Teaching Philosophy

When breaking down the aspects of basketball and teaching, there are many similarities and overlapping concepts. The coach acts like the teacher, the players as the student, the teammates act like the other students in the classroom, and the court can be compared to the classroom/school environment. As both a coach and future educator, I see many aspects that I apply in my coaching that relate to my teaching philosophy as well. I understand the importance of having a strong philosophy to keep my values always at the forefront of my teaching. Before explaining my philosophy there are some definitions that are important to understand. The psychological theory that relates to my philosophy is behaviourism. Behaviourism characterizes behaviour as conditioned responses in our environment (Long et al., 2011). Bandura's social learning theory, which goes in hand with behaviourism, involves observing what others do (Long et al., 2011) and suggests that social modeling and good behaviour are powerful classroom strategies. I also want to highlight the definition of dialogic teaching, which involves the teacher's ability to support learner's exploration of their limits of knowledge and ability (Long et al., 2011). Lastly, self-efficacy is related to the perception of a person's capabilities (Cassidy, 2015). Overall, I follow a pragmatism philosophy in metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology, meaning that reality is constructed through transactional experiences, people come to know things by examining their experience with the environment, and values are relative and situational (Beatty et al., 2009). All in all, my philosophy in teaching is that I believe that a student's experience with their environment is the most important aspect of their learning, and they should have as much to do with their learning as I do to help them gain a sense of positive self-efficacy.

The educational psychology theory that is most relevant to my teaching is behaviourism. The social learning theory argues that children learn social expectations and behaviour from observing what others do (Long et al., 2011). The concept of social learning theory agrees with behaviourism but adds that internal psychological processes also influence behaviour. This happens through observations, modelling, and imitation. As a coach, I always try to model my behaviour to my players in modelling how to speak to opponents and referees, having players imitate me during a drill, and even participating in cardio drills with them. I do this so that I can build trust with my players and show them that I am always on their side. In my classroom, I want to model the basic school expectations to help students understand what is expected from them. I believe that it is important to practice what you preach, and that students will be more inclined to learn from someone they believe in. This comes from participating in different behaviours from sitting at the carpet with them to using positive language when speaking to them and my peers. To add, if a child imitates a behaviour and there is a reinforcement that is rewarding, the child is likely to continue performing the behaviour. If students see one group continuously getting rewarded for their good behaviour, they may be more inclined to participate in the behaviour themselves. In my classroom, I would try to implement a system that uses social learning theory and operant conditioning based on the expectations of the classroom, like keeping a low volume during independent work and staying seated during instructional time. This could be through a ticket-and-draw system, a group seating point system, or through overall classroom behaviour points.

In my whole class instruction, I would follow a progressive learning strategy, which states that the teacher should facilitate the learning but not be overly involved, and emphasizes independence, and having students correct their own mistakes (Williams, 2017). This relates to

the concept of dialogic teaching, a concept that focuses on the role of the teacher in classroom talk (Long et al., 2011) and involves the teacher's active capacity to assist students in recognizing and exploring their own blind spots—that is, their knowledge and skill limitations. (English, 2016). Dialogic teaching takes on a more democratic stance of teaching and emphasizes speaking with learners rather than speaking at learners. The essential features of dialogic teaching are being collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful (Long et al., 2011). When relating this to my identity and philosophy as a coach, I always make sure to have contributions from my players and try to fully understand how they are feeling from a player perspective. I want my players to feel like they have room to work together to learn new skills, but that I will be there to guide them and to correct them when needed. This is how I feel about the students in my classroom as well. My instructional time will emphasize group discussion, use different questioning strategies, ask open-ended questions, ask children how they feel, and limit scaffolding. Teaching strategies like cooperative learning, which is the interaction of students with each other, and discovery learning, in which students lead their own learning experiences to help them find key concepts, are two strategies that would dominate in my classroom. Being able to collaborate, communicate, and work with others is a necessity in life. Dialogic teaching and discovery learning helps to get students to recognize their own mistakes to help gain knowledge of themselves and helps to build self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy was defined by Bandura as a type of esteem that refers to one's opinion of their own ability to complete academic tasks (Long et al., 2011). As common sense would allow us to understand, failure tends to reduce self-esteem while success generates higher expectations and positive self-concepts. These positive self-concept leads to an increase of motivation, effort, and success (Long et al., 2011). Although failure is a part of learning and achieving in the

classroom, many students in the classroom may hold back in fear of feelings of failure, yet holding back in academics limits them from continuing to increase their self-concepts, and improve academic performance (Green, 2004). In my classroom, I want students to face and enjoy challenges to help them to become more persistent and resilient. Resilient students are people who exhibit high levels of drive and performance even in the face of challenging circumstances that put them at risk for subpar performance (Cassidy, 2015). In my classroom, I want all my students to embrace failure as a part of learning, and I want to help them to become resilient in their academics, which will hopefully translate to their real life. In my players, I do this by promoting positive emotions while acknowledging negative thought patterns (e.g., imposter syndrome) and by encouraging goal setting. I believe that these strategies would translate very well to my classroom if I put emphasis on positive thinking to help combat negative emotions, and by teaching students to acknowledge their potential feelings of academic inadequacy and mindfully replace the thoughts with positive affirmations. In goal setting, helping students to set concrete goals helps them to reinforce themselves that they are capable and can control their actions. These were the strategies my past teachers used for me that highly contributed to the student and educator I am today.

My personal experience as a student was positive, and somewhat different than most of my peers. Going to school was the best part of my life as a child, a safe place for me, and learning was my favourite thing to do. When I was learning in the classroom, my stress from home felt nonexistent. It was a relief to bring sunshine into my stormy mind with the love that I felt at school. My love for learning continued into my high school years, having many amazing teachers who always motivated me and gave me confidence in myself; I credit them for pushing me toward a career in education. My goal as an educator is for all my students to know that

school is a place to discover, to play, to be free of judgment, and to spread my love and appreciation for learning to the next generation of students. I want to develop their confidence in themselves, I want them to have an open mind, and expose them to different ways of thinking. I want them to believe that education is their ticket to any place that they want to be. My ideas of learning and teaching have stayed consistent over the years because of my very positive experience in my early educational years. My experiences changed the way I see my teaching relationship with students because the main reason why I did well in the classroom was because of the support I felt from my teachers. To be able to reciprocate this support to the students in my future classroom and be at least one positive adult influence in their life is how I will know that I have succeeded as their teacher.

My teaching philosophy emphasizes the behaviourism psychology theory along with the philosophical education theory of pragmatism to cement the importance of student's interaction with their environment and having them be the leaders in their learning. I related my teaching to my coaching, as in my mind they both overlap tremendously and helps me to stick to one overarching philosophy that can be consistent through all aspects of my life. As an educator, I would use strategies like modelling (social learning theory), progressive and dialogic teaching, and cooperative learning to help students develop their own academic self-esteem and self-efficacy. In conclusion, my goal as a teacher is to maximize my student's involvement in the classroom to create a failure-safe learning environment to make my students feel secure and safe. My goal is to create a classroom where the students create positive experiences with their peers, and feel that I am a kind, caring, and truthful person who always sees the best in them.

References

Beatty, J. E., Leigh, J. S. A., & Dean, K. L. (2009). Philosophy Rediscovered: Exploring the

Connections Between Teaching Philosophies, Educational Philosophies, and Philosophy.

Journal of Management Education, 33(1), 99–114. https://doi-

org.ledproxy2.uwindsor.ca/10.1177/1052562907310557

Cassidy, S. (2015). Resilience building in students: The role of academic self-efficacy. Frontiers

in Psychology, 6, 1781–1781. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01781

English, A. R. (2016). Dialogic Teaching and Moral Learning: Self-critique, Narrativity,

Community and "Blind Spots." Journal of Philosophy of Education, 50(2), 160–176.

https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12198

Eun, B. (2019). The zone of proximal development as an overarching concept: A framework for

synthesizing Vygotsky's theories. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 51(1), 18–30.

https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2017.1421941

Green, D. M. (2004). Self-Efficacy: A Communication Model for the Development of Self-

Efficacy in the Classroom. Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 23(3-4), 107–116.

https://doi.org/10.1300/J067v23n03_09

Long, M., Wood, C., Littleton, K., Passenger, T., & Sheehy, K. (2011). The Psychology of

Education (2nd ed.). Taylor & Francis.

Williams, M. K. (2017). John Dewey in the 21st Century. Journal of Inquiry & Action in

iEducation, 9(1), 91–102. Retrieved 2021, from

https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1158258.pdf.