Philosophy of Vygotsky’s Theories in Language Arts

Sydney Arman

The University of Mary

My understanding of language arts and the information I have gained about it has helped me form my philosophy about it. I will emphasize that understanding language arts is the key to communicating with others. I desire that my students will use the six modes of language arts so that they may become successful communicators in their everyday lives. Every person will be using their listening, talking, reading, writing, viewing and visually representing skills every day throughout their lives, which means it is imperative to teach children the importance of each mode. At the primary age, I plan to focus more on listening, talking, reading and writing because I think they are more foundational skills for language arts and communication. Since the art of communication involves interacting with others, I am basing my language arts philosophy on Vygotsky’s theories of how children learn.

I would incorporate Vygotsky’s theory of social learning as well as his idea of zones of proximal development. I believe that social learning in a language arts classroom is imperative for the students’ success in understanding the modes of language arts because they will be able to practice what they know and learn. If I emphasize using listening and talking skills the students will be able to interact socially with their peers will aid them in their comprehension and communication. I also believe that using Vygotsky’s zones of proximal development will be beneficial in teaching my students language arts skills. This is because when using ZPD, the teacher is scaffolding the students’ learning. According to our textbook, “teachers scaffold, or support, students’ language arts development as they demonstrate, guide, and teach, and they vary the amount of support according to the instructional purpose and students’ needs” (Tompkins, 2015, p. 36). The five levels of scaffolding- modeled, shared, interactive, guided, independent- will be a helpful tool as I teach my students reading and writing skills. By utilizing Vygotsky’s two theories, I believe I will be successful in teaching my students language arts.

References

Tompkins, G. E. (2015). Language arts: Patterns of practice (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ:

Pearson/Merrill/Prentice Hall.