

Triathlon Coaches' Approaches to Learning from a Lifelong Learner Perspective

Aman Hussain & Pierre Trudel, Ph.D.

Faculty of Health Sciences, School of Human Kinetics

Université d'Ottawa | University of Ottawa



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university



uOttawa.ca

Coaching in Canada

- Coach education in Canada is guided by the the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) and implemented through the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).
- Coach education in Canada is currently influenced by two major factors:

Coaching
Association
of Canada



Association
canadienne
des entraîneurs



uOttawa

A. Introduction of the Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD).

- There are calls for the LTAD to be used as a framework for coach education (Way & O’Leary, 2006; Van Neutegem, 2006).
- While he recognizes the importance of LTAD to plan the athletes’ development, Trudel (2006) *disagrees* with the attempt to use it for coaches’ development:
 1. LTAD is based on physiological growth and development theories of adolescents. Coach education should be based on *adult* learning theories.
 2. LTAD focuses on the “*what*” and “*when*” to introduce sport skills, but not “*how*” to coach.



B. Transition to the new NCCP.

- Coach education has gone through a major shift in assessing the competency of its coaches.
- There are now *three* major coaching streams individuals can participate in (Instruction, Competition, Community Sport). Within these streams are different coaching *contexts* (CAC, 2006).
 - For example within the Competition Stream, there is the:
 - Introduction context,
 - *Development* context,
 - High Performance context.

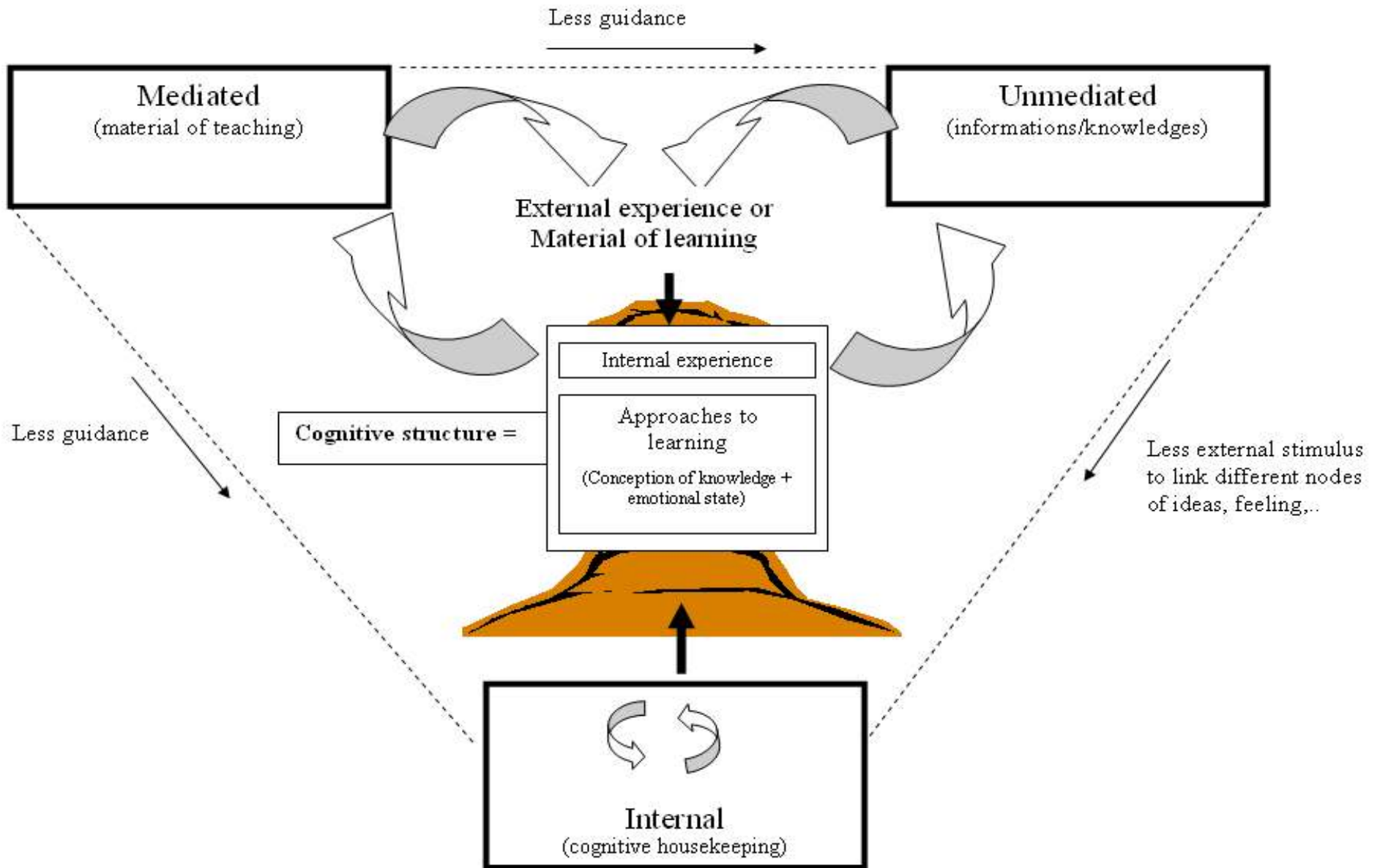


Past Research in Coach Education

- There are calls for research into the training and development of coaches (Lyle, 2007; Nash & Collins, 2006).
- Some of these studies examined the developmental paths of coaches using retrospective interviews, and as a next step should be looked at from a *lifelong learner* perspective (Cote, 2006; Gilbert, Cote, & Mallett, 2006).
- However, to the best of our knowledge, there has *yet* to be any *longitudinal* research looking at the developmental paths of coaches.



- A review of literature on lifelong learning suggests the emergence of *two major* themes:
 1. Self-directed learning.
 - a. Learners taking *responsibility* for their *own* learning and creating learning opportunities for themselves. (Deakin-Crick & Wilson, 2005; Lambeir, 2005).
 2. Ontological shift in our way of “*being*”.
 - a. Knowledge is changing at such a rapid pace that learners must be *open* to *new ways* of knowing (Barnett, 2004, Bolhuis, 2003; Jarvis, 2006; Moon, 2004).



Phase 1

Phase 2

Athlete

Assistant Coach

Retirement

Triathlon CANADA 

**ENTRY
BY COACHING
PARTICIPANT**

Coach submits a coaching portfolio outlining knowledge, experience, coaching philosophy, training and periodization principles, relation to energy systems and stage of athlete development, etc. to Coaching Education Coordinator

Application fee of \$200.00 required



© Triathlon Canada 2009

EVALUATION

Seven Outcomes will be evaluated across three stages:

- Design a sport program
- Manage a Sport Program
- Make Ethical Decisions
- Plan a Practice
- Analyze performance
- Support athletes in training
- Support the Competitive Experience



**EDUCATION
& TRAINING...**

In discussions with the Evaluator and Coaching Education Coordinator, the coach pursues training through learning experiences, mentoring, etc. to address criteria that was not met during the evaluation. In some instances, completion of the learning processes will require no further evaluation



CERTIFICATION

Once a coach has successfully completed all outcomes they will sign a Code of Conduct Agreement



RECERTIFICATION

All Certified coaches must recertify every two years by completing various professional development activities.



uOttawa

Why Do Research With Triathlon Canada?

- Triathlon Canada is learner centered:
 - Triathlon Canada requires the submission of a *portfolio* to contextualize the participants prior experience.
 - The participant *chooses* their education and training with guidance from the Coach Education Director.
- Triathlon Canada is *one of only a few* sports close to fulfilling the requirements to certify coaches in the Competition-Development context.
- Triathlon Canada provides a *unique opportunity* to study coaches' development through the different learning situations (prior experiences, NCCP, networks, reflections, etc.) that must be considered in a lifelong coaches' development perspective.



Preliminary Results

- Currently *six* (n=6) of *nine* coach participants have been interviewed prior to entering Triathlon Canada's new coach education program at the Competition-Development context.
- Each coach acts as their *own* case study.
- Prior to their interview, the researcher reviewed their portfolio submitted to Triathlon Canada in an attempt to better understand their current level of knowledge.



Preliminary Results – Education before entering Competition-Development

	Post-Secondary Education		NCCP				NCI	
	University	College	Swimming	Cycling	Track	Triathlon		
Coach A	M.Sc	B.Kin	-	-	-	-	Comp Intro	Diploma
Coach B	-	B.A	-	NCCP 1	-	-	Comp Intro	-
Coach C*	M.Sc	B.PE	-	NCCP 1	NCCP 2	NCCP 1	-	Diploma
Coach D	-	-	Diploma	NCCP 2	NCCP 2	NCCP 3	-	-
Coach E**	-	B.Kin	-	NCCP 1	-	-	Comp Intro	Enrolled
Coach F	-	B.Sc	Certificate	NCCP 1	NCCP 1	-	Comp Intro	-

- Coach C is also a chartered professional coach (ChPC).
- Coach E did not finish his last year of B.Kin. Currently needs to defend his project with NCI.

Preliminary Results – Motivations to Coach

Coach A	<i>“One of the reasons why I like the high performance stuff... is that you go to work everyday and everybody is committed to doing the best job they can... It’s really neat working with people who are driven and dedicated”</i>
Coach B	<i>“Number 1 is the competitiveness... Number 2 is that I was in the sport for a few years prior to starting coaching and its kind of a way to contribute back to the sport”</i>
Coach C	<i>“I enjoy it. I enjoy the people. Triathlon coaching doesn’t pay a lot, but I enjoy it. You sacrifice the salary to do something you love to do”</i>
Coach D	<i>“It’s certainly a passion for me. I think it’s a passion for me because I think it’s my call. And I’ve been lucky enough to convert that into somewhat of a career”</i>
Coach E	<i>“Figuring out how to be the best in the world. That’s motivating to me. Figuring out how to beat the best. What do we have to do? You know, the limits of human performance or performance in triathlon”</i>
Coach F	<i>“I enjoyed the aspect of competing, the rewards of seeing other people improve and seeing other people succeed and reach their goals”</i>

Next Steps...

- Complete the last three interviews.
- Follow up with the coaches once they have begun their education and training in the Competition-Development context.
- Follow up interviews intend to explore:
 1. Which component(s) are the coaches working on?
 2. How have they chosen to work on the components?
 3. Is this training influencing their coaching practice?
 4. Is this training contributing to their lifelong learning?



Thank You - Merci



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne
Canada's university



Email: ahuss077@uottawa.ca