Learning Theories

CLARE JEFFERY

FRIDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2019

Learning outcomes

o   To be able to explain why educators need to be both knowledgeable about and critical of some theories of child development

o   To be able to critique the work of theorists, practitioners, planners and others in terms of respect for culture and context

o   To understand the concept of patterns of development and how and why these vary

o   To become familiar with the work of Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner and Malaguzzi

o   To become familiar with the theories of Behaviourism, Constructivism and Social Constructivism

o   To make links between the theoretical and practitioner aspects of these ideas and the implications for classroom practice

o   To have reflected upon own classroom experiences in relation to learning theories

What is child development?

"…teachers who do not make use of a systematic body of theory in their day-to-day decisions are behaving blindly; little evidence of long-range rationale, purpose, or plan is observable in their teaching. Thus, teachers without a strong theoretical orientation inescapably make little more than busy-work assignments. True, some teachers operate in this way and use only a hodge-podge of different methods without theoretical orientation. However, this muddled kind of teaching undoubtedly is responsible for many of the current adverse criticisms of public education." (Bigge & Shermis 2004, p.5)

What would they say?

Looking at learning - 3 different approaches

Behaviourism, Constructivism, Social Constructivism

Post sessional challenge

Organise to spend time in the class in which you are doing your placement. Take a notebook with you and see if you can find examples of any of the important issues we have been learning about today, from our tour of some of the ideas of significant researchers and theorists.

Look for examples of any of the following:

- a child or children actively making meaning
- a child or children raising questions or offering a theory
- a child or children learning through interaction
- a child or children having direct or hands-on experience
- a child or children communicating effectively with one another
- children playing different roles
- the languages of the children being evident in the room
- the adults listening attentively to the children
- adults scaffolding children's learning
- adults giving helpful feedback to a child
- an adult and child sharing attention

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