

Self-Reflection

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Studying behavioral learning theory enlightened me on how the structured use of reinforcement and environmental stimuli targets specific behaviors. Through class activities, my own teaching experiences and comparative analysis of the behaviorism theory with the other learning theories I came to appreciate that it has both strengths and weaknesses when applied in teaching.

The behaviorist focus on the measurable, conditioning-based approach to learning provides a pragmatic method of building foundational skills. I've witnessed how the reinforcement of praise, recognition, or correction promotes desirable behaviors in students. These techniques were particularly effective in structuring students' routine and engagement, especially for those who need clear guidelines and expectations.

However, it also indicates that behaviorism falls short of some important aspects of learning, such as the ability to develop higher-level thinking skills or motivation for continuous innovation and growth. I also believe it is important to note that excessive use of rewards suppresses curiosity and independent inquiry, which are key qualities of a student.

As an instructor, I intend to apply behaviorist strategies with intentionality and balance. I'll use it to scaffold the foundational skill and classroom norm acquisition but also ensure my teaching is designed for learners to grow beyond that. This includes designing formative activities such as discussions and open-ended tasks which can be performed collectively.

As a lifelong learner, behaviorism reminds me of the importance discipline and feedback has on habit formation. Yet I also want to constantly push myself beyond what I was conditioned to do; to stay curious, self-reflective and open. My goal is to model that balance for students, so they can see that learning isn't just about doing what earns approval but about finding out what matters.

Ultimately, behaviorism contributes significantly to my "toolbox" as a teacher, but it is not the only tool I use. By combining it with constructivist and cognitive approaches, I aim to create a classroom environment that enhances both behavior and understanding.