best. The reason is because every single teacher needs a variety of different teaching methods in their theoretical teaching bag to pull from depending on the lesson, the students, and things as seemingly minute as the time the class is and the subject. Using these different teaching methods, which are rooted in theory of different teaching styles, will not only help teachers reach their full potential, but more importantly engage, motivate and reach the students in their classes, whether in person or online.

**Teaching Methods**

Teaching methods, or methodology, is a narrower topic because it’s founded in theories and educational psychology. If you have a degree in teaching, you most likely have heard of names like Skinner, Vygotsky, Gardner, Piaget, and Bloom. If their names don’t ring a bell, you should definitely recognize their theories that have become teaching methods. The following are the most common teaching theories.

**Behaviorism**

*Behaviorism* is the theory that every learner is essentially a “clean slate” to start off and shaped by emotions. People react to stimuli, reactions as well as positive and negative reinforcement, the site states. Learning Theories names the most popular theorists who ascribed to this theory were Ivan Pavlov, who many people may know with his experiments with dogs. He performed an experiment with dogs that when he rang a bell, the dogs responded to the stimuli; then he applied the idea to humans. Other popular educational theorists who were part of behaviorism was B.F. Skinner and Albert Bandura.

**Social Cognitive Theory**

*Social Cognitive Theory* is typically spoken about at the early childhood level because it has to do with critical thinking with the biggest concept being the idea of play, according to [Edwin Peel writing for *Encyclopedia Britannica*](https://www.britannica.com/science/pedagogy/Teaching-theories-educational-psychology#ref39087). Though Bandura and Lev Vygotsky also contributed to cognitive theory, according to [Dr. Norman Herr with California State University](https://www.csun.edu/science/ref/theory-research/theorists/theorists.html), the most popular and first theorist of cognitivism is Piaget.

There are **four stages** to Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development that he created in 1918. Each stage correlates with a child’s development from infancy to their teenage years.

The first stage is called the Sensorimotor Stage which occurs from birth to 18 months. The reason this is considered cognitive development is because the brain is literally growing through exploration, like squeaking horns, discovering themselves in mirrors or spinning things that click on their floormats or walkers; creating habits like sleeping with a certain blanket; having reflexes like rubbing their eyes when tired or thumb sucking; and beginning to decipher vocal tones.

The second stage, or the Preoperational Stage, occurs from ages 2 to 7 when toddlers begins to understand and correlate symbols around them, ask a lot of questions, and start forming sentences and conversations, but they haven’t developed perspective yet so empathy does not quite exist yet, the website states. This is the stage when children tend to blurt out honest statements, usually embarrassing their parents, because they don’t understand censoring themselves either.

From ages 7 to 11, children are beginning to problem solve, can have conversations about things they are interested in, are more aware of logic and develop empathy during the Concrete Operational Stage.

The final stage, called the Formal Operational Stage, though by definition ends at age 16, can continue beyond. It involves deeper thinking and abstract thoughts as well as questioning not only what things are but why the way they are is popular, the site states. Many times people entering new stages of their lives like high school, college, or even marriage go through elements of Piaget’s theory, which is why the strategies that come from this method are applicable across all levels of education.

**The Multiple Intelligences Theory**

*The Multiple Intelligences Theory* states that people don’t need to be smart in every single discipline to be considered intelligent on paper tests, but that people excel in various disciplines, making them exceptional. Created in 1983, the former principal in the Scranton School District in Scranton, PA, created eight different intelligences, though since then two others have been debated of whether to be added but have not yet officially, according to the site. The original eight are musical, spatial, linguistic, mathematical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic and most people have a predominant intelligence followed by others. For those who are musically-inclined either via instruments, vocals, has perfect pitch, can read sheet music or can easily create music has Musical Intelligence. Being able to see something and rearrange it or imagine it differently is Spatial Intelligence, while being talented with language, writing or avid readers have Linguistic Intelligence. Kinesthetic Intelligence refers to understanding how the body works either anatomically or athletically and Naturalistic Intelligence is having an understanding of nature and elements of the ecosystem.

The final intelligences have to do with personal interactions. Intrapersonal Intelligence is a matter of knowing oneself, one’s limits, and their inner selves while Interpersonal Intelligence is knowing how to handle a variety of other people without conflict or knowing how to resolve it.

**Constructivism**

 *Constructivism* is another theory created by Piaget which is used as a foundation for many other educational theories and strategies because constructivism is focused on how people learn. Piaget states in this theory that people learn from their experiences. They learn best through active learning, connect it to their prior knowledge and then digest this information their own way. This theory has created the ideas of student-centered learning in education versus teacher-centered learning.

**Universal Design for Learning**

The final method is the *Universal Design for Learning* which has redefined the educational community since its inception in the mid-1980s by David H. Rose. This theory focuses on how teachers need to design their curriculum for their students. This theory really gained traction in the United States in 2004 when it was presented at an international conferece and he explained that this theory is based on neuroscience and how the brain processes information, perform tasks and get excited about education. The theory, known as UDL, advocates for presenting information in multiple ways to enable a variety of learners to understand the information; presenting multiple assessments for students to show what they have learned; and learn and utilize a student’s own interests to motivate them to learn, the site states. This theory also discussed incorporating technology in the classroom and ways to educate students in the digital age.