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**Lecture Title: The Practice Style Method**

## **Introduction**

Hello and welcome to yet another module on physical education. In today's episode, we will be talking about the practice method or the practice style which is a very important method for imparting physical education training.

The defining characteristic of the Practice style is individual and private practice of a memory/reproduction task with private feedback. In the anatomy of the Practice style the role of the teacher is to make all subject matter and logistical decisions and to provide private feedback to the learners. The role of the learner is to individually and privately practice a memory/reproduction task while making nine specific decisions. When this behavior is achieved, the objectives described below are reached in subject matter and in behavior.

The Practice style establishes a new reality, offers new conditions for learning, and reaches a different set of objectives other than the Command style. The landmark O–T–L–O relationship of the Practice style occurs because certain decisions are shifted from the teacher to the learner. This shift, in who makes decisions about what, when, creates new relationships between the teacher and learner, between the learner and the tasks, and among the learners themselves.

In every field, the Practice method or style is a predominant behavior—people individually practice tasks and receive feedback. This landmark teaching–learning behavior can emphasize any of the attributes along the Developmental Channels. Consequently, the classroom image of this behavior is not singular. Although there are more variations in the classroom image of this style than most styles, the

decision distribution for these variations represents the anatomy of the Practice style. To determine the developmental focus of any teaching–learning event it is necessary to identify the specific decisions made by the teacher and the learner as they participate in the content.

### **The Anatomy of the Practice Style**

To design episodes in the second style on the Spectrum, a change in the decision distribution—who makes which decisions, when—must take place; specific decisions are shifted from the teacher to the learner. In this new landmark style, which has significantly different objectives from the Command style, the following nine specific decisions are shifted from the teacher to the learners in the impact set:

1. Location
2. Order of tasks
3. Starting time per task
4. Pace and rhythm
5. Stopping time per task
6. Interval
7. Initiating questions for clarification
8. Attire and appearance
9. Posture

In the anatomy of this style, the teacher’s role is to make all the decisions in the pre-impact and post-impact sets. In the impact set, the teacher shifts the nine decisions to the learner; therefore, the learner’s role is to make the nine decisions while performing the task(s) designed by the teacher. In the post-impact set of decisions, the teacher observes the performance and offers individual and private feedback to learners about both their tasks and their decision making in the nine categories. This shift of the nine decisions marks the beginning of the individualization process—inviting different behaviors from both teacher and learner. The teacher must begin to see the learners as individual performers who are responsible for decision making in nine categories. The teacher must learn to shift time decisions and refrain from giving commands for every movement, task, or activity. The learner has the opportunity to initiate practice, to initiate interaction with the task on his or her own, and to initiate and learn to make the nine decisions within the logistical parameters determined by the teacher. The

learner learns to make time decisions as they relate to practicing the task.

An episode in style must reflect the essence of this new teacher–learner relationship. Initially, the teacher will describe to the class the concept of shifting decisions to produce different learning objectives. This explanation establishes the behavior expectations for the ensuing episode. The teacher continues with the subject matter explanation/demonstration and the logistical expectations. (The order of these three expectations changes according to the objectives of the episode.) Once the three expectations have been delivered, the learners begin while the teacher observes the learners making the nine decisions. The learners will pick up the necessary materials, establish their locations, and within a reasonably short time, will settle into the performance of the task. The teacher begins to individually and privately contact each learner. The manner in which time is used marks a major contrast between the realities of the Command behavior and the Practice method or style.

Signaled or cued performance is the essence of all variations of the Command behavior. Learners respond when they are cued or signaled (time decisions) to achieve a precision performance. The essence of all variations of the Practice behavior is the availability of a unit of time (within the stated parameters) allotted for learners to make the decisions while practicing the task(s). The primary learning focus in the Practice method or style is to develop awareness in making decisions about time, and also to realize the importance of time in task acquisition for oneself and for others.

The essence of the classroom image of this style is a particular cycle of relationships between the teacher and the learner. The teacher presents the expectations for the task, the behavior/decisions, and the logistics; the learner performs the task making the nine decisions for a period of time; the teacher observes the performance and offers feedback.

### **Events of the Practice Method or Style**

#### **Behavior Decision Presentation**

1. The teacher sets the scene by introducing the learners to the idea of new

expectations.

2. The teacher states the style's expectations and objectives:

- a. To offer time for each learner to work individually and privately
- b. To provide time for the teacher to offer individual and private feedback to everyone

3. The teacher describes the role of the learner and the shift in decision making. Initially, the teacher actually names the nine decisions. This procedure clearly identifies the specific decisions shifted to the learner.

4. The teacher describes his or her role:

- a. To observe the performances and offer individual and private feedback
- b. To be available to answer questions from the learner

#### Subject Matter Presentation

5. The teacher presents the task(s). The teacher must be aware of the following Components of Communication and the options within each component:

- a. Content: Each task has particular expectations of what is accomplished.
- b. Mode: Each task can be presented through different modes: audio, visual, audiovisual, and tactile. The teacher decides which mode is best for a given task.
- c. Action: Each mode has its own form of action; the teacher has a choice of speaking about the task, demonstrating it, or using a combination of both. Each choice depends on the task, on the situation at hand, and on the purpose of the communication. At times, a demonstration of the task conveys a clear image of what is to be practiced; at other times, a few words are needed to clarify the task.
- d. Medium: Various media can deliver the task: the teacher, a film, a video, or a task sheet.

#### Logistics Presentation

6. The teacher announces the logistics and parameters that are necessary for the task and/or behavior, which include:

- a. The number of repetitions per task, or the length of time that the task is to be performed
- b. The order of the tasks (sequence or random)
- c. Location parameters for the tasks
- d. Equipment information and details
- e. Interval activities
- f. Attire and appearance parameters

#### Questions for Clarification

7. At this point, the learners have been introduced to the three expectations. Before asking the learners to begin, the teacher asks for clarification questions to check for understanding.

a. The teacher is available for clarification questions, or the teacher initiates questions to verify the degree of understanding of the new expectations.

b. The learners are then asked to begin practicing individually and privately on the task when they are ready.

Feedback

Post-impact Set of Decisions

8. The teacher moves from learner to learner, observing both the performance of the task and the decisionmaking process, then offers feedback and moves on to the next learner. During this process, the teacher will:

a. Identify, as quickly as possible, the learners who are making errors in either the performance of the task, or the decision-making process, or both

b. Offer corrective feedback to the individual learner

c. Stay with the learner to verify the corrected behavior (in many cases, a few seconds are sufficient for this step)

d. Move on to the next learner

e. Visit, observe, and offer feedback to those who perform correctly and who do make the nine decisions appropriately. These students also need the teacher's time (often teachers offer feedback only to those who make errors).

f. In the beginning episodes, circulate to all students. For some tasks, it may take two or three episodes to observe every learner in the class. Learners usually develop the patience needed for such cycles.

g. Develop awareness of the feedback forms used. Corrective, value, neutral, and ambiguous feedback are always available.

h. Develop awareness in seeing the overall performance and behavior of the learners. When a significant number of learners are incorrectly performing, call the class together and provide group corrective feedback.

### **The Implications of the Practice Style or Method**

Each event, each decision in the classroom, has consequences. Because learners enter the classroom from different philosophical, psychological, social, and cognitive points of view, it is imperative to know the network of implications that

each teaching–learning behavior implies.

Episodes in the Practice style imply that:

- The teacher values the development of deliberate decision making.
- The teacher trusts the learners to make the nine decisions.
- The teacher accepts the notion that both teacher and learner can expand beyond the values of one style.
- Learners can make the nine decisions while practicing the task(s).
- Learners can be held accountable for the consequences of their decisions as they participate in the process of individualization.
- Learners can experience the beginning of independence.

Although there are numerous examples of teaching strategies in the literature, each is associated more closely with one landmark behavior than another. Because all models, strategies, or methods suggest a decision distribution between the teacher and the learner in reference to the subject matter, it is possible to identify which landmark styles (set of objectives) different behaviors represent. In the literature, the term “guided practice” has been described as a unique teaching behavior. However, in the literature, the “actions” of the teacher and learners are not consistently described; at times the behavior suggests the Command style, at other times the description supports the Practice style.

When guided practice is described as a cued practice—in which each part is demonstrated and students are “guided” step by step and told what to do and when to do it—the decision distribution represents style A. When guided practice describes an individual practice “on your own,” the decision distribution represents style B. In both situations, frequent feedback is offered to “guide” the practice. Although the name guided practice suggests something different from Command or Practice styles, the underlying decision distribution is the same. When teachers know the implications—the primary focus and value of the learning experience—of various teaching terms that are used in the literature, they are able to more accurately implement the approach and succeed in reaching the anticipated goals and objectives. Philosophical intention about teaching and learning must be followed by the decision distribution for the teacher and learner; that is, if the benefits of the idea are to be reached.

## Selecting and Designing the Subject Matter

This section deals with two questions that the teacher must answer while planning episodes in the Practice style: What kinds of tasks are appropriate for this style? How does one design and organize a cluster of tasks to accommodate the process of this style?

### Kinds of Tasks

The characteristics of a task appropriate for an episode in the Practice style are:

1. That it is fixed, and must be performed according to a specific model; no alternatives are sought.
2. That the movement or responses can be identified as correct or incorrect. Many activities in physical education consist of fixed tasks.

In many cases they form the basis of the activity by defining its structure. For example:

- When a teacher demonstrates the position at the starting blocks for a short dash, that demonstration becomes the model, the fixed standard. In the Practice style, all learners are expected to practice and perform that position as demonstrated without individual variations and adjustments. (Perhaps later, if a variation proves to be beneficial to one runner or another, it will be adopted.)
- When a forehand stroke in tennis is demonstrated, all the learners are expected to practice the stroke as demonstrated, with the same motion and same foot position.
- When a “one-and-a-half, front somersault in tucked position” is the description of the task, all learners are expected to practice the dive according to the accepted standards to offer feedback about the “correctness” of the performance.

The teacher compares the performance with the demonstrated model. At least four sources determine the need for fixed tasks:

1. Kinesiological and biomechanical principles
2. Past experience of teachers and coaches
3. Aesthetic standard
4. Safety

Kinesiological principles establish the correctness of postures and movement combinations based on scientific analyses. These analyses tell us precisely which posture and which movement is most appropriate for attaining given objectives. Laws of physics, for example, help determine the degree of difficulty for various exercises (Mosston, 1965). It is futile to produce alternatives when a specific posture or movement works best. One cannot ignore the knowledge provided by teachers' and coaches' observations. Over the years, they have developed special and subtle insights into the activity and designed appropriate movement sequences that lead to attaining the task. Their knowledge serves as a powerful basis for establishing correctness for performance.

Aesthetic standards generally evolve from cultural agreements and are transmitted and preserved by ceremonies and rituals. Certain postures, movements, and movement combinations are considered attractive, beautiful, and symbolic. They are used to maintain and project a tradition. In this sense, these movements are correct for this purpose. The actions of cheerleaders, drill teams, marching bands, gymnastics demonstrations, and traditional dance performances all represent this category of adhering to a particular standard or of attaining the predetermined standard by performing the correct movements. Performing these standards is represented by the Command style; practicing them is often represented by the Practice style or method.

## **Conclusion**

Now we come to the conclusion of this episode. So in this episode, we have seen that how important this particular style is for imparting physical education training for the students. I hope that the information provided was of some use to all of you. Thank you so much for watching.