

EFFECTIVE School Practices

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FOCUS: DISCRIMINATORY EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

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Philosophy of Effective School Practices

1. Teachers are responsible for student learning.
2. The curriculum is a critical variable for instructional effectiveness.
3. Effective teaching practices are identified by instructional research that compares the results of a new practice with the results of a viable alternative.
4. Experiments should not be conducted using an entire generation of Americans. The initial experimentation with a new practice should be small in scale and carefully controlled so that negative outcomes are minimized.
5. A powerful technology for teaching exists that is not being utilized in most American schools.

Effective School Practices (formerly *ADI News*) is a publication of the Association for Direct Instruction. The mission of the Association for Direct Instruction, as stated in the by-laws, is to promote the improvement of educational methods.

The name *Direct Instruction* originated with the highly effective instructional model first developed by Zig Engelmann in Project Follow Through during President Johnson's Great Society legislation. Although the evaluation of Project Follow Through showed the Direct Instruction model to be far more effective than the other models on every identified outcome, education in America remained generally unchanged.

A few educators, impressed by the extraordinary results of the original Direct Instruction model and the programs that were developed as DI evolved, formed the Association for Direct Instruction in 1981.

Today, this organization is a vanguard in promoting school practices that have been validated as effective through the use of the scientific method in educational research.

The Association for Direct Instruction was incorporated in 1981 in the state of Oregon for educational purposes. ADI is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and is a publicly supported organization as defined in Sections 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) and 509(a)(1). Donations are tax-deductible.

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Focus: Discriminatory Educational Practices

Overview

Heterogeneous grouping is often regarded as "the way" to remedy educational discrimination. As the last issue of *Effective School Practices* indicated, heterogeneous grouping is only a superficial solution to the problem of educational equity. Equity involves much more than simply providing all students with a seat in the same classroom.

In this issue, we further develop the idea that discrimination is not erased by simply providing the same instruction to all children, especially if the "same" instruction assumes a rich, supportive home environment as North America's currently most popular reforms do. "Child-Directed Teaching Methods: A Discriminatory Practice in Western Education" (pages 9-20) summarizes the research reviewing the social and educational impact of the child-directed practices that are currently promoted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In England, this model (called "progressive education") was officially adopted for over 20 years. Its detrimental effects on achievement and upward mobility of economically disadvantaged children led England to finally abandon the approach. Similar effects have been documented in America from the same model (called "open education").

Child-directed teaching methods are usually associated with heterogeneous grouping, the nongraded or mixed-age programs, and wholistic teaching methods. Gutierrez and Slavin's research summary on nongraded programs (see pages 21-28) found that the greatest learning effects were achieved when the nongraded organization was used to provide for more homogeneous grouping and more teacher-directed instruction, not less. Jean Chall's findings related to school factors that contribute to failure in reading (pages 29-36) indicates that wholistic, "one-stage" approaches to reading instruction result in discrimination against children of poverty.

The views of Black educators on child-directed practices are eloquently presented in two articles by Lisa Delpit, a Black educator who has lived in both worlds of academia and practice. The first article "Skills and Other Dilemmas," (pages 37-41) presents her personal story and reflections on the contradictions between theory and practice. The appearance of that article in the *Harvard Educational Review* raised such a response from readers that she later expanded on the original piece in a second article, "The Silenced Dialogue..." (pages 42-54). Here she develops the differing views of Black and White educators that were expressed to her in response to the first article into a deeper understanding of the processes involved in educational reform.

The newest incarnation of child-directed learning is called "developmentally appropriate practice" by the NAEYC. On pages 55-57, Anne McGill-Franzen defines the current meaning of "developmentally appropriate." Pro and con views are then presented on pages 58-86. As special educators, who seek to accelerate the development of special education children, rather than letting them grow naturally, Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell find the NAEYC guidelines problematic (pages 58-69). Johnson and McChesney Johnson, who were part of the original group who defined the concept of "developmentally appropriate practices" respond to those criticisms (pages 70-80). The manner they describe in which "developmentally appropriate practices" were defined and made quasi-national policy should cause some concern. Kaminski and Carey further discuss how the views expressed in these two pro and con articles define a significant gap between general and special education (pages 81-86). This is a gap that academicians cannot expect teachers in the field to bridge alone.

Canada is two or three years ahead of the US in implementing this latest wave of child-directed practices. Parental concern is leading to some backlash. The videotape featured in the Video Review, "Failing Grades," was developed by one of Canada's concerned parents, Dr. Joe Freedman, M.D. After becoming alarmed, Dr. Freedman began reading educational research the way he reads medical research—looking at the effects of interventions. In "Failing Grades" he summarizes his findings in a very straightforward manner, so that not only lay people, but also educational theorists might understand (see pages 87-93 for review).

Finally, the way that school choice is playing out in Holland's increasingly multicultural society may alert us to possible discriminatory pitfalls that could develop if America were also to legislate school choice (pages 94-95). Possibly one problem with the school choice system in Holland is that some schools, those with religious affiliation, are allowed to turn away students they do not want to serve. Perhaps disallowing "student choice" in school choice legislation would solve the problem. But the Holland report seems to indicate that, given a choice, humans will tend to segregate and inequities will result.

Bonnie Grossen, Editor

Addendum:

The article "When Ability Grouping Makes Good Sense" by James Gallagher that appeared in the last issue (Winter, 1993) was reprinted from *Education Week*, Volume XII, Number 8, October 28, 1992.

From the Field: Oregon Watch

Full Inclusion

In our school district the administration has proposed to eliminate the Special Ed learning disability staff. The administration claims they can mainstream the LD students because of the effectiveness of the new whole language program and the "developmentally appropriate practices" they are implementing. Is this legal?

Riffed in Oregon

Dear Riffed:

This proposal faces at least two serious legal problems:

1. the district cannot cut the special education budget because of federal "maintenance-of-effort" requirements, and
2. every placement decision (a) must be based on that individual student's IEP, (b) must be made individually, and (c) must be based on the district having available the mandated full continuum of alternative placements.

Also, every disabled child's IEP must be "reasonably calculated" to allow the student to receive educational benefit. How would one show that teaching methods or practices which have not been shown to be effective (such as whole language) would be "reasonably calculated" to have educational benefit?

Barb Bateman, Ph.D., J.D.

What The Oregon Law Says About "Developmentally Appropriate Practice"

The original legislation in HB 3565 says:

The State Board of Education shall report to the 1993 regular session of the Legislative Assembly on the feasibility of all school districts implementing nongraded primary programs... [HB 3565, page 9, Section 19f(2)]

The Oregon State Board of Education says:

A non-graded primary program is one in which children of different ages and ability levels are taught in the same classroom, without dividing them or the curriculum into steps labelled by grade-level designations. Children progress from easier to more difficult material at their own varying rates of speed, making continuous progress rather than being promoted once a year.

Most educators view non-graded arrangements, sometimes referred to as multiaged groupings, as a logical outgrowth of developmentally appropriate practices—practices that reflect research on how children learn at different stages of development. At the primary level, developmentally appropriate practices emphasize active, hands-on learning, supported by a wide variety of learning resources, flexible grouping of students for specific instructional purposes, and child-centered arrangements of facilities and furnishings.

The State Board has taken the following positions on non-graded primary programs:

1. Schools should be encouraged to implement developmentally appropriate practices generally. Non-graded arrangements should be viewed as one aspect of developmentally appropriate practice.
2. Schools should provide staff development programs to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate practices. These programs should provide time for educators to plan and solve problems together. ["Working Designs for Change," January, 1993]

The Non-Graded Primary Task Force Report November, 1991 says:

The NAEYC curriculum and assessment guidelines should be used as the guidelines for the Oregon Primary Program, kindergarten through grade 3. [Page 10, Section 19f(3)(f)]

An Open Letter to the Oregon State Legislature, Department of Education, and Board of Education

I understand that the Oregon legislature is considering some kind of statutory stipulation for "developmentally appropriate" educational practice. I am a licensed educational psychologist, school psychologist, and professor of human development and learning; and I have been examining the impact of an educational doctrine called developmentalism on educational reform. I would like to offer the following for your consideration.

Developmentally appropriate instruction is an adaptation of developmentalism to early childhood education. It is quite similar to an earlier form of developmentalism called "child-centered instruction." Child-centered instruction was the centerpiece of the now discredited progressive education movement. As outlined below, I have found developmentalism to be a significant hindrance to school reform. In a manner of speaking, it is a Trojan Horse. It seems intuitively reasonable, but it serves to reaffirm the very mediocrity that reform-minded legislators have sought to eliminate. I recognize that language stipulating "developmentally appropriate" instruction has been included in the statutes enacted by other states and in various policy recommendations, but I believe that reformers will eventually discover its counterproductive implications. In any case, it would indeed be ironic if after having disbanded its publicly supported teacher education programs, Oregon would require its schools to employ one of their most counterproductive doctrines.

Parents, government leaders, and the American public believe that children attend school to acquire a formal education. Academic learning outcomes are considered to be the foremost priority. The education establishment agrees but with what appears to be an innocuous and unarguable caveat. They say students should be taught through educational experiences fitted to their needs—needs dictated by the individual student's personal, social, and intellectual development. But therein lies the catch. Restricting teaching practice to that which is "developmentally appropriate" effectively limits learning outcomes to those permitted by educational orthodoxy—the very orthodoxy that has hampered most attempts at school reform.

Developmentalism requires teaching to be fitted to the student's developmental characteristics. Proponents of developmentalism believe that nothing good can result from teaching that is not in harmony with the student's developmental state. They call teaching that accords an unrivaled priority to academic learning "subject-matter centered." It is a disparaging term. Good teaching, they believe, is "student-centered."

Although their apprehensions are overblown and in many cases virtually groundless, developmentalists insist that no student should be expected to do anything contrary to that which he or she is enabled and inclined to by their present state of development. In reality, however, a student's state of development is not directly observable. Rather it is known only from observation of the student's actions, that is, known by that to which the student seems naturally and willingly inclined. Therefore, a call for developmentally appropriate instruction amounts to a standing suggestion that the student's current level of capability and inclination to learn should be understood as the approximate limit of that which it is educationally appropriate to expect of the student. If a student seems unable or disinclined to learn, the developmentally appropriate course of action is to avoid expecting more. With such a stipulation in effect, the expectations for learning mandated by Oregon law can be interpreted to mean "these objectives are expected, provided that developmental considerations permit."

Developmentalism...seems intuitively reasonable, but it serves to reaffirm the very mediocrity that reform-minded legislators have sought to eliminate.

In contrast, teachers and parents in Japan and throughout the Far East believe that learning depends on student effort, not growth and development. Students there are expected to make their best effort. If a

Teachers and parents in Japan and throughout the Far East believe that learning depends on student effort, not growth and development.

student has not achieved that which is expected, they are encouraged to keep trying. The quality of a student's effort is considered more important than their level of success. The accomplishments of students throughout the Far East and the cost-effectiveness of their schools attest to the validity of their approach and the shortcomings of American developmentalism. Contrary to developmentalist expectations, students in the Far East are also better adjusted and more enthusiastic about school than American students (see *The Learning Gap* by

Harold Stevenson and James Stigler). A recent set of recommendations published by the U.S. Department of Education also suggests that American students perform poorly primarily because of insufficient effort (See "Hard Work and High Expectations" by Tomlinson).

Contrary to developmentalist expectations, students in the Far East are also better adjusted and more enthusiastic about school than American students.

Developmentalism has understandable appeal to many elements of the educational establishment because it virtually precludes accountability for either teaching practices or learning outcomes. Developmentalism requires both teaching practices and learning outcomes to be creatively fitted to the developmental needs of individual students. Thus neither standard practices nor standard outcomes can be expected. If standards cannot be set, evaluations cannot be made. And not incidentally, if each student requires thoroughly individualized teaching, schooling must inevitably require very low pupil/teacher ratios. Here again, there is a sharp contrast between American practices and those employed in the Far East.

Instead of mandating "developmentally appropriate" instruction and thereby effectively restricting academic learning outcomes, Oregon should mandate only learning outcomes and permit educators to employ "developmentally appropriate" or other teaching methods to the extent that they are consistent with reasonable standards for learning and an affordable per pupil cost. Legally mandating "developmentally appropriate" instruction or any other theory-driven restriction will only impair the effort to improve schools. The question of which methods work best can be answered only by looking at results.

For your information, I have summarized my recent paper regarding developmentalism and its relationship to educational reform. The paper titled "Educational Reform, Student Effort, and Developmentalism: Recommendations for Teachers" is adapted from a scholarly paper that was presented at Ohio State University (September 18-20, 1992). The original paper will be published this year by Brooks-Cole as a chapter in a collection of selected papers from that meeting.

- We have been reforming the schools for 10-15 years with little effect and at great expense. The reason for our ineffectiveness is that American schools are heavily influenced by a doctrine that permits students to waste their educational opportunities. Attendance is compulsory, but study is optional and learning prob-

lematic. The doctrine, termed developmentalism, is a reincarnation of progressive education.

- Developmentalism emphasizes the sufficiency of a "natural" desire to learn, the danger of "artificial" inducements for learning, and the desirability of teaching that is compatible with the learner's state of development. It assumes that if teachers can provide the right experience to the right student at the right time, attention to studies and learning will more or less spontaneously follow. It is true that learning can and sometimes does spontaneously arise, and it is reasonable to conclude that such natural learning is the product of a fortunate confluence of environmental stimulation and student inclination. Unfortunately nature is inefficient in its use of time and opportunity, and it is terribly uncertain as to its outcomes. Present day social and economic requirements necessitate a competitive degree of efficiency in schooling and outcomes that are sufficiently predictable to insure a workable degree of cultural coherence.

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- To one degree or another, most American teachers aspire to teaching that fits the ideal implied by developmentalist doctrine. Teachers who are strongly committed to it teach by trial and error. Their aim is to fashion experiences to which students might be responsive. They expect students to attend to classroom activities but to engage in study and learning only if they experience sufficient interest or desire. Teachers less influenced by developmentalism are more insistent on student effort, but they too continually search for practices that might better approximate the ideal. Creativity, innovation, and change in response to varied and changing student "needs" have become identified as the hallmarks of "good" teaching.

- Ideally, such teaching is thought to produce learning by precisely fitting the learner's needs. It is stimulating but not obtrusive, it is challenging but not demanding of sacrifice or overexertion. It is an ideal that is widely sought but rarely attained. Nonetheless it stands as the benchmark to which teachers compare

the alternatives. Teachers captivated by the developmentalist ideal resist mandates for educational accountability not because they propose high standards but because they believe accountability wrongly forces them to expect student effort regardless of felt interest or desire.

Developmentalism: Students...engage in study and learning only if they experience sufficient interest or desire....Teachers...resist mandates for educational accountability.... Meaningful accomplishments [are] expected without sacrifice, effort, or adversity.

- One important impact of "developmentally appropriate instruction" is that teachers work very hard to teach while very many students make little more than a minimal effort to learn. If students fail, it is understood that the teacher has failed to meet their needs. If they waste their opportunities and their lives, it is their parents, their teachers and their families that have failed. Students are given an object lesson from which certain attitudes and understanding inevitable flow: Meaningful accomplishments can be expected without sacrifice, effort, or adversity. Failure to achieve is "no big thing." Wasting time, resources, and opportunity is "ok." Developmentally informed teaching creates dependence on teacher stimulation, supports immaturity, and undermines a work ethic.

- All educational reformers who believe that effective teaching must insure the application of student time and effort to study are hindered by the prevalence of developmentalist doctrine. Their recommendations are unappealing to teachers who aspire to the developmental ideal. Standardized and field-tested methods, especially those that require inducements other than interest and a love for learning, are resolutely rejected. In effect, teachers fail to employ "what works" because they are preoccupied with finding something that better fits the developmentalist ideal.

- Although developmentally informed methods theoretically afford learning under optimal conditions, they do not succeed with typical American youth consistently enough to be useful in public schools. Thus the challenge to reformers is to convince teachers, parents and students that no matter how they plan to motivate, student effort beyond that typically prompted by interest and love of learning, is required for success in school. Teachers, especially, have to be convinced that good teaching must do more than merely afford opportunities for learning; it must somehow induce work by the student. Of course, mandates for developmentally

appropriate instruction ensure the opposite. Experimenting with a variety of approaches to motivation is fine so long as the methods employed produce continuing work toward the attainment of academically valued results and do so within an educationally appropriate time frame. Although results may not always be produced within the desired time frame, a level of student effort commensurate with timely achievement should be expected in all cases.

- Cost effective educational reform will require students to adopt a work ethic. Students should be encouraged to adopt a work ethic. Students should be encouraged to: "Be all that you can be." Students should be encouraged to recognize that with learning as with other facets of life, reality dictates: "no pain, no gain." Students should know that students in other countries succeed not because they are more intelligent but because they work hard at their studies.

Students should know that students in other countries succeed not because they are more intelligent but because they work hard at their studies.

- Public leadership at all levels can greatly support teachers by promoting study as a matter of civic responsibility. A work ethic is certainly consistent with American belief in free enterprise. For that matter, it is equally consistent with the socialist principle "From each according to his ability, ..." Young Americans must be convinced that their country needs them.

I believe [students] will respond to the call for responsible attention to school work if we support the call with a public consensus.

Thirty years ago they responded to the call, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Recently they responded to Desert Storm. I believe they will respond to the call for responsible attention to school work if we support the call with a public consensus.

- Young people in America have been hurt by having too much done for them and not enough expected of them. Without question their ability to succeed in school is sometimes impaired by social and economic conditions, but the country cannot wait until all of these conditions are corrected before their performance improves. In spite of sometimes adverse life circumstances, they have many strengths and advantages. Whatever their deficits, we

cannot expect them to heed the message that they are the parties who must work much harder in school, if we continue to talk like everyone else is to blame for their lack of achievement.

I hope you find these ideas helpful in your deliberations.

Sincerely,
J.E. Stone, Ed.D.
Professor
East Tennessee State University
College of Education

For more information about "developmentally appropriate" practice in Oregon, contact the Oregon Department of Education, Office of Student Services, (503) 378-5585, or the 21st Century Schools office, (503) 373-7118.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

What it is starting to look like.



Mr. Jones, this is all I am interested in learning this year.

A Letter to Oregon's Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dear Superintendent Paulus:

We have looked carefully at the NAEYC document that the Nongraded Primary Task recommends as a guide to the implementation of the nongraded primary. One could quibble about the interpretation of some of its recommendations, but no reasonable person could doubt that certain teaching practices are being discouraged. These include: teacher directed reading groups, paper-and-pencil exercises or worksheets, the correction of errors, reinforcement of correct answers, regular testing, and the use of a textbook, workbook, practice sheets or boardwork to teach mathematics.

As I understand the philosophy of "developmentally appropriate practice" (DAP), it is felt that structured activities of this sort will be harmful because children are not ready for them. The empirical literature shows unequivocally that this is not the case and we would be happy to demonstrate it for you. Children in primary grades can engage in these activities and can enjoy them. And, especially for disadvantaged and children with disabilities, it is vital that they do so.

I enclose a copy of a careful review of the empirical literature by Gutierrez and Slavin (1992, see pages 21-28 for a summary) that documents this fact. They conclude that "nongraded organization can have a positive impact on student achievement if cross-age grouping is used to allow teachers to provide direct instruction to students but not if it used as a framework for individualized instruction (Gutierrez & Slavin, see p. 21, this issue).

I particularly want to emphasize the harm that will be done if active, teacher-led instructional practices are discouraged in teaching disadvantaged children and children with disabilities. Many children come to school without having much exposure to numbers, letters, and reading activities. We need to ensure that they get more, not less, instruction, for without instruction, they will fall further and further behind children who have come to school with an interest in numbers, letters, and the rudimentary activities that go with them.

This view does mesh with the DAP philosophy of the NAEYC in one important respect. Both approaches would consider it inappropriate to present instructional materials that the child does not have the skills to master. This would be a formula for frustration on the part of the child (and the teacher); it would motivate the child to avoid such activities and often motivate problem behavior. Indeed, I suspect that the DAP philosophy grows out of the difficulties that many teachers have had in getting poorly prepared children to work with instructional materials for which they are simply not ready.

But the answer to this problem is better and more skill-appropriate materials, not the abandonment of teacher-led instruction entirely. If we can find a way to work together, our group can provide much useful information on instructional approaches that "work" with children who have had little prior exposure to the numbers and letters.

At the risk of dwelling too long on this topic, let me add that the evidence is quite clear that disadvantaged children and children with disabilities can be harmed if they do not receive active teaching (Watkins, 1988).

I enclose a review of effective teaching practices that was produced by the Northwest Regional Education Laboratories that provides considerable further documentation of what I have been saying.

One alternative is to shift the DAP philosophy of the NAEYC to one that encourages site-based councils to select teaching strategies based on evidence that they produce good outcomes for children. Both emphases are there in the legislation and task force recommendations and thus would not undermine reform.

Another possibility is to clarify that by developmentally appropriate teaching practices we mean all practices that meet the children at their skill level and increase their skills, not just those practices endorsed by the NAEYC.

I voted for you when you ran for Superintendent of Public Instruction. I felt then, and I feel now, that someone of competence and political skill in that office can help education become better supported and more effective.

I hope that we can find a way to cooperate in ensuring that every Oregon child comes out of the first three years of their elementary education with the reading, math and other skills they need to be successful in later grades.

Sincerely,
Anthony Biglan, Ph.D.

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Child-Directed Teaching Methods: A Discriminatory Practice of Western Education

Bonnie Grossen
University of Oregon

Abstract: The NAEYC model of child-directed practices, currently called "developmentally appropriate practices" (DAP) has been extensively implemented and evaluated in England (as "progressive education") and in America (as "open education"). Extensive case studies in England indicated that progressive education was in reality radically conservative; children became more firmly entrenched in the social class they inherited from their parents. Achievement data showed that "an extended tail of distribution" (more low-end scores) has pulled the mean English score down on international assessments. Analyses of open education in America corroborate the English findings. Economically disadvantaged children have repeatedly performed more poorly on measures of self-esteem, cognitive development, and basic skills in child-directed environments than in traditional classrooms. In spite of these documented effects, state departments of education around the country are pressing schools to change to DAP.

Child-directed practices are reemerging across North America under the new label "developmentally appropriate practices" and "constructivism." The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), in particular, has defined these practices and developed guidelines for their implementation (1987). The NAEYC guidelines are being widely adopted (e.g., Canada, Kentucky and Oregon) as an important school reform for bringing American students to meet world class standards.

A problematic assumption of child-directed practices is that a child cannot learn from instruction that is initiated and directed by a teacher. Instead, these practices assume that children's learning needs are best fulfilled by allowing each child to pursue his or her unique interests through play. What the child wants is what the child needs. The reasoning for this is as follows: Each child's learning needs are unique and these unique learning needs are revealed through the child's interests, which in turn direct each child's selection of play activities. Therefore, no child should be inhibited from pursuing his or her interests, that is, from playing. "Much of young children's learning takes place when they direct their own play activities.... Such learning should not be inhibited by adult-established concepts of completion, achievement, and failure" (p. 3, NAEYC, 1987).

The idea that children often learn from the activities they initiate is perfectly reasonable. The idea that children should also have ample opportunities to take initiative is also acceptable. However, the idea that a

teacher cannot possibly initiate and direct learning effectively requires closer examination. It may be that child-initiated and teacher-initiated learning both have an important place in education.

The leaders of the child-directed learning movement usually do not see it this way. They argue against teacher-directed instruction in both the "what" and the "how" of learning. For example, DuCharme, Earl, and Poplin (1989) and Poplin (1988) recommend the abandonment of strategy instruction (the "how" of learning) in both special and general education on the grounds that it represents explicit, non-constructivist, rote learning. This is not an argument that teachers should teach students "how to fish" rather than "feeding them fish." These theorists argue that the teacher should place students in an environment where they will figure out how to fish on their own.

Child-directed education is not new. Although the idea that it is impossible for real learning to occur under the control and direction of a teacher is often attributed to Piaget, it was firmly entrenched in academic circles before Piaget. Walkerdine (1984) notes that Piaget's work was not the impetus, but rather, arrived at an opportune moment to provide a legitimizing rationale. The ideas behind child-directed education seem to have originated much earlier, with Plato: "[Because] knowledge which is acquired under compulsion obtains no hold in the mind... then do not use compulsion but let early education be a sort of amusement" (para. 536e, Plato, 1955). Although Piaget was "not an educationalist" (Plowden, 1967) and the data he collected did not evaluate the effects

of the child-directed instruction on learning, Piaget personally agreed with the philosophy: "Each time one prematurely teaches a child something he could have discovered for himself, that child is kept from inventing it and consequently from understanding it completely" (p. 715, Piaget, 1970). So Piaget became a modern authority for a philosophy as old as western civilization.

The idea that a teacher cannot possibly initiate and direct learning effectively requires closer examination.

While these ideas have been accepted as *a priori* truth in western thought, they are conspicuously absent from eastern thought. The child-directed philosophy rests on the belief that development and learning are a result of innate aspects of the inner being of the child. The US Department of Education publication, "Hard Work and High Expectations" (1992), concludes that this western belief in the innateness of learning and learning potential is the most defining difference between western cultures and eastern cultures and this belief is preventing America from achieving greater academic success. In contrast, eastern cultures are dominated by a belief in effort and hard work as the primary factor in learning (USDE, 1992; see also Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). These contrasting beliefs explain why American students spend 70% less time studying than Asian students who consistently achieve the highest scores on international assessments (USDE, 1992).

What follows is a review of studies that have evaluated the effects of the NAEYC model of child-directed education (called "developmentally appropriate practice") on learning. This model has been extensively evaluated under the labels "progressive" education in England and "open education" in America. The boxed insets provide descriptions of each model from original sources so that the reader can independently evaluate the similarity in the emphases and philosophy of the three models: progressive education, open education, and developmentally appropriate practices (DAP).

The Social and Educational Impact of Child-directed Methods

The significant themes of the DAP model (NAEYC, 1987, 1992) are the same themes that were significant in the progressive education movement in England, and in the open education model that was popular in America in the 1970's. These significant themes are:

1. The teacher *facilitates* learning, rather than directing or controlling it. The teacher should interact with children, but the interactions should follow the intent of each child or the children as

a whole, rather than the teacher pursuing his or her intent. *Child choice* of activity is emphasized, rather than the teacher choosing the learning activity.

2. Children learn by *discovery*.
3. Children discover through *play*, which is the most important activity for learning.
4. The content of learning is *not divided into subjects*, such as reading or mathematics, but "integrated" in projects and activities.
5. Children learn in groups of *mixed ability* resulting in nongraded or mixed-age primary schools.
6. *Standardized tests are inappropriate* as a form of evaluation.

In England

Background. During this century, child-directed education has been called "progressive" education in England. The name "progressive" reflected the expectation that it would have a leveling effect on social class differences and result in significant social change. It was the official educational policy in England for more than two decades and was officially endorsed for a longer period (see the 1931 HMSO report, cited in Sharp, Green, & Lewis, 1975). The Plowden report (1967) marked the official adoption of the method in England until the time it was rejected in 1992. A description of progressive education is found in the box on the next page.

Effects of progressive education. A number of sociologists and ethnologists observed and evaluated qualitatively the effect of progressive education on the socialization of lower (working) class children. Although progressive education subscribed wholeheartedly to the democratic ideals of individual freedom and autonomy, these qualitative evaluations of the socialization of children revealed that, ironically, progressive approaches had anti-progressive outcomes. A brief summary of these evaluations follows.

Sharp, Green, and Lewis (1975) evaluated the students, teachers, and parents in a school that was deemed a model of progressive education in England. They found that the reality of progressive education was very different from the promise.

"Whereas all three teachers would claim to be supporters of the egalitarian principle that all pupils are of equal worth, having an equal right to receive an education appropriate to their needs, in practice there was a marked degree of differentiation among the pupils in terms of the amounts and kinds of interaction they had with their teachers.... Those pupils whom their teachers regarded as more successful tended to be given far greater attention than the others. The teachers interacted with them more frequently,

Progressive Education in England

(Taken from Sharp, Green, and Lewis, 1975, and from Holt, 1969)

"The general features of the philosophy of the developmental tradition have...a nucleus of ideas upon which all would agree which relate to the view that the child should be allowed to develop his own inner potential rather than have ideas and techniques from the adult world imposed upon him, thus denying the child's own integrity and inner being....The child centred approach aims, by treating the child as a unique subject with its own needs and interest, to extend to the child as large a measure of autonomy as is consistent with a liberal democratic view of society....

"The progressive's claim to being 'child-centred' is an expression of the concern for the 'whole' child. It is no longer a case of children being rigorously drilled, of inculcating 'facts' regarded as sacrosanct, but of schooling being adapted to the requirements of the child. The child is no longer regarded as an 'empty vessel' to be filled by the teacher, but to a large extent as an arbiter of his own education. He is allowed to follow his own interests; in exercising his right to 'choose' he acquires self-control and responsibility.

"In order to develop the child's potential to the full it is, therefore, considered essential that his schooling be made relevant, and that this can only be achieved by removing 'artificial' disciplinary barriers (e.g., 'knowledge does not fall into separate compartments' The Plowden Report, 1967), thereby allowing the child to pursue whichever aspect of the situation appeals to him. The curriculum is thus based on 'problem solving' rather than subject areas. The child is presented with a challenging and stimulating environment and encouraged to find out for himself without waiting to be told the answer. In short, learning by doing.

"For, 'Proficiency in learning comes not from reading and listening but from action, from doing and experiencing' (Dewey, 1938); as 'When they learn in their own way and for their own reasons, children learn so much more rapidly and effectively than we could possibly teach them' (Holt, 1969)....

"The aim then, is to allow the child free expression in order to foster what is individual in each human being. For, 'the purpose of teaching is to bring ever more out of man rather than put more into him' (Froebel, 1909)....

"Central to progressive child centred philosophy are the concepts of 'readiness,' 'choice,' 'needs,' 'play' and 'discovery.' Briefly, it is believed that given an invigorating setting, when the child is 'ready,' he will 'choose' what it is that he 'needs.' This selection is believed to be facilitated through 'play' which sets in train the 'discovery,' or learning processes....

"The recommendation that the child be left free to choose is seen to be based, on the one hand, on a belief that he is able to make an informed choice to satisfy his particular 'needs,' which leads to the suggestion that, 'we could well afford to throw out most of what we teach in school because the children throw it out anyway (hence) we can afford to throw away our curricula and our timetables' (Holt, 1969); and on the other an acknowledgment that the teacher is often ignorant of what the child 'requires.' Thus it would seem that the child is accorded greater perception than the teacher....

"Vertical grouping is recommended in preference to the horizontal class where children are categorized merely on the basis of age....Within a mixed age range, theoretically, it should be possible for each child to operate at his own 'level,' to the benefit of advanced and slow alike who can 'be themselves and develop in the way and at the pace appropriate to them' (Plowden, 1967)" (pp. 40-44, Sharp, Green, & Lewis, 1975).

"In short, the school should be a great smorgasbord of intellectual, artistic, creative and athletic activities, from which each child could take whatever he wanted and as much as he wanted, or as little" (Holt, 1969).

played closer attention to their activities, subtly structuring and directing their efforts in ways which were noticeably different from the relationship with other pupils less favourably categorized." (p.115, Sharp, Green, & Lewis, 1975).

The students who received less attention were the lower performing children who were from lower working class families, while the children the teacher spent more time with were higher performing children who were also from a higher social class.

For example, Michael's teacher described him as a "peculiar" boy who wants to "go his own sweet way." The teacher said she would not "force" or "make" Michael do activities, even where his achievement was poor compared with other children, because to do so would violate the integrity of the child. Yet she did say: "But he's ever so willing to join in if you organize a little group—and he'll join in and he'll be, you know, quite an important member of that group—but he doesn't need to..." (pp. 137-8, Sharp, Green, & Lewis, 1975). Evidently, unless

the child was strongly assertive about joining a learning group, he did not *need* the instruction.

Sharp, Green, and Lewis (1975) concluded that progressive education was in reality radical conservatism: "We are suggesting that modern child-centred education is an aspect of romantic radical conservatism..." (p. 227). Child-directed methods served to maintain the social class structure rather than fostering fluidity across social class boundaries. Sharp, Green, and Lewis called progressive educators "unwilling victims of a structure that undermines the moral concerns they profess..." (p. 227).

Although progressive education subscribed wholeheartedly to the democratic ideals of individual freedom and autonomy, these qualitative evaluations of the socialization of children revealed that, ironically, progressive approaches had anti-progressive outcomes.

Willis (1977) came to similar conclusions after qualitatively evaluating the growth of 12 non-academic, "working class lads." Willis concluded that the working class status of the boys was perpetuated by their own behavior and that working class behavior was given freer reign in progressive environments. The boys' school behavior and values (e.g., the attempt to gain informal control through resistance, the machismo and toughness, the language) all corresponded directly with the culture of shopfloor workers and served to ensure that the boys would inherit the working class status of their fathers.

"We are suggesting that modern child-centred education is an aspect of romantic radical conservatism."

Sharp, Green, & Lewis

According to Willis (1977), breaking this self-perpetuating cycle would require intervention. It is not surprising that progressivism, by intent a weak intervention, is not successful in breaking this cycle, but rather facilitates its perpetuation: "...it can be argued that often 'progressivism' has had the contradictory and unintended effect of helping to strengthen processes within the counter-school culture which are responsible for the particular subjective preparation of labour power and acceptance of a working class future in a way which is the very opposite of progressive intentions in education" (p. 178, Willis, 1977).

Similar conclusions were drawn by Bernstein (1974), Simon (1981), Aggleton (1987), Atkinson (1985), and Walkerdine (1984) from their case study data. Atkinson (1985) argued that the shift from traditional to progressive methods represented a shift from visible to invisible control of economic power. "Arguably, the 'progressivism' of infant and primary schooling is more a matter of 'myth' than 'reality'" (p. 160, 1985).

The findings of these numerous case studies substantiate the distrust that Delpit (pp. 37-54, this issue) has documented to be the intuitive response of Black Americans to child-directed practices. For example, one Black informant had this comment about child-directed practices, usually promoted by White academicians: "...The biggest difference between Black folks and White folks is that Black folks *know* when they're lying!" (p. 46, this issue).

Because standardized tests were not a part of the philosophy of progressive education in England, the learning outcomes of the model were not evaluated until the recent advent of international competitiveness in education. On one of these international comparisons in science, the English Department of Education and Science (DES, 1992) reported that 61% of the schools in the English sample scored below the lowest scoring Japanese school (para. 49). Consequently, in 1992 English policy made a dramatic turn-about to endorse teacher-directed instruction. The official report (DES, 1992) squarely placed the blame for the low achievement levels of English students on the progressive model the government had previously endorsed.

Here are excerpts from the discussion paper by the English Department of Education and Science (DES, 1992):

"The Plowden Report of 1967 set the seal of approval on the Hadow vision, and elaborated it into what it called a 'recognisable philosophy of primary education': 'A school...lays special stress on individual discovery, on first-hand experience and on opportunities for creative work. It insists that knowledge does not fall into neatly separate compartments and that work and play are not opposite but complementary.' In this paragraph are the seeds of the ideas and practices to which several generations of teachers have aspired. However, they did not necessarily deliver...." (para. 18 & 19).

"Part of the reason for our relatively low performance overall in...international assessments is an extended tail of distribution which pulls the average down" (para. 49).

"Conclusion:[The data] suggest that these [downward] trends may affect some ability

groups and pupils from particular backgrounds more than others. Whatever else they do primary schools must get their policies and practices right for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy" (para. 50)

"The rhetoric of primary education has for a long time been hostile to the idea that young children should be exposed to subjects. Subject divisions, it is argued, are inconsistent with the child's view of the world. Children must be allowed to construct their own meanings and subject teaching involves the imposition of a received version of knowledge. And, moreover, it is the wholeness of the curriculum which is important rather than the distinct identity of the individual subjects.

"Each of these familiar assertions needs to be contested. First, to resist subjects on the grounds that they are inconsistent with children's views of the world is to confine them within their

existing modes of thought and deny them access to some of the most powerful tools for making sense of the world which human beings have ever devised. Second, while it is self-evident that every individual, to an extent, constructs his/her own meanings, education is an encounter between these personal understandings and the public knowledge embodied in our cultural traditions. The teacher's key responsibility is to mediate such encounters so that the child's understanding is enriched. And, finally, the integrity of the curriculum as a whole is hardly likely to be achieved by sacrificing the integrity of its constituent parts" (para 63 and 64).

England tried for over twenty years to make progressive education work in the most extensive and longest implementation of child-directed methods ever recorded. As the DES (1992) report indicates, even in most recent years, the performance of English students continued to decline as determined by both qualitative and quantitative analyses. English educational policy-makers finally

The Open Education Model

"The EDC Open Education approach seeks to stimulate learning by providing children with a great variety of materials and experience within a supportive emotional environment. The sponsor believes children learn at individual rates and in individual ways, and teachers should adapt approaches to encourage individual progress and responsibility in learning.

"The EDC Model is predicated on the notion that learning, particularly cognitive learning, occurs best when children are offered a wide range of materials and problems to investigate within an open, supportive environment. According to this sponsor, a child's ability to learn depends in part on the opportunities and experiences provided by the educational setting. The sponsor believes that the EDC approach, derived from practices of British infant and primary schools and Piagetian research, is appropriate for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic or educational status. The EDC approach is operationalized by sponsor advisory teams who work with parents, teachers, and school administrators in each site to help realize the EDC open-education philosophy. The advisory team assists in setting up classrooms and selecting a variety of books and materials from which local educators can choose.

"The sponsor believes that there is no uniform way to teach reading, writing, or arithmetic skills, and no uniform timetable for all children to follow. Children are not compared with other children and do not receive standardized tests. Consequently, EDC classrooms and teachers vary greatly. Teachers often divide classrooms into interest areas where children may work part or all of the day. Traditional subjects important in the open classroom may be combined with these interest groups. The teacher may work with the entire class, small groups, or individuals. Parents sometimes serve as classroom aides and assist in curriculum planning. In sum, the EDC Model is more a philosophy than a technique.

"Since the sponsor does not prescribe a detailed instructional program and feels that the open classroom philosophy is appropriate for all voluntary teachers, this model demands a highly creative and resourceful teacher and is perhaps the most teacher-dependent of the Follow Through models. Teachers must diagnose each child's strength, potential, and interests and then strive to provide instructional units reflecting that information. They are trained to provide a "hidden structure," to act as guides and resources, to make suggestions and to give encouragement, as the primary methods of extending their pupils' learning activities. Within this environment the pupils are encouraged to work at their own pace, learn from one another, and make choices about their own work....Although there is some stress on specific academic skills, the foci of this model are learning how to learn, developing an appreciation for learning, and encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning" (p. 113-114, Abt Associates, 1977).

concluded that progressive, child-directed methods would never achieve their democratic objective and abandoned the model.

"Education is an encounter between these personal understandings and the public knowledge embodied in our cultural traditions. The teacher's key responsibility is to mediate such encounters so that the child's understanding is enriched."

DES, England

In the United States

Background. One of several child-directed models evaluated in Project Follow Through (the largest educational study ever funded by the US Department of Education) was the same British model of progressive education. Project Follow Through was a broad-range comparison of educational alternatives for teaching the economically disadvantaged to find out "what works." Different models of instruction were tested in 139 communities and evaluated for stability of results over successive program years. Model programs were implemented in grades kindergarten through third grade.

The open education model resulted in lower scores than any other model evaluated in Project Follow Through.

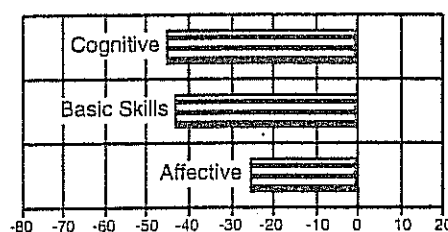
In Follow Through the progressive education model was called "Open Education" and was sponsored by the Education Development Center (EDC). An independent agency, Abt Associates, gathered and evaluated the data from Project Follow Through. Their report included their own description of each model. Their description of open education is provided in the box on the previous page.

Abt Associates evaluated the data from the open education model in all eight of its sites: Philadelphia, PA; Burlington, VT; Lackawanna County, PA; Morgan Community School in Washington, DC; Patterson, NJ; Chicago, IL; Laurel, DE; Johnston County, NC.

Effects of open education. The open education model resulted in lower scores than any other model evaluated in Project Follow Through (see summary of comparison data in Engelmann, Becker, Carmine, & Gersten, 1988). Figure 1 illustrates the overall effects across open education implementations compared to the control groups receiving traditional instruction. Figure 1 uses a crude metric of combining positive and negative effects and dividing by the total number of comparisons. For example, 10 significant positive effects combined with 20 significant negative

effects divided by 100 total comparisons would yield an overall effect of -10%. (Seventy outcomes were nonsignificant.) A score of 0 represents a perfect match with the traditional instruction in the control groups. As Figure 1 indicates, open education had more negative outcomes (i.e., significantly lower scores than those achieved in traditional education) than positive ones on measures of basic skills, cognitive development, and affect (self-esteem and so on). Across multiple implementations and settings, open education was inferior to traditional education.

Figure 1. Percent of significant outcomes on three categories of measures.

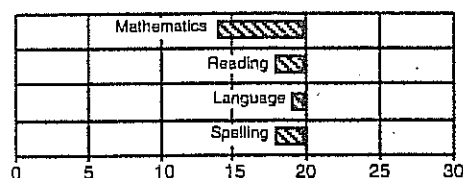


The various Abt reports also provided median grade-equivalent scores by site and by sponsor for four Metropolitan Achievement Test measures: Total Reading, Total Math, Spelling, and Language. Figure 2 displays these results. The means for students who entered the program in Kindergarten and were evaluated in the third grade were converted to percentiles. Because the

Disadvantaged children learning from the EDC open education model became further disadvantaged by the use of that model.

average achievement expectation for disadvantaged children without special help was thought to be the 20th percentile, that percentile is used as the baseline in Figure 2. Figure 2 suggests that disadvantaged children learning from the EDC open education model became further disadvantaged by the use of that model.

Figure 2. Percentile scores (expected score from traditional instruction = 20).



The Abt report (1977) concludes that performance of disadvantaged children learning from the child-directed EDC model was below the performance of disadvantaged children learning from traditional instruction: "In general, [EDC instructed] children in most...sites perform below expectations on a number of the basic skills and

also evaluated by Abt Associates. The lowest achievement outcomes were consistently obtained by the child-directed models (Becker, Engelmann, Carnine, & Gersten, 1988). The outcomes of the four child-directed models were all consistently below the expectations of performance of comparable disadvantaged children learning in traditional classrooms.

The outcomes of the four child-directed models were all consistently below the expectations of performance of comparable disadvantaged children learning in traditional classrooms.

cognitive conceptual skills tests....A smaller-than-expected proportion of [EDC instructed] children in Lackawanna perform at least one year below grade level (the criterion of educational disadvantage) on three sections of the MAT: Reading, Math, and Spelling. In other sites in this model, a larger than expected proportion of [EDC instructed] children perform at least one year below grade level." (p. 121, Abt Associates, 1977)

Other child-directed models that varied somewhat from the British progressive education model were

The Currently Popular Model for Elementary School Reform: DAP

In spite of the earlier research findings, educators continue to deny the possibility that teacher direction can greatly facilitate initial learning. The same open education model from Project Follow Through is the one that has been repackaged as "developmentally appropriate practice" (DAP). The following boxed inset presents descriptive features of DAP, taken directly from the NAEYC position paper and guidelines for implementing DAP (NAEYC, 1992, 1987). Although DAP is widely promoted as an innovative new teaching practice, there is little in DAP that is innovative, beyond the clever change in the name. The same themes of child-directed learning are found in DAP that were present in progressive education and in open education.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice According to the NAEYC

"Children need years of play with real objects and events before they are able to understand the meaning of symbols such as letters and numbers. Learning takes place as young children touch, manipulate, and experiment with things and interact with people....Workbooks, worksheets, coloring books, and adult-made models of art products for children to copy are *not* appropriate for young children, especially those younger than 6" (p. 4, NAEYC, 1987).

"As children work with materials or activities, teachers listen, observe, and interpret children's behavior. Teachers can then facilitate children's involvement and learning by asking questions, making suggestions, or adding more complex materials or ideas to a situation" (p. 5, NAEYC, 1987).

"In developmentally appropriate practices, adults:

1. provide a rich variety of activities and materials from which to choose. Such variety increases the likelihood of a child's prolonged or satisfied attention and increases independence and opportunity for making decisions.
2. offer children the choice to participate in a small group or in a solitary activity.
3. assist and guide children who are not yet able to use easily and enjoy child-choice activity periods.
4. provide opportunities for child-initiated, child-directed practice of skills as a self-chosen activity. Children need opportunities to repeat acquired skills to fully assimilate their learning. Repetition that is initiated and directed by the child, not adult-directed drill and practice, is most valuable for assimilation" (p. 7, NAEYC, 1987).

"Formal, inappropriate instructional techniques are a source of stress for young children" (p. 10, NAEYC, 1987).

"First, second, and third grade teachers all report that children cannot comprehend place value; teachers spend hours trying to teach this abstract concept, and children either become frustrated or resort to memorizing meaningless tricks. This is an example, of an unrealistic objective that could be attained much more easily later on" (p. 20, NAEYC, 1992).

- "Children construct knowledge....Knowledge is constructed as a result of dynamic interactions between the individual and the physical and social environments [not as a result of planned teaching]. The child's

active experimentation is analogous to spontaneous research; in a sense, the child discovers knowledge" (p. 15, NAEYC, 1992).

- "Children learn through play. The various kinds of play by young children are effective vehicles for promoting learning. Children's spontaneous play provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and manipulation that are essential for constructing knowledge" (p. 16, NAEYC, 1992).

"Children's learning is not compartmentalized or divided into artificial subject-matter distinctions....The curriculum provides for long blocks of time to bring naturally related subjects together and does not require minimal time allotments for instruction in discrete subject matter" (p. 20-21, NAEYC, 1992).

"Multiage grouping is one strategy to promote social interaction among individual children and their more capable peers, an effective way of enhancing language competence and generally assisting children's progress to the next level of development and understanding" (p. 21, NAEYC, 1992).

The Basis for DAP

The NAEYC position statement cites the theories of "Piaget (1952), Vygotsky (1978), and Erikson (1963)" as the "theories that inform this document." As the citation dates indicate, these theories are not new. In fact, Vygotsky died in 1934. None of these theorists describe outcomes that have actually been obtained using DAP; rather they describe theories derived from observations of children at different ages (called "developmental research"). Howard Gardner (1985) provides a succinct summary of some findings from developmental research, specifically from Vygotsky and his followers:

At each age children exhibit a different set of interests: thus, during infancy, the dominant activity involves emotional contact; at age two, the child is absorbed in manipulation of objects; at ages three to seven, role play and other kinds of symbolic activity come to the fore; during the ages of seven to eleven, the feature activity is formal study in school; and in adolescence, the youth pursues a combination of intimate personal relations and career-oriented exploration (p. 389).

The above summary typifies the findings of developmental research, which never tests the basic assumption that children learn only through their own initiative. Rather this basic assumption is taken for granted as developmental research is translated into instructional practice. The basic assumption of child-directed learning can only be tested through instructional research, not through developmental research.

Research that does not involve instruction, such as developmental research, does not provide evidence that any particular teaching practice will work. Only after a practice has been implemented and its results evaluated can one say that it has been tested. Only if the results show improvement over another alternative can one say the new method is superior. As described

above, the DAP model promoted by the NAEYC and many state departments of education has proven inferior, rather than superior, in instructional research. Even if DAP is accepted as a "new" method, the most one can say is that DAP is untested.

Stahl and Miller found "strikingly larger effects for systematic phonics used in first grade."

The long list of references provided in the NAEYC literature is predominantly opinion literature. When asked to highlight the citations that include empirical data, the Early Childhood Specialist at the Oregon State Department of Education presented a list of 14 references. Of those studies, only seven reported performance data from instruction of some type. One study supported the effectiveness of teacher-directed instruction, not child-directed (Gersten, Darch, & Gleason, 1988). Two studies supported small class sizes, not DAP (Folger, 1989; Johnston, 1990). Four studies supported whole language instruction (Manning et al., 1990; Reutzel & Cooter, 1990; Roberts, 1991; Stice & Bertrand, 1990). No studies had results indicating the effectiveness of DAP.

Whole language. Whole language instruction is one aspect of DAP. The support for whole language instruction found in the NAEYC reference list is overshadowed by the weight of evidence in support of systematic phonics instruction provided by three comprehensive reviews of the research on reading. Whole language is more often compared with traditional whole word approaches, as it was in the four studies cited by the NAEYC, than with systematic phonics instruction. From reviewing all comparisons of whole language and whole word approaches, Stahl and Miller (1989) found that traditional "whole word" approaches work better than "whole language" approaches with disadvantaged children. Some positive effects for whole

language in comparisons with traditional whole word approaches were evident only in prereading (kindergarten) instruction. When systematic phonics instruction was included in the comparison, Stahl and Miller found "strikingly larger effects for systematic phonics used in first grade" (p. 108, 1989). Marilyn Adams, commissioned by Congress through the National Center for the Study of Reading to comprehensively review all the research on reading, also concluded that the research supports the need for systematic phonics instruction in beginning reading (1988). *Becoming a Nation of Readers* by the National Commission on Education also conducted a comprehensive review with the same conclusion (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985).

Nongraded organization. Another aspect of DAP is mixed-age grouping or "nongradedness." The body of research reporting performance data for nongraded primaries has been extensively reviewed by Gutierrez and Slavin of Johns Hopkins University (1992, see pages 21 to 28 for a summary of their findings). Unlike other reviews of nongraded arrangements (McLoughlin, 1967; Pavan, 1973, 1977), Gutierrez and Slavin looked at the instructional approach used within the nongraded organization. They categorized all the nongraded implementations as one of four models with a fifth category of unidentifiable instructional approaches. They concluded that positive achievement gains were demonstrated in nongraded programs if mixed-age grouping was used to allow teachers to provide *more direct instruction* to students, not less. This more effective model was the oldest nongraded model. It used the opportunity to mix children across ages to create more

Positive achievement gains were demonstrated in nongraded programs if mixed-age grouping was used to allow teachers to provide more direct instruction to students, not less.

homogeneous learning groups, rather than more heterogeneous groups, as DAP recommends. In general, the model most similar to DAP, was least effective.

The Response to Poor Results

Child-directed implementations have not been child-directed enough. Advocates of child-directed learning are aware of the poor learning outcomes that have been reported. A frequent response by many advocates is that the teacher still directed the child-directed instruction too much by expecting specific outcomes. For example, Salomon, Perkins, and Globerson (1991) argue that an undefinable "cloud of variables" makes the significant difference in obtaining

the desired "cognitive residue" in students. They state that instruction that is too focused on a specific outcome, shuts out the effect of this cloud. Therefore, instead of treating the instruction "as just another subject matter to be mastered," it should be treated as "material to mess around with" (p. 8, 1991), so this "cloud" can take effect. The evidence they cite involves child-directed learning practices that did *not* have the desired results. They cite no case where more messing around actually resulted in the desired "cognitive residue." Yet if there is any change in current child-directed learning models from the earlier models, it is a change toward more "messing around" in social learning groups with fewer teacher expectations imposed on students.

Learning outcomes are over-emphasized. Another response to poor learning outcomes is to claim that outcomes are overemphasized. Instead of attempting to raise achievement levels by adopting other than child-directed methods, many reform leaders argue for lowering expectations. In "Overselling Literacy," Frank Smith, an influential leader and ardent advocate of the wholistic reading instruction used in DAP, argues that literacy is oversold in our society (1989). According to Smith, concern about illiteracy only makes illiterates feel bad. He argues for having happy illiterates, rather than universal literacy.

Real learning cannot be measured. Another explanation for the failure to achieve results with child-directed methods is that learning is so complex it cannot be measured. Therefore, outcomes that are measurable are no indication of real learning. However, anything that can be observed can be measured. Sophisticated measures of knowledge and problem solving are time consuming (i.e., expensive) to administer and evaluate, and for that reason they are usually impractical as standardized measures for public school use. However, controlled studies can make use of more complex indices and do provide valuable, in-depth information about the cause-and-effect relationships involved in learning (e.g., Carnine and Kameenui, 1992).

Individuals cannot be measured by any standard. Advocates of child-directed methods also discourage the use of standardized tests because they do not capture the uniqueness of an individual. However, standardized measures have more validity as a tool for evaluating programs, than for evaluating individuals. This can be illustrated with an extreme example. Assume that a test consists of only one problem:

$$\frac{2}{3} + 1\frac{1}{4} = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

If two students take this test, and one gets a right answer and the other gets a wrong answer, then we know very little about what these two students know. There could be

a hundred reasons why the one student missed the problem, most of them having nothing to do with his or her knowledge of mathematics.

Multiple-choice tests certainly give more information than no standardized test at all.

But let's give the same test to two entire schools composed of students comparable in home background, age, and so on. If *all* the students in one school get the answer right while *all* the students in the other school get the answer wrong, then we do know that the fractions instruction in one school is probably better than in the other school.

Where students' natural talents lie is largely irrelevant to the question of whether schools are using instructional programs that effectively develop those talents. The fact that individuals may possess intelligence in one or more of seven different domains (Gardner, 1985) is no excuse for providing inferior instruction in any of those domains.

Standardized tests can only evaluate lower level knowledge. A further criticism of standardized measures is that they only test low level knowledge, and not higher level problem solving. This is not entirely true.

Judging by the past performance of students learning from DAP, we should expect American students' scores on standardized tests to go down, not up, as we implement DAP.

For example, Shaw (1983) developed a highly reliable multiple-choice measure (split-half reliability = .924) of scientific process skills. These skills included "observing, classifying, measuring, using numbers, using space and time relationships, communicating, predicting, inferring, manipulating variables, making operational definitions, forming hypotheses, interpreting data, and experimenting" (p. 3, Shaw, 1983).

Conclusion

Multiple choice tests should be used with extreme caution to evaluate individuals; however, as a tool to compare instructional programs, they are reasonably reliable and inexpensive to score. In spite of their shortcomings, multiple-choice tests certainly give more information than no standardized test at all.

Setting Educational Policy

The poor performance of American students on international standardized measures is a major reason cited for

the current thrust to reform schools. Judging by the past performance of students learning from DAP, we should expect American students' scores on standardized tests to go down, not up, as we implement DAP. While current moves to abandon standardized tests might hide the problem, they are not likely to lead to a solution.

In spite of the lack of empirical support for DAP as a means to achieve our goals, Kentucky passed legislation mandating DAP in 1991 and Oregon recently adopted a government policy that promotes DAP. Many states have similar proposals on their legislative agendas. How did DAP become our quasi-national education policy?

The ideas for "appropriateness" represented only a "working hypothesis" and did not derive from instructional research.

According to an NAEYC position paper, the DAP guidelines were developed in collaboration with state departments of education. "The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education jointly developed these guidelines..." (p. 10, NAEYC, 1992). According to two professors who participated in the national meetings where the guidelines were originally defined, the ideas for "appropriateness" represented only a "working hypothesis" and did not derive from instructional research (Johnson & Johnson, 1992).

"The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education jointly developed these guidelines..."

NAEYC

Nor did the ideas reflect any representative consensus of the views of experts in education. Johnson and Johnson, who wrote a defense for DAP, state that a consensus was impossible to achieve at the policy development meetings until the "majority" view, supporting child-directed learning, "elbowed" the minority view out of the room:

"A 'majority rules' modus operandi prevailed with Montessori and constructivist (e.g., Piagetian) contingencies figuratively, if not literally, elbowing behaviorists out of meeting rooms

and committees when DAP was being drafted...Accordingly, the position paper or policy statement on DAP that emerged slighted behaviorists and learning theorists" (see pages 70 to 80, this issue).

A consensus was impossible to achieve at the policy development meetings until the "majority" view, supporting child-directed learning, "elbowed" the minority view out of the room.

Our selection of educational policy-makers should be based on some criterion other than large elbows.

Summary

Considerable evidence indicates that child-directed teaching methods have a detrimental effect on the education of diverse learners (handicapped and disadvantaged children). Sociologists and ethnologists in England denounced child-directed learning (progressive education) as a form of radical conservatism that served to maintain the class structure of society (e.g., Sharp, Green, & Lewis, 1975). The results of Project Follow Through indicated that economically disadvantaged children learning from child-directed instruction (open education) obtained lower scores on basic skills (reading, mathematics, language,

The use of child-directed methods which are based on a belief in the innateness of learning, are inconsistent with a belief in effort, and undermine the development of a strong work ethic in Western education.

and spelling), on cognitive development measures, and on measures of self-esteem and other desirable affects, than children learning from traditional education (Abt, 1977). More recent research reviews (Adams, 1989; Gutierrez & Slavin, 1992; Stahl & Miller, 1989) are consistent with the earlier research.

Asian cultures are dominated by a strong belief in effort and a deep respect for the teacher. To become competitive in the world, American schools also need to develop a culture of effort and hard work (USDE, 1992). The use of child-directed methods which are based on a belief in the innateness of learning, are inconsistent with a belief in effort, and undermine the development of a strong work ethic in Western education. Moreover, these practices discriminate against

many students. Child-directed methods will not help America become more competitive in a world economy.

About the Author

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Achievement Effects of the Nongraded Elementary School: Summary of A Best Evidence Synthesis

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Note: Readers interested in a more detailed description of the methods and findings should see: Roberto Gutiérrez and Robert Slavin, (1992), "Achievement Effects of the Nongraded Elementary School: A Best Evidence Synthesis. Review of Educational Research, 62(4), 333-376.

Abstract: A nongraded elementary program is one in which children are flexibly grouped according to performance level, not age, and proceed through the elementary school at their own rates. Popular in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s, the nongraded plan is returning today. This article reviews research on the achievement effects of nongraded organization. Results indicated consistent positive achievement effects of simple forms of nongrading generally developed early: cross-grade grouping for one subject (median ES = +.46) and cross-grade grouping for many subjects (median ES = +.34). Forms of nongrading making extensive use of individualization were less consistently successful (median ES = +.02). Studies of Individually Guided Education (IGE), which used nongrading and individualization, also produced inconsistent effects (median ES = +.11). The article concludes that nongraded organization can have a positive impact on student achievement if cross-age grouping is used to allow teachers to provide more direct instruction to students but not if it is used as a framework for individualized instruction.

The nongraded elementary school movement was an important force in North American education in the 1960s and early 1970s, even if its major elements were only implemented in a small proportion of schools. The challenge to the traditional age-graded classroom posed by the nongraded concept is one that still has relevance today. More importantly, the nongraded elementary school itself is reappearing in U.S. schools. Recently, the states of Kentucky and Oregon have promoted a shift to nongraded programs, and many districts and schools elsewhere are moving in this direction (Willis, 1991).

A great deal of research has been done to evaluate various forms of the nongraded elementary school, but there are few comprehensive reviews on this topic. McLoughlin (1967), reviewing studies done up to 1966, concluded that most found no differences between graded and nongraded programs in reading, arithmetic, and language arts performance. In contrast, Pavan (1992), who limited her review of achievement to studies reported between 1968 and 1990, concluded that most comparisons favored the nongraded plan. However, both of these reviews were quite limited. Both simply counted statistically significant findings favoring graded or nongraded programs, paying little attention to the particular forms of nongrading used, the methodological quality of the studies, or the size of the effects.

The purpose of this article is to describe the nongraded elementary school in its earlier incarnations, to systematically review research on the academic achievement effects of nongraded schooling, and to draw inferences from this research for applications of the nongraded ideal in today's schools.

What is a Nongraded Elementary School?

At one end of a continuum of complexity, nongraded organization is essentially equivalent to the Joplin Plan (Floyd, 1954; Slavin, 1987). This is an arrangement in which students are grouped across grade lines for just one subject, almost always reading. For example, at a common reading period all students might move to a class composed of students at the same performance level in reading drawn from different classes and grade levels; a second grade, first-semester reading class might have first, second, and third graders in it. Students move through a continuous-progress sequence of reading levels that cover the material students are expected to learn in all grades involved in the plan. They move as rapidly as they are able to go, taking as much time as they need to master the material. Groupings are reassessed frequently and changed if student performance warrants it.

The main effect of the use of the Joplin Plan is to reduce the number of reading groups taught by each

teacher, often to one (i.e., whole-class instruction), thereby reducing the difficulties inherent in managing multiple groups and reducing the need for students to do follow-up activities independently of the teacher.

The Joplin Plan can be described as a nongraded reading program that still maintains an age-graded organization for other subjects. Studies of the Joplin Plan, which was popular in the 1950s and 1960s, do not make it clear what happened when students reached the end of the elementary grades and were reading at a level quite different from their grade level.

In the 1960s, nongraded programs began to resemble more closely the model described by Goodlad and Anderson (1963), which suggested flexible multiage grouping for most or all academic subjects, with continuous-progress curricula for such subjects as reading and mathematics.

When it was first described and implemented in the 1950s and early 1960s, nongraded organization primarily involved changes in grouping patterns, not instructional methods. Teachers in the earlier implementations still overwhelmingly taught students in groups using traditional methods and curricula. Starting in the late 1960s, however, the nongraded plan often absorbed another innovation becoming popular at that time, individualized instruction. Increasingly, descriptions of nongraded schools began to include the extensive use of learning stations, learning activity packets, and other individualized, student-directed activities. In many cases, these individual activities were also combined with tasks students completed in small groups which primarily worked independently of the teacher. Another typical attribute of these forms of nongrading was team teaching. For example, two to six teachers might occupy a section of the school and take joint responsibility for a large group of students, flexibly grouping and regrouping them throughout the day. As time went on, programs of this kind were increasingly implemented in schools without classroom walls and tended to be called open schools rather than nongraded elementary schools (see Giaconia & Hedges, 1982), and, in an introduction to the 1987 reprinting of their 1963 book, Goodlad and Anderson acknowledge the essential commonality between the two approaches.

The Rationale for the Reemergence of the Nongraded Plan

The rationale for the reemergence of the nongraded plan today is similar to that of the 1950s. In the 1980s, retention rates increased dramatically in elementary schools, especially those in large cities (Levine & Eubanks, 1986-1987). This was partly a result of accountability pressures, which focus on the performance of students according to grade level, not age, thereby rewarding districts for such policies as imposing grade-to-grade promotion standards and holding back low achievers (see

Allington & McGill-Franzen, 1992; Slavin & Madden, 1991). However, in more recent years, a reaction against high retention rates has taken place, influenced in particular by the work of Shepard and Smith (1989) which documents the negative long-term effects of retention in the elementary grades. Unwilling to return to social promotion (and still under accountability pressures which discourage it), many school districts are currently experimenting with a variety of means of holding standards constant while allowing time spent in the early grades to vary. Among these is the growing use of adding a year between kindergarten and second grade for at-risk children—such as, developmental kindergarten, junior kindergarten, transitional first grade, or prefirst programs. However, research on the long-term impacts of these approaches has questioned their value (see Karweit & Wasik, in press). The nongraded primary has been rediscovered as a means of avoiding both retention and social promotion, just as it was in the 1950s.

Two features were important in almost all of the successful nongraded programs evaluated: flexibility in pupil grouping, with frequent assessment of mastery at each level; and increased amounts of teaching time for the homogeneous instructional groups.

Another rationale for the nongraded primary school still important today is reaction against traditional ability grouping. Between-class ability grouping (e.g., high, middle, and low second grades) has been used by a minority of elementary schools, but use of reading groups has been almost universal until very recently (McPartland, Coldiron, & Braddock, 1987). At present, many schools are seeking alternatives to the use of set reading groups (see Barr, 1990), and the nongraded program appears to be a means of doing away with reading groups while still allowing teachers to accommodate instruction to individual needs.

An important factor today in the move toward the nongraded primary that was not a rationale in the 1950s is the trend toward "developmentally appropriate" practices in the early grades. Developmentally appropriate practices are instructional approaches that allow young children to develop skills at their own pace. For example, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (1989) published a position statement, entitled *Appropriate Education in the Primary Grades*, that described developmentally appropriate education for children ages 5-8. Among the prescriptions were the following:

Each child is viewed as a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth....Children are allowed to move at their own pace in acquiring important skills....For example, it is accepted that not every child will learn how to read at age 6, most will learn by 7, and some will need intensive exposure to appropriate literacy experiences to learn to read by 8 or 9 (p.4).

The NAEYC position paper also supported integrated curriculum and instruction, extensive use of projects and learning stations, cooperative learning, and other strategies quite consistent with the nongraded primary plans of the late 1960s and early 1970s (and with the open classroom of the same period). A book by Katz, Evangelou, and Hartman (1991), published by NAEYC, makes a case for mixed age grouping that emphasizes developmentally appropriate activities and downplays grouping by ability or performance level.

Summary of the Effects of Four Nongraded Models

1. Nongraded Programs Involving Only One Subject (Joplin-Like Programs). Nine studies, all reported in the 1950s or 1960s, evaluated nongraded plans that only involved one subject. The subject was reading in eight studies, math in one.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the findings of methodologically adequate studies of this type of nongraded program were consistent. All studies exhibiting good methodological quality (randomized and matched studies with evidence of initial equality) found substantial positive results in favor of the nongraded program. The median effect size for the four best quality studies was + .50; for all seven studies from which effect sizes could be estimated, it was + .46. The matched studies lacking evidence of initial equality that do not report positive results were characterized by similar reading programs; the biggest difference between them appeared to be their label. Two features were important in almost all

for the homogeneous instructional groups. Because each teacher had to manage fewer groups, there was less need for independent follow-up activities, such as worksheets in reading. Perhaps this last characteristic is one of the most important elements that favors students in a nongraded program: More homogeneous groups allow teachers to define more specific objectives for instruction, and children receive a greater amount of direct teaching.

2. Nongraded Programs Involving Multiple Subjects (Comprehensive Programs). Fourteen studies, reported from the late 1950s or 1960s to the early 1980s, evaluated nongraded plans incorporating two or more subjects (and often including all academic subjects). This category adheres most closely to the original conception put forward by Goodlad and Anderson (1963), in that the nongraded programs emphasize continuous progress and flexible grouping but do not emphasize individualized instruction.

Summary of Findings

Findings from this group of studies consistently favored the nongraded program. Almost all of its positive results were significant; not one study found significant differences in favor of the graded plan. The median effect size for the matched equivalent studies was + .34, and it was the same for all nine studies from which effect sizes could be estimated. Among those studies that did not report any significant difference, three were conducted in university laboratory schools, and another three found equivalence in the first year of the program but started to see favorable changes in subsequent years. In the case of laboratory schools, control classes were similar to experimental ones, or they appeared to be very high quality classes. Perhaps for these reasons, significant differences did not appear in those circumstances. Across many studies, greater duration of the program was associated with higher positive differences. Other common characteristics of academically successful nongraded plans were subjects organized by levels, use of texts written in accordance with those levels, and regrouping of students in multiage environments that allowed teachers to reduce the heterogeneity of their instructional groups.

An important factor today in the move toward the nongraded primary that was not a rationale in the 1950s is the trend toward "developmentally appropriate" practices in the early grades.

of the successful nongraded programs evaluated: flexibility in pupil grouping, with frequent assessment of mastery at each level; and increased amounts of teaching time

3. Nongraded Programs Incorporating Individualized Instruction.

Eleven studies, all but one reported in the brief period from 1969 to 1973, evaluated nongraded programs that emphasized individualized instruction, learning stations, learning activity packages, programmed instruction, and/or tutoring.

Summary of Findings

Considered together, the results of research on these nongraded programs were remarkably consistent. No

significant differences appeared in most studies. A median effect size of essentially zero ($ES = +.02$) was found across the nine studies from which effect sizes could be computed. These findings suggest that nongraded programs using individualized instruction were equivalent to graded plans in terms of academic achievement. As the nongraded plans became more complicated in their grouping arrangements, they apparently lost the comparative advantage of Joplin-like or comprehensive nongraded programs.

Pavan (1973, 1977, 1992) concluded that the evidence favored the nongraded primary while McLoughlin (1967) stated that most research showed no differences between graded and nongraded plans ...the evidence could be interpreted as confirming both Pavan's and McLoughlin's conclusions, contradictory though they are.

There is one interesting trend in the data on nongraded programs using individualized instruction: More positive effects were obtained with older than with younger children. It may be that students need a certain level of maturity or self-organizational skills to profit from a continuous-progress program that includes a good deal of independent work. Another indication of this is the observation that the longer the duration of the program, the better the results.

4. Individually Guided Education (IGE). Ten studies evaluated implementations of Individually Guided Education (IGE). As in any nongraded elementary school, students could take as much time as they needed to complete the objectives prescribed for each subject. However, IGE affected all aspects of school organization and instruction, not only grouping. Individual plans were prepared for each student, and students were constantly assessed to determine their continuing placements. In-

struction could be delivered one-on-one by teachers or peers, to small groups, or (rarely) to large groups. Extensive use was made of learning stations at which students would perform experiments, work on individualized units, or do other individual or small-group activities independently of the teacher. Comprehensive instructional models were developed and implemented in reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. Students were organized into multiage Instruction and Research (I & R) units of 100 to 150 students with (ideally) a unit leader, three to five staff teachers, an aide, and a teacher intern. This team planned and carried out the instruction students received in all subjects. Often, individual teachers would become experts in a given subject and take responsibility for that subject with the entire unit. A building-level Instructional Improvement Committee worked to establish objectives and policies for the school as a whole. This was the latest group of studies, with reports appearing over the period from 1972 to 1985.

Summary of Findings

Overall, research findings on IGE schools resemble results obtained by other studies on nongraded programs incorporating individualized instruction. The median effect size across six studies from which effect sizes could be computed was near zero ($ES = +.11$).

The evidence presented here supports a conclusion that the effects of nongraded programs depend on the type of program being implemented.

Nevertheless, four studies reported significant differences in favor of IGE schools, and all of these were evaluations of schools that clearly differ from one another. Schools closer to a full implementation of IGE concepts seemed to supply students with a wider range of instructional possibilities for their specific needs: small groups, one-to-one tutoring, or independent work. This finding supports the argument that selective use

TABLE 1. *Summary of effects by type of nongraded plan*

Type of program	Total studies	Significant positive	Nonsignificant positive	No difference	Nonsignificant negative	Significant negative	Median effects size
Joplin-Like	9	4	2	1	1	1	+.48
Comprehensive	14	8	2	1	3	0	+.34
Individualized	12	2	8	2	2	0	+.02
IGE	10	4	3	2	1	0	+.11
Unspecified	12	2	3	1	4	2	+.01

of individualized instruction can yield positive results for children's academic performance.

Discussion

As the nongraded elementary plan reappears in schools of the 1990s, it is important to learn about the history of this movement of 30 years ago. Most important, one needs to understand the achievement effects of nongraded organization and to understand the conditions under which achievement was or was not enhanced by this innovation.

A review of research on the nongraded elementary school is particularly needed today because there was little consensus on its effects in its own time. Only two reviewers examined portions of the literature, and they came to opposite conclusions. Pavan (1973, 1977, 1992) concluded that the evidence favored the nongraded primary while McLoughlin (1967) stated that most research showed no differences between graded and nongraded plans. Slavin and I conclude that, when their review methods are applied to a much larger set of studies, the evidence could be interpreted as confirming both Pavan's and McLoughlin's conclusions, contradictory though they are.

Table 1 summarizes the outcomes of the 57 studies that met the inclusion standards. Looking only at the boxscore of significant and nonsignificant positive and negative findings, one can read the results as supporting either McLoughlin's (1967) negative conclusion or Pavan's (1973, 1977, 1992) positive one. McLoughlin argued that, because nonsignificant findings outnumbered significant positive ones, the effects of the nongraded primary were equivocal. Twenty-five years later, the proportions of significantly positive findings are like those he reported; only 20 of the 57 studies were significantly positive. Pavan came to the opposite conclusion in her review, noting that significant positive findings far outnumbered significant negative ones. This is also true in the present review; only 3 studies significantly favored graded programs, while 20 favored nongraded ones.

By grouping students across age lines, it may allow teachers to reduce the number of within-class reading and math groups they teach at any given time, thereby reducing the need for independent seatwork and follow-up.

However, the conclusions of the present review, which uses a best evidence synthesis, conform to neither McLoughlin's nor Pavan's conclusions. Instead,

the evidence presented here supports a conclusion that the effects of nongraded programs depend on the type of program being implemented. Using median effect sizes rather than box scores, one sees that the positive effects of nongraded organization are most consistent and strongest when the program focuses on the vertical organization of the school and when nongrading is used as a grouping strategy but not as a framework for individualized instruction.

Four categories of nongraded programs were examined, in addition to one group of studies in which the nature of the nongraded program could not be determined. Studies in two of these categories clearly supported the nongraded plans. These are the Joplin-like programs, in which students are grouped across age lines in just one subject (usually reading), and the comprehensive programs, which involve cross-age grouping in many subjects but still rely on teacher-directed instruction. The median effect sizes for studies in these categories were clearly positive (+.46 for Joplin-like programs, +.34 for comprehensive), and the best designed evaluations were the ones most likely to show the positive effects.

In contrast, nongraded programs that incorporated a great deal of individualized instruction (and correspondingly less teacher-directed instruction), including Individually Guided Education (IGE), were less consistently associated with achievement gain. This is not to say that these approaches reduce student achievement; rather, their effects are very inconsistent, generally neither helping nor hurting student achievement, with more studies finding positive than negative effects (especially in the case of IGE). Poorly described nongraded programs also had median effects very near zero, perhaps because experimental and control groups may not have differed in anything essential except label.

What accounts for the relatively consistent positive effects of the Joplin-like and comprehensive nongraded plans and the less consistent effects of programs incorporating individualization? At this remove of time from the flowering of the nongraded ideal, one can only speculate, but there are many more recent developments in educational research that suggest some possibilities.

The most obvious reason that incorporating a great deal of individualization might have reduced the effectiveness of the nongraded elementary school is suggested by research on individualized instruction itself, which has generally failed to support this innovation (e.g., see Bangert, Kulik, & Kulik, 1983; Horak, 1981; Miller, 1976; Rothrock, 1982). Correlational evidence from process-product studies of more and less effective teachers has consistently found that student learning is enhanced by direct instruction from teachers, as con-

trasted with extensive reliance on individualization, seatwork, and written materials (see Brophy & Good, 1986). Further, to the degree that the nongraded elementary school came to resemble the open school, the research finding few achievement benefits to this approach (e.g., Giaconia & Hedges, 1982) takes on increased relevance.

Another factor in the success of simple nongraded plans is the likelihood that [they] allow teachers to fully accommodate instruction to the needs of each child in a particular subject while still delivering instruction to groups.

In its simplest forms, the nongraded elementary school has many likely benefits. By grouping students across age lines, it may allow teachers to reduce the number of within-class reading and math groups they teach at any given time, thereby reducing the need for independent seatwork and follow-up. In fact, in several of the evaluations of Joplin-like programs, it was noted that cross-age groupings made within-class groupings (i.e., reading groups) unnecessary, so teachers could spend the class period teaching the entire class, with no need for seatwork unless they saw a specific need for it.

Grouping students within classes or within grades (in all but the largest elementary schools) does not provide enough opportunity to have group instruction closely tailored to student needs.

Another factor in the success of simple nongraded plans is the likelihood that flexible cross-age grouping allows teachers to fully accommodate instruction to the needs of each child in a particular subject while still delivering instruction to groups. Goodlad and Anderson's (1959, 1963) criticism of traditional ability grouping is that it does not truly reduce heterogeneity in the specific skill being taught. Grouping students within classes or within grades (in all but the largest elementary schools) does not provide enough opportunity to have group instruction closely tailored to student needs. Flexible cross-age grouping does provide such an opportunity, so the instructional costs of grouping (in terms of disruption, movement, and stigma for children in low groups) can perhaps be outweighed by the greater opportunity to adapt instruction to the

precise needs of students and to continue to adapt to students' needs by examining and changing groupings at frequent intervals (see Slavin, 1987).

If the effectiveness of nongraded organization is due to increased direct instruction delivered at students' precise instructional level, then it is easy to see how a move to greater individualization would undermine these effects. Individualized instruction, learning stations, learning activity packets, and other individualized or small group activities reduce direct instruction time with little corresponding increase in appropriateness of instruction to individual needs (in comparison to the simpler cross-age grouping plans).

It is difficult to assess the impact of one of the key rationales given for the nongraded plan throughout its history, the opportunity to allow at-risk students to take as much time as they need to complete the primary or elementary grades without the use of retention. An early study by McLoughlin (1970) found that self-described nongraded programs did not generally take advantage of the opportunity to let low achievers take more time, but one does not know if McLoughlin's findings would apply to most nongraded programs implemented now or in the past. Clearly, however, the effectiveness of the simpler nongraded programs does not depend on the opportunity to accelerate or decelerate student progress, since most studies found positive effects in the first year of implementation, before any acceleration or deceleration could take place.

This discussion is, as noted earlier, completely speculative. There is much more we would have liked to know about how nongraded programs were actually implemented in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's. The return of the nongraded idea in the 1990's may, however, answer many questions. But assessments of current forms of nongrading as well as component analyses are necessary to understand which elements of nongrading account for the program's effects, and studies combining qualitative and quantitative methods are necessary to understand both what really changes in nongraded schools and what differences these changes make in student achievement.

Individualized instruction, learning stations, learning activity packets, and other individualized or small group activities reduce direct instruction time with little corresponding increase in appropriateness of instruction to individual needs (in comparison to the simpler cross-age grouping plans).

Is Earlier Research on the Nongraded Elementary School Relevant Today?

How relevant is research on the nongraded elementary school to education today? Many of the problems that the nongraded elementary school was designed to solve still exist, and the reemergence of nongraded programs appears to be due in large part to concern about these problems, especially the tension between retention and social promotion and rejection of traditional forms of ability grouping. Yet there are also many differences

The movement toward developmentally appropriate early childhood education and its association with nongrading means that nongraded primary programs will probably be more integrated and thematic, and less academically structured or hierarchical.... Whether these instructional methods will have positive or negative effects on ultimate achievement is currently unknown.

between education today and that of 30 years ago. The general perception that both individualized instruction (e.g., Bangert et al., 1983; Horak 1981) and the open classroom (e.g., Giaconia & Hedges, 1982) failed in their attempt to increase student achievement means that it is unlikely that the nongraded elementary schools of the 1990s will, like those of the early 1970s, embrace these methods. As a result, it is more likely that the nongraded programs of the 1990s will resemble the simpler forms found in this review to be instructionally effective. Yet there are other developments in North American education today that will certainly influence the forms taken by the nongraded programs, their effects on achievement, and their ultimate impact on educational practice. The movement toward developmentally appropriate early childhood education and its association with nongrading means that the nongraded primary school of the 1990s will often incorporate 4- and 5-year-olds (earlier forms rarely did so) and that instruction in nongraded primary programs will probably be more integrated and thematic, and less academically structured or hierarchical, than other schools. A proposal for nongraded primary programs of this type was recently made by Katz et al. (1991). In other words, like in the early 1970s, the effectiveness of the nongraded school organization plan may become confounded with innovative instructional methods. Whether these instructional methods will have positive or negative effects on ultimate achievement is currently unknown.

The ultimate impact of the nongraded ideal will also have much to do with rapidly unfolding changes in assessment and accountability. One reason for the increase in retention, prefirst, and other extra-year programs in the late 1970s and early 1980s was greatly increased accountability pressures in U.S. schools.

Retaining more students has a strong (though short-lived), positive impact on achievement test scores reported by grade (not age), because the children taking the tests are older (see Allington & McGill-Franzen, 1992; Slavin & Madden, 1991). There is currently widespread concern about high retention rates (Shepard & Smith, 1989), yet returning to social promotion would greatly reduce test scores in districts currently retaining many students. If the nongraded elementary school emerges as a means of giving low achievers more time in the elementary grades, it may be favored by the current policies of reporting test scores by grade (for the same reasons that they favor retention). On the other hand, if high-stakes accountability systems begin to report achievement by age (e.g., as does the National Assessment of Educational Progress), this advantage may not become a factor.

Clearly, there is a need for much more research on the nongraded elementary school as it is being implemented today. Because of scientific conventions of the time, most of the earlier research reviewed here was strong in experimental design (most studies used random assignment or careful matching of experimental

Yet returning to social promotion would greatly reduce test scores in districts currently retaining many students.

and control groups) but weak in description of the independent variable—that is, the characteristics of the nongraded and graded schools. Research done today must be strong in both dimensions. Goodlad and Anderson (1963) emphasized that the nongraded plan addresses only vertical organization, not instruction. Yet, as this review has shown, differences in instructional methods between nongraded and graded schools may account for differences (or non differences) in outcomes.

Differences in instructional methods between nongraded and graded schools may account for differences (or non differences) in outcomes.

Research on the nongraded elementary school offers a fascinating glimpse into the history and ultimate

fate of compelling innovations. The return of this idea after nearly 20 years of dormancy is fascinating as well. This review concludes that the evidence from the first cycle of research on the nongraded elementary school supports use of simpler forms of the model and certainly supports the need and potential fruitfulness of further experimentation. Yet there is a cautionary note in this review as well. Good ideas can be undermined by complexification over time. A constant cycle of experimentation, research, evaluation, revision, and continued experimentation is necessary to build compelling ideas into comprehensive, effective plans for school organization and instruction.

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Why Poor Children Fall Behind in Reading: What Schools Can Do About It

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Note: This article contains the major findings and recommendations from an intensive study of the literacy development of 30 children from low-income families in grades 2 to 7, reported in The Reading Crisis: Why Poor Children Fall Behind (Chall, Jacobs, and Baldwin, 1990). The study sought, also, to find the school and home conditions that influenced the literacy development of the students. The focus in this excerpt is on school factors. A companion volume focuses on home factors (Snow, et al., 1991).

How Do Low-Income Children Compare? Reading

The most significant finding for reading was that in grades 2 and 3 the low-income children achieved on a par with children in the general population. As predicted by the theoretical model of reading used for the study (Chall, 1983b), the students' scores started to slump around grade 4. The slump started earlier on some tests than on others. The first to slip was in defining words. Although the low-income students did as well as the general population in defining words in grades 2 and 3 (common, high-frequency words), they began to have difficulty defining the more abstract, academic, literary, and uncommon words tested in grades 4 through 7. By grade 7, they were more than two years below norms on word meanings. Next to decelerate were their scores on word recognition and spelling. Oral reading and silent reading comprehension scores decelerated last. The difference in fluency between the below- and above-average readers was considerable: all of the above-average readers in grades 2 through 7 were fluent readers, while most of the below-average readers were dysfluent.

Thus, if we view reading as composed of three basic components—cognition, language, and reading skills (Carroll, 1977)—cognition did not seem to be their major problem. They did best from grades 4 to 7 on the reading tests that required understanding—reading comprehension and connected oral reading. (In grades 2 and 3 they did equally well on all the tests.) Their worst performance in grades 4 to 7 was on vocabulary (defining less common words presented orally), identifying less common, single words and spelling. These have been considered basic and teachable and have traditionally been seen as the responsibility of the school. Further, the vast research and theory on reading indicate that they are essential for the higher-level

cognitive processes needed for reading comprehension (see Chall, 1983b).

Writing

The findings on writing were essentially similar to those for reading. Greater gains were made on writing in the early grades (2 and 3) than in the later grades (4 to 7). Similar to reading, deceleration in writing started earlier and was more intense for the below-average readers as compared to the above-average, especially on exposition.

Also similar to reading, most of the children scored better on the writing measures concerned with the maturity and quality of the content (that is, ideas) as compared to the form (use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure). The students had ideas to express but lacked precise form with which to express those ideas. A final similarity to reading was the students' use of only the commonest of words. Only rarely did any of the students use uncommon words, even in grade 7. Thus, in writing as in reading, the students preformed better on "meaning-making" tasks (that is, higher in content than in form).

Language

On the language tests the trends were less consistent than for the reading and writing tests. Overall, our population seemed to do well on basic language abilities through the third grade. Starting around grade 4, they began to decelerate in the knowledge of less common, more academic words; words beyond the elemental; words that are learned in school; and words required to read and understand the books used in the intermediate and upper elementary grades.

Why the Slump in Reading and Writing Achievement Around Fourth Grade?

One hypothesis is that students' reading skills and knowledge of word meanings, which were sufficient for reading through grade 3, were not sufficient for

grades 4 and beyond, when students are expected to read more complex materials. While reading at grade 4 and beyond requires students to be fluent in word recognition and decoding, it also requires that they know the

The school's role assumes greater importance for the literacy development of low-income children in grades 4 to 7 than in the primary grades.

meanings of words that are less common, more abstract, and more literary—that is, words that are acquired through formal education. Another reason for the difficulty these students experienced in making the transition to harder texts in grades 4 and beyond may stem from a lack of fluency, particularly among the below-average readers. Those who lacked fluency read slowly and hesitatingly—conditions that tend to result ultimately in less reading on the part of the student and greater difficulty with silent reading comprehension.

What Were the School and Home Conditions That Influenced Literacy and Language Achievement? Home Influences

The conditions in the children's homes that were positively related to reading achievement in grades 2 and 3 were adult interaction with children and homes that provided a good literacy environment. Happily, we found that most homes provided these. However, the home conditions that facilitated reading achievement in grades 4 to 7 (higher educational and literacy attainment of the parents and parental interest in the educational achievement of their children) were not as common. These conditions, which we found to be positively associated with literacy development in grades 4 to 7, are not as easily modified as the conditions that are associated with early literacy development. Thus, the school's role assumes greater importance for the literacy development of low-income children in grades 4 to 7 than in the primary grades.

School Influences

The school factor that helped the children make a good transition from the primary to the intermediate grades was a strong reading program in the early grades.

Further, different school conditions affected different aspects of reading development. (See Chandler and Hemphill, 1983.) For the whole population, structure and challenging materials (on or above the reading level of the student, not below) had a positive influence on all aspects of reading—on word recognition, comprehension, and word meanings. The teaching of

higher-level processes and enrichment were particularly effective for the development of vocabulary and reading comprehension, but not for word recognition. Vocabulary development also benefited from structure and challenge and from the availability and use of a wide variety of materials in addition to textbooks. Reading comprehension improved with the use of challenging materials and with direct instruction and practice using these more difficult materials.

Some school influences had greater effects in either the earlier or the later grades. Structure and challenge had a strong positive influence in both the primary and the intermediate grades; use of a variety of materials and direct teaching of comprehension and word meanings were more effective in the intermediate grades.

The school factor that helped the children make a good transition from the primary to the intermediate grades was a strong reading program in the early grades.

Higher-level instruction that focused on making inferences and reacting critically to what is read had strong positive effects on reading comprehension especially in the later grades; it was weak or had negative effects in the early grades, especially on the development of word recognition. The use of many books besides textbooks had a positive effect on vocabulary gains, substantial positive effects on reading comprehension, but no effect on word recognition.

Thus, we found no one set of best practices for all grades and all aspects of reading. As would be predicted by the reading developmental theory that guided our study, the effectiveness of various practices depended on the level of development of the children. In the lower grades, when the students needed work in word recognition, the most effective conditions were structure and appropriate challenge. Emphasis on enrichment and higher-level processes was not as effective in the lower grades. For the children who had made the transition to an intermediate level, focus on higher-level processes and enrichment was more productive; it was associated with greater development of word meanings, one of the major needs in the middle grades.

Recommendations

Do Low-Income Children Need Different Reading Programs?

Many current efforts, and those of the past, to prevent the literacy gap among low-income children have called for special methods and materials based on the special needs of those children. Most have tended to stress differences.

Our study would indicate that the literacy development of these children is perhaps more similar to than different from that of mainstream children. Of course, they do have some special needs, but these needs seem to be more of quantity than of kind. They need more help at certain times to prevent and alleviate the lags. But the methods to overcome them are widely known and these methods benefit other children who lack the same aspects of literacy.

We believe that if adjustments in the instructional program are made, particularly as the children approach fourth grade, the typical slumps found in their reading achievement can be prevented. Indeed, most effective reading programs make some adjustments to the needs of particular children.

We believe that if adjustments in the instructional program are made, particularly as the children approach fourth grade, the typical slumps found in their reading achievement can be prevented.

Perhaps the strongest reason for not having a separate reading program for low-income children is that different programs tend to separate children from others not like themselves. For broad educational, social, and civic reasons, being part of a larger community is beneficial for low-income children and for society. Moreover, if their instruction proceeds at a slower pace because they are in a different program, it will be even more difficult for them to catch up.

Overall, we recommend as a guide the instruction proposed as optimal for most children (see Chall, 1983a; Anderson et al., 1985). These guides, based on a synthesis of research, suggest the early teaching of word recognition skills; systematic, explicit phonics; and connected reading of texts and trade books for the primary grades.

In grade 4 and beyond they need to learn uncommon, "academic" words, as do middle-class children. Indeed, an essential aspect of most reading curricula, as well as the curricula in specific subject areas for the intermediate and upper elementary grades, is the development of word meanings. Our low-income children's need for greater vocabulary knowledge is thus similar to that of middle-class children. It is not a difference in kind, only a difference in amount.

Thus, the needs of low-income children are not really special needs; they are the same needs as for most children. Because the low-income child's family may not provide as much stimulation in language and literacy, the school must take on more of this responsibility. But this is not a new responsibility for the schools,

for they have always been responsible for the teaching of language and literacy.

Preventing the fourth-grade slump. The schools should become more sensitive to the course of development of reading, writing, and language among all children and particularly among low-income children as they advance through the grades. This awareness, important for all children, is critical for low-income children; for the earlier they start to slip, the faster they fall, and the farther behind they are in each succeeding grade (see Stanovich, 1986). Literacy and language develop over many years; if students fall behind, they seldom right themselves without special help. Instead, the momentum of the decline intensifies. Thus, it is important that the reading difficulties of these children be assessed as early as possible and that they be given assistance to overcome their difficulties. It is equally important to design programs that anticipate the particular needs of low-income children. Because of the developmental nature of reading, the later one waits, the more difficult it is for the children to cope with the increasing demands of reading in the later grades. Moreover, those who have reading difficulties in the intermediate grades will have serious trouble not only with their reading lessons but with the study of science, social studies, literature, mathematics, and other subjects that are learned, in part, from printed text.

Overall, the low-income children in our sample were strongest in reading comprehension and in other cognitive and linguistic aspects of reading. They had little difficulty understanding connected texts, using basic grammar and language, and understanding the meanings of the common words in the language. They did have difficulty, however, with less familiar, longer, and more specialized words, and with identifying such words in print and spelling them.

We do not recommend, therefore, a reading program that focuses only on highly structured reading materials or one that uses only trade books without explicit teaching of skills.

Why should low-income children have greater difficulty than middle-class children with the meanings of less familiar words? It would seem that middle-class children have a double chance of learning more advanced words because they have more parents who are more educated, who read to them more, and because middle-class children also read more themselves. They also own more books.

Policy decisions for the reading curriculum. Policy issues concerning the reading curriculum are the responsibility of many—of researchers and scholars; those

who train teachers; superintendents; school principals; directors of reading and language arts; classroom teachers; and, in some communities, parent groups.

Concern with vocabulary should start even in the primary grades by reading to children, particularly those that cannot yet read by themselves and the time spent listening to books is not taken from the time they should spend reading books.

What program emphasis is best for low-income children? We found that reliance on one emphasis does not promote all aspects of reading. Word recognition and reading comprehension for our low-income children were developed best when the teacher used structured materials such as reading textbooks and workbooks. Vocabulary gains (word meanings) were greater in classrooms that contained a wide variety of materials. However, classrooms that focused solely on varied materials sacrificed gains in word recognition.

We do not recommend, therefore, a reading program that focuses only on highly structured reading materials or one that uses only trade books without explicit teaching of skills.

For the primary grades, a reading program that was structured and challenging but also provided for wide reading of trade books produced good results. Such programs focused on teaching recognition and decoding skills as well as the reading of stories.

Hard or easy? A strong factor influencing the reading achievement of our low-income children in the primary and in the intermediate grades was the level of difficulty of the materials used for instruction. This has been found both in previous studies (Chall and Feldmann, 1966; Chall, Conard, and Harris, 1977; Chall, Conard, and Harris-Sharples, 1983). Generally, we recommend that for instruction guided by the teacher, the level of difficulty be challenging—neither too easy nor too hard. In our study, a level either on or somewhat above the students' reading level was more effective than a level below the students' reading achievement. A challenging level was associated with good gains in all aspects of reading—word recognition, comprehension, and word meanings.

The importance of fluency. Fluency and automaticity (that is, the quick recognition of words and phrases) are critical underlying factors for effective reading, particularly in grade 2 and beyond (see Chall, 1983b). Wide reading is essential to the development of automaticity and fluency. Therefore, collections of literature and information books of high quality need to be made available in the classroom, particularly for low-

SES children, who have fewer books at home than middle-class children. Time needs to be set aside in the classroom for the use of such books, and the children should be encouraged to take the books home for reading.

The special case of vocabulary in the middle grades. Our findings suggest the need for a serious look at how to accelerate the rate of vocabulary acquisition, particularly of the less common, literary, abstract words needed for reading, writing, and understanding in grade 4 and beyond. Two questions need to be considered: When should we start teaching vocabulary? And what method and materials would be most effective?

With regard to the timing, the research evidence offers some guidelines. The average six-year-old has listening and speaking vocabularies of about 6,000 words; thus the major focus in a primary-grade reading program might best be placed on accurate word recognition, decoding, and fluent reading. Beginning at about grade 3 or 4, these children need a systematic emphasis on less common words. But concern with vocabulary should start even in the primary grades by reading to children, particularly those that cannot yet read by themselves and the time spent listening to books is not taken from the time they should spend reading books.

The use of reading textbooks and workbooks was associated with more than expected gains in word recognition and comprehension.

More is known about how to teach vocabulary in the fourth grade and beyond. Effective methods can be divided roughly into those that stress direct instruction and those that rely on acquiring vocabulary from wide reading of increasingly difficult texts. In the present study, challenge and a rich literacy environment were found to be effective for developing word meanings, and wide reading exposed them to new words. Other studies have found that the direct teaching of word meanings also produces effective results. For specific methods of teaching vocabulary, see Dale and O'Rourke (1971), Johnson and Pearson (1984), Graves (1987), and Nagy (1989).

Should reading textbooks be used? Until quite recently, textbooks for teaching reading—readers, workbooks, and teacher's manuals—were the materials used almost universally in elementary schools. During the past decade, more schools are using "real literature" in trade books. It is difficult to know how many classrooms have made this change and particularly how many schools with high concentrations of

low-income children have done so. A meta-analysis by Stahl and Miller (1989) of studies that compared basal-reader approaches with those that used language experience and whole language found that while in kindergarten the children seemed to benefit more from the more open approaches, in first grade, programs that were more structured tended to produce higher achievement.

Exposure to books on a variety of subjects and on a wide range of difficulty levels was particularly effective in the development of vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Our study offers evidence that different approaches lead to somewhat different strengths and weaknesses. The use of reading textbooks and workbooks was associated with more than expected gains in word recognition and comprehension. But the exclusive use of reading textbooks and workbooks was not enough—particularly for grade 4 and beyond. The children who were in classrooms that used trade books, encyclopedias, and other reference books (in addition to reading textbooks) and who spent time reading their subject matter textbooks made greater gains than expected. Exposure to books on a variety of subjects and on a wide range of difficulty levels was particularly effective in the development of vocabulary and reading comprehension.

Wide reading was especially important for building the vocabularies of our low-income children, beginning at about grade 4. Visits to libraries were also related to better reading achievement. Thus it seems clear that, to improve the reading and language development of low-income children, they need instruction and they need to read widely. To facilitate this, books must be made accessible to them in the classroom, in the school library, and in the public library.

Writing. Our findings strongly support increased instruction and practice in writing starting in the primary grades. Little writing occurred in the schools we observed. The children who were required to write selections of at least a paragraph in length were better writers; quasi-writing (such as filling in blanks, copying poems from the blackboard or definitions from dictionaries, and doing worksheets) did not enhance the children's writing skills. Further, the children who practiced writing longer passages also showed greater gains in reading comprehension.

Clearly, the classrooms of low-income students need to devote more time to writing. What writing they did do in their classrooms was personal or narrative writing. Little practice was observed in expository writing.

Much has been written about the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of teaching writing to low-income children. Our findings indicate that they need practice not only in the process or meaning-making aspects of writing, but also in the precise aspects of form in which they were particularly weak: syntax, mechanics, spelling, and punctuation. Further, their writing, as their reading, would benefit from better and increased instruction in vocabulary, especially that vocabulary needed in grade 4 and beyond: words that are less common in everyday, conventional, spoken language and more characteristic of academic discourse. In our study, even the best readers in grade 4 and beyond used only concrete, common words. The content of their writing, was affected by the limited vocabulary with which they expressed themselves; it was also limited by their uncertain knowledge of form.

Relation of literacy instruction to other curricular areas. The most difficult words children are likely to encounter, particularly in the middle elementary grades, are in their subject area textbooks. Yet the classrooms

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we observed made little use of opportunities during social studies or science instruction to teach vocabulary and to provide guidance in reading and studying those texts. In classes where the teachers did teach "content reading," the intermediate-grade children made better gains. Teaching reading and writing in the various curricular areas has been proposed for it is especially needed by low-income children for vocabulary development.

Overcoming Obstacles in Schools

Our recommendations for preventing the fourth-grade slump in the literacy development of low-income children are, for the most part, not dramatically different from recommendations made for the literacy development of most children. The importance of teaching reading and word meanings using challenging materials as well as the importance of wide reading for acquiring reading skills and for developing lifetime habits in reading was stressed by early investigators (see Terman and Lima, 1926). Moreover, much of what we found has long been known intuitively by teachers and administrators. Why, then, we may ask, has the literacy level of low-income children lagged when the

knowledge for improving it has long been available? There are many explanations; here we discuss only a few.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle is that schools have not provided state-of-the-art programs and instruction for either mainstream or at-risk children.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle is that schools have not provided state-of-the-art programs and instruction for either mainstream or at-risk children. Although mainstream students perform better than low-income and minority students, even they do not reach a level of literacy achievement that is appropriate for their cognitive abilities. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, only 39 percent of U.S. high school seniors were able to read, with understanding, textbooks appropriate for their grade. Their achievement in writing, mathematics, science, and history was equally low (Chall, Conard, and Harris, 1977; Applebee, Langer, and Mullis, 1989). Why have the schools had such problems in developing literacy among students and particularly among low-income students?

We turn first to the training of teachers, because they are, in the final analysis, the ones who provide the literacy environment and the instruction that make the difference between learning well and not learning well. They decide on appropriate levels of instruction and on assignments, and they must blow the whistle when students' achievement lags behind their cognitive abilities. They must collaborate with other professionals—reading specialists, psychologists, speech and language specialists, social workers, neurologists—when a child needs special help. To do these things well, particularly with at-risk children, requires more than the preservice training that most teachers receive. Few teachers have sufficient theoretical knowledge and practical skills to teach reading to at-risk children successfully. Thus schools should provide for teachers' professional growth. Yet funds for such activities are sorely limited, and they are particularly limited for the teachers who teach low-income children.

Classroom observations reveal little time is spent on reading of subject-area materials, particularly in science and social studies. Moreover, little time is devoted to teaching the special vocabularies in these subjects.

Another reason for the less than optimal state of literacy programs in schools is the uncertainty and confusion surrounding such concepts as the appropriate level of difficulty for instruction, the effective use of content materials, and whether literacy instruction should have the same or a different focus in the primary and the later grades.

The place of subject-area textbooks in the teaching of reading is still uncertain, although the importance of connecting the two has been recognized at least since the 1920s. Everyone agrees that reading and writing belong "across the curriculum." Yet classroom observations reveal little time is spent on reading of subject-area materials, particularly in science and social studies. Moreover, little time is devoted to teaching the special vocabularies in these subjects. Most instructional time is spent teaching from reading textbooks and trade books that are mainly fiction and are less challenging than the context textbooks (Chall and Conard, 1991).

For low-income students, not being exposed to reading science and social studies limits what they can learn in these subjects; it also limits their needed practice in the higher-level reading skills, and leads ultimately to further deceleration of their reading and language.

Why, when theory and research over many decades have recommended the use of expository, subject-matter texts and materials for teaching reading in the intermediate grades, has so little been done in this area? Some have suggested that the answer lies in the popular movement to make content more meaningful through "hands-on experiences" rather than the reading of texts. Thus, science is taught mainly through experiments and social studies through "relevant" discussions. Printed materials, as a source of information, have been considered less important. As a result, children often do not learn how to read expository texts—how to remember what they read, how to make generalizations and inferences, and how to write about what they have learned.

For teachers of students who are low-achievers in reading, the hands-on approach may be a major means of survival. Because low-income students may read several years below grade level, they find their textbooks too hard. Unfortunately, publishers have not produced the kinds of subject matter materials that are optimally challenging for the lower one-quarter to one-third of students—those who are at risk. Thus, for low-

income students, not being exposed to reading science and social studies limits what they can learn in these subjects; it also limits their needed practice in the higher-level reading skills, and leads ultimately to further deceleration of their reading and language.

Another area in which practice lags behind theory is the provision of a variety of reading materials in classrooms covering a wide range of subjects and difficulty. All agree that a rich literacy environment is helpful for achievement in literacy. Yet if we were to survey a random sample of elementary school classrooms in the United States on any one day of the school year, we would find too many classrooms that do not have even enough textbooks for each child. Classrooms often lack a small library of story and informational books, and few classrooms have enough encyclopedias and dictionaries for their students. Moreover, the greater the number of at-risk children in the school, the more limited is the print environment in the classrooms and in the school.

Sending books home is particularly important for low-income children, who do not have many books of their own.

Books cost money, and many schools say they cannot afford textbooks in the basic subjects for each child, let alone an encyclopedia, dictionaries, and trade books for each classroom. Some schools have so few books that they cannot send them home with the children for homework. Yet sending books home is particularly important for low-income children, who do not have many books of their own. Indeed, they have significantly fewer than do mainstream children (NAEP, 1985).

State-of-the-art reading programs have diagnostic and remedial services for those students who need them, and as early as they need them. But few schools can provide these services for all the children who need them. Declining funds over the past 15 years have resulted in decreased rather than increased services. Low-SES children suffer the most in this situation, for the middle-class children who have reading difficulties are often taken elsewhere by their parents for services—clinics in universities and hospitals, to commercial tutoring centers and to private tutors.

A major confusion about the teaching of reading concerns whether reading is essentially the same at different levels or whether it changes as it develops. The findings from this study support the theory that reading changes over time, and that a major transition point comes at about grade 4. Many in the field of reading, however, believe that reading is a single-stage process—that it is essentially the same for the beginner

in grade 1 and for the more advanced reader in grade 4 and beyond. This single-stage view of reading places equal focus on all components from the start—cognition, language, and reading skills. Our position is that a single-stage view of reading makes it difficult to focus instruction on the essential elements of each level and to assess whether students are advancing as expected.

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Focus on “high level” skills (comprehension, word meanings, and inference) in the primary grades might limit time that should be devoted to word recognition and decoding, and the oral and silent reading of stories—the main tasks in beginning reading. Although such practices might work well with middle-class children whose parents and tutors can help them with what the school might fail to teach, they are particularly detrimental to low-income children, who cannot get as much assistance at home and who rely more on the school for their learning.

With a single-stage view of reading, teachers in the intermediate and upper elementary grades may not be aware that they need to make special provision for vocabulary learning, particularly for the low-income children. Although such children usually do not need

With a single-stage view of reading, teachers in the intermediate and upper elementary grades may not be aware that they need to make special provision for vocabulary learning, particularly for the low-income children.

practice with the concrete, familiar words found in the primary grade texts, they do need help in learning the more unfamiliar, literary, abstract, and specialized vocabularies that are used in texts beginning around grade 4. Again, middle-class, mainstream children will not lose as much as at-risk children if such instruction is not given in school because they acquire more of these words from being read to and from reading more outside of school.

It appears, then, that even though we have the knowledge to help prevent the deceleration of literacy achievement among low-income children, we are still far from providing what is needed.

It appears, then, that even though we have the knowledge to help prevent the deceleration of literacy achievement among low-income children, we are still far from providing what is needed. The time to examine the conditions that keep many schools from providing the programs that all children need—and especially those at risk—is now.

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Minority View: Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Progressive Black Educator

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Abstract: In this article the author reflects on her practice as a teacher and as a teacher of teachers. Arguing from her perspective as a product of the skills-oriented approach to writing and as a Black teacher of the process-oriented approach to writing, she describes the estrangement many minority teachers feel from the progressive movement. Her conclusions advocate a fusion of the two approaches and point to a need for writing-process leaders to develop a vocabulary which will allow educators who have differing perspectives to participate in the dialogue.

Why do the refrains of progressive educational movements seem lacking in the diverse harmonies, the variegated rhythms, and the shades of tone expected in a truly heterogeneous chorus? Why do we hear so little representation from the multicultural voices which comprise the present-day American educational scene?

These questions have surfaced anew as I begin my third year of university "professoring" after having graduated from a prestigious university known for its progressive school of education. My family back in Louisiana is very proud about all of that, but still they find me rather tedious. They say things like, "She just got here and she's locked up in that room with a bunch of papers talking about she's gotta finish some article. I don't know why she bothers to come home." Or, "I didn't ask you about what any research said, what do you think?"

I once shared my family's skepticism of academia. I remember asking myself in the first few months of my graduate school career, "Why is it these theories never seem to be talking about me?" But by graduation time

During my progressive undergraduate teacher training... I learned that the open classroom was the most "humanizing" of learning environments, that children should be in control of their own learning, and that all children would read when they were ready.

many of my fellow minority students and I had become well trained: we had learned alternate ways of viewing

the world, coaxed memories of life in our communities into forms which fit into the categories created by academic researchers and theoreticians, and internalized belief systems that often belied our own experiences.

I learned a lot in graduate school. For one thing I learned that people acquire a new dialect most effectively through interaction with speakers of that dialect, not through being constantly corrected. Of course, when I was growing up, my mother and my teachers in the pre-integration, poor Black Catholic school that I attended corrected every other word I uttered in their effort to coerce my Black English into sometimes hypercorrect Standard English forms acceptable to Black nuns in Catholic schools. Yet, I learned to speak and write in Standard English.

I also learned in graduate school that people learn to write not by being taught "skills" and grammar, but by "writing in meaningful contexts." In elementary school I diagrammed thousands of sentences, filled in tens of thousands of blanks, and never wrote any text longer than two sentences until I was in the tenth grade of high school. I have been told by my professors that I am a good writer. (One, when told about my poor community and segregated, skill-based schooling, even went so far as to say, "How did you ever learn how to write?") By that time I had begun to wonder myself. Never mind that I had learned—and learned well—despite my professors' scathing retroactive assessment of my early education.

But I cannot blame graduate school for all the new beliefs I learned to espouse. I also learned a lot during my progressive undergraduate teacher training. There, as one of the few Black education students, I learned

that the open classroom was the most "humanizing" of learning environments, that children should be in control of their own learning, and that all children would read when they were ready. Determined to use all that I had learned to benefit Black children, I abandoned the cornfields of Ohio, and relocated to an alternative inner-city school in Philadelphia to student-teach.

Located on the border between two communities, our "open-classroom" school deliberately maintained a population of 60 percent poor Black kids from "South Philly," and 40 percent well-to-do White kids from "Society Hill." The Black kids went to school there because it was their only neighborhood school. The White kids went to school there because their parents had learned the same kinds of things I had learned about education. As a matter of fact, there was a waiting list of White children to get into the school. This was unique in Philadelphia—a predominantly

My White students zoomed ahead. They worked hard at the learning stations. They did amazing things with books and writing.

Black school with a waiting list of White children. There was no such waiting list of Black children.

I apprenticed under a gifted young kindergarten teacher. She had learned to same things that I had learned, so our pairing was most opportune. When I finished my student teaching, the principal asked me to stay on in a full-time position.

My Black students played the games; they learned how to weave; and they threw the books around the learning stations. They practiced karate moves on the new carpets.

The ethos of that school was fascinating. I was one of only a few Black teachers, and the other Black teachers were mostly older and mostly "traditional." They had not learned the kinds of things I had learned, and the young White teachers sometimes expressed in subtle ways that they thought these teachers were—how to say it—somewhat "repressive." At the very least they were "not structuring learning environments in ways that allowed the children's intellect to flourish"—they focused on "skills," they made students sit down at desks, they made students practice handwriting, they corrected oral and written grammar. The subtle, unstated message was, "They just don't realize how smart these kids are."

I was an exception to the other Black teachers. I socialized with the young White teachers and planned shared classroom experiences with them. I also taught as they did. Many people told me I was a good teacher: I had an open classroom; I had learning stations; I had children write books and stories to share; I provided games and used weaving to teach math and fine motor skills. I threw out all the desks and added carpeted open learning areas. I was doing what I had learned—and it worked. Well, at least it worked for some of the children.

My White students zoomed ahead. They worked hard at the learning stations. They did amazing things with books and writing. My Black students played the games; they learned how to weave; and they threw the books around the learning stations. They practiced karate moves on the new carpets. Some of them even learned how to read, but none of them as quickly as my White students. I was doing the same thing for all my kids—what was the problem?

I taught in Philadelphia for six years. Each year my teaching became less like my young White friends' and more like the other Black women's who taught at the school. My students practiced handwriting; I wrote on the board; I got some tables to replace some of the thrown-out desks. Each year my teaching moved farther away from what I had learned, even though in many ways I still identified myself as an open-classroom teacher. As my classroom became more "traditional," however, it seemed that my Black students steadily improved in their reading and writing. But they still lagged behind. It hurt that I was moving away from what I had learned. It hurt even more that although my colleagues called me a good teacher, I still felt that I had failed in the task that was most important to me—teaching Black children and teaching them well. I could not talk about my failure then. It is difficult even now. At least I did not fall into the trap of talking about the parents' failures. I just did not talk about any of it.

In 1977 I left Philadelphia and managed to forget about my quandary for six-and-a-half years—the one-and-a-half years that I spent working in an administrative job in Louisiana and the five years I spent in

Each year my teaching moved farther away from what I had learned.... As my classroom became more "traditional," however, it seemed that my Black students steadily improved in their reading and writing.

graduate school. It was easy to forget failure there. My professors told me that everything I had done in Phila-

Philadelphia was right; that I was right to shun basals; that I was right to think in terms of learner-driven and holistic education; that, indeed, I had been a success in Philadelphia. Of course, it was easy to forget, too, because I could develop new focal points. I could even maintain my political and moral integrity while doing so—graduate school introduced me to all *sorts* of oppressed people who needed assistance in the educational realm. There were bilingual speakers of any number of languages, there were new immigrants. And if one were truly creative, there were even whole countries in need of assistance—welcome to the Third World? I could tackle someone else's failures and forget my own.

"This is just another one of those racist ploys to keep our kids out. White kids learn how to write a decent sentence. Even if they don't teach them in school, their parents make sure they get what they need. But what about our kids? They don't get it at home and they spend all their time in school learning to be *fluent*. I'm sick of this liberal nonsense."

A Black teacher in Philadelphia

In graduate school I learned about many more elements of progressive education. It was great. I learned new "holistic" teaching techniques—integrating reading and writing, focusing on meaning rather than form. One of the most popular elements—and one, I should add, which I readily and heartily embraced—was the writing-process approach to literacy. I spent a lot of time with writing-process people. I learned the lingo. I focused energy on "fluency" and not on "correctness." I learned that a focus on "skills" would stifle my students' writing. I learned about "fast-writes" and "golden lines" and group process. I went out into the world as a professor of literacy armed with the very latest, research-based and field-tested teaching methods.

All went well in my university literacy classes. My student teachers followed my lead and shunned limited "traditional" methods of teaching. They, too, embraced holistic processes and learned to approach writing with an emphasis on fluency and creative expression.

But then I returned to Philadelphia for a conference. I looked up one of my old friends—another Black woman who was also a teacher. Cathy had been teaching for years in an alternative high school. Most of the students in her school, and by this time in the

entire Philadelphia system, were Black. Cathy and I had never taught together but had worked together on many political committees and for many radical causes. We shared a lot of history, and a lot of philosophies. In fact, I thought we were probably in agreement on just about everything, especially everything having to do with education. I was astounded to discover our differences.

Cathy invited me to dinner. I talked about my new home, about my research in the South Pacific, and about being a university professor. She brought me up to date on all the gossip about radicals in Philly and on the new committees working against apartheid. Eventually the conversation turned to teaching—as is often does with teachers.

Cathy began talking about the local writing project based, like those in many other areas, on the process approach to writing made popular by the Bay Area Writing Project. She adamantly insisted that it was doing a monumental disservice to Black children. I was stunned. I started to defend the program, but then thought better of it, and asked her why she felt so negative about what she had seen.

She had a lot to say. She was particularly adamant about the notion that Black children had to learn to be "fluent" in writing—had to feel comfortable about putting pen to paper—before they could be expected to conform to any conventional standards. "These people keep pushing this fluency, fluency thing," said Cathy. "What do they think? Our children have no fluency? If they think that, they ought to read some of the rap songs my students write all the time. They might not be writing their school assignments but they sure are writing. Our kids *are* fluent. What they need are the skills that will get them into college. I've got a kid right now—brilliant. But he can't get a score on the SAT that will even get him considered by any halfway decent college. He needs *skills*, not *fluency*. This is just another one of those racist ploys to keep our kids out. White kids learn how to write a decent sentence. Even if they don't teach them in school, their parents make sure they get what they need. But what about our kids? They don't get it at home and they spend all their time in school learning to be *fluent*. I'm sick of this liberal nonsense."

I returned to my temporary abode, but found that I had so much to think about that I could not sleep. Cathy had stirred that part of my past I had long avoided. Could her tirade be related to the reasons for my feelings of past failures? Could I have been a pawn, somehow, in some kind of perverse plot against Black success? What did those Black nuns from my childhood and those Black teachers from the school in which I taught understand that my "education" had hidden from me? Had I abrogated my responsibility to teach

all of the "skills" my Black students were unlikely to get at home or in a more "unstructured" environment? Painful thoughts.

The next day at the conference I made it my business to talk to some of the people from around the country who were involved in writing-process projects. I asked the awkward question about the extent of minority teacher involvement in these endeavors. The most positive answer I received was that writing-process projects initially attracted a few Black or minority teachers, but they soon dropped out of the program. None came back a second year. One thoughtful woman told me she had talked to some of the Black teachers about their noninvolvement. She was pained about their response and still could not understand it. They said the whole thing was racist, that the meetings were racist, and that the method itself was racist. They were not able to be specific, she added, but just felt they—and their ideas—were excluded.

As soon as this teacher asked when children were to be taught the technical skills of writing standard prose, leaders of the group began to lecture her on the danger of a skills orientation in teaching literacy. She never went back.

I have spent the last few months trying to understand all that I learned in Philadelphia. How could people I so deeply respect hold such completely different views? I could not believe that all the people from whom I had learned could possibly have sinister intentions towards Black children. On the other hand, all of those Black teachers could not be completely wrong. What was going on?

When I asked another Black teacher in another city what she thought of her state's writing project, she replied in a huff, "Oh, you mean the White folks' project." She went on to tell me a tale I have now heard so many times: she went to a meeting to learn about a "new" approach to literacy. The group leaders began talking about the need for developing fluency, for first getting anything down on paper, but as soon as this teacher asked when children were to be taught the technical skills of writing standard prose, leaders of the group began to lecture her on the danger of a skills orientation in teaching literacy. She never went back.

In puzzling over these issues, it has begun to dawn on me that many of the teachers of Black children have roots in other communities and do not often have the opportunity to hear the full range of their students' voices. I wonder how many of Philadelphia's teachers know that their Black students are prolific and "fluent"

writers of rap songs. I wonder how many teachers realize the verbal creativity and fluency Black kids express every day on the playgrounds of America as they devise new insults, new rope-jumping chants and new cheers. Even if they did hear them, would they relate them to language fluency?

Maybe, just maybe, these writing-process teachers are so adamant about developing fluency because they have not really had the opportunity to realize the fluency the kids already possess. They hear only silence, they see only immobile pencils. And maybe the Black teachers are so adamant against what they understand to be the writing-process approach because they hear their students' voices and see their fluency clearly. They are anxious to move to the next step, the step vital to success in America—the appropriation of the oral and written forms demanded by the mainstream. And they want it to happen quickly. They see no time to waste developing the "fluency" they believe their children already possess. Yes, they are *eager* to teach "skills."

Of course, there is nothing inherent in the writing process approach itself which mitigates against students' acquiring standard literacy skills; many supporters of the approach do indeed concern themselves with the technicalities of writing in their own classrooms. However, writing-process advocates often give the impression that they view the direct teaching of skills to be restrictive to the writing process at best, and at worst, politically repressive to students already oppressed by a racist educational system. Black teachers, on the other hand, see the teaching of skills to be essential to their students' survival. It seems as if leaders of the writing-process movement find it difficult to develop the vocabulary to discuss the issues in ways in which teachers with differing perspectives can hear them and participate in the dialogue. Progressive

Black teachers...see no time to waste developing the "fluency" they believe their children already possess. Yes, they are *eager* to teach "skills."

White teachers seem to say to their Black students, "Let me help you find your voice. I promise not to criticize one note as you search for your own song." But the Black teachers say, "I've heard your song loud and clear. Now, I want to teach you to harmonize with the rest of the world." Their insistence on skills is not a negation of their students' intellect, as is often suggested by progressive forces, but an acknowledgement of it: "you know a lot; you can learn more. Do It Now!"

I run a great risk in writing this—the risk that my purpose will be misunderstood, the risk that those who

subject Black and other minority children to day after day of isolate, meaningless, drilled "subskills" will think themselves vindicated. That is not the point. Were this another paper I would explain what I mean by "skills"—useful and usable knowledge which contributes to a student's ability to communicate effectively in standard, generally acceptable literary forms. And I would explain that I believe that skills are best taught through meaningful communication, best

If minority people are to effect the change which will allow them to truly progress we must insist on "skills" *within the context* of critical and creative thinking.

learned in meaningful contexts. I would further explain that skills are a necessary, but insufficient aspect of Black and minority students' education. Students need technical skills to open doors, but they need to be able to think critically and creatively to participate in meaningful and potentially liberating work inside those doors. Let there be no doubt: A "skilled" minority person who is not also capable of critical analysis becomes the trainable, low-level functionary of dominant society, simply the grease that keeps the institutions which orchestrate his or her oppression running smoothly. On the other hand, a critical thinker who lacks the "skills" demanded by employers and institutions of higher learning can aspire to financial and social status only within the disenfranchised underworld. Yes, if minority people are to effect the change which will allow them to truly progress we must insist on "skills" *within the context* of critical and creative thinking.

But that is for another paper. The purpose of this one is to defend my fellow minority educators at the same time I seek to reestablish my own place in the progressive educational arena. Too often minority teachers' voices have been hushed: A certain paternalism creeps into the speech of some of our liberal colleagues as they explain that our children must be "given voice." As difficult as it is for our colleagues to hear our children's existing voices, it is often equally difficult for them to hear our own. The consequence is that all too often minority teachers retreat from these "progressive" settings grumbling among themselves, "There they go again." It is vitally important that non-minority educators realize that there is another voice, another reality; that many of the teachers whom they seek to reach have been able to conquer the educational system *because* they received the kind of instruction that their White progressive colleagues are denouncing.

What am I suggesting here? I certainly do not suggest that the writing-process approach to literacy

development is wrong or that a completely skills-oriented program is right. I suggest, instead, that there is much to be gained from the interaction of the two orientations and that advocates of both approaches have something to say to each other. I further suggest that it is the responsibility of the dominant group members to attempt to hear the other side of the issue; and after hearing, to speak in a modified voice that does not exclude the concerns of their minority colleagues.

It is time to look closely at elements of our educational system, particularly those elements we consider progressive; time to see whether there is minority involvement and support, and if not, to ask why; time to reassess what we are doing in public schools and universities to include other voices, other experiences; time to seek the diversity in our educational movements that we talk about seeking in our classrooms. I would advocate that university researchers, school districts, and teachers try to understand the views of their minority colleagues and constituents, and that

I certainly do not suggest that the writing-process approach to literacy development is wrong or that a completely skills-oriented program is right.

programs, including the country's many writing projects, target themselves for study. Perhaps ethnographies of various writing projects, with particular attention given to minority participation and nonparticipation would prove valuable. The key to understand the variety of meanings available for any human interaction, and not to assume that the voices of the majority speak for all.

It is time...to seek the diversity in our educational movements that we talk about seeking in our classrooms.

I have come to believe that the "open-classroom movement," despite its progressive intentions, faded in large part because it was not able to come to terms with the concerns of poor and minority communities. I truly hope that those who advocate other potentially important programs will do a better job.

The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children

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Abstract: Lisa Delpit responds to concerns raised by White and Black educators to her earlier article, "Skills and Other Dilemmas." She examines the "culture of power" that exists in society in general and in the educational environment in particular. She analyzes five complex rules of power that explicitly and implicitly influence the debate over meeting the educational needs of Black and poor students on all levels. Delpit concludes that teachers must teach all students the explicit and implicit rules of power as a first step toward a more just society. This article is an edited version of a speech presented at the Ninth Annual Ethnography in Education Research Forum, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 5-6, 1988.

A Black male graduate student who is also a special education teacher in a predominantly Black community is talking about his experiences in predominantly White university classes:

There comes a moment in every class where we have to discuss "The Black Issue" and what's appropriate education for Black children. I tell you, I'm tired of arguing with those White people, because they won't listen. Well, I don't know if they really don't listen or if they just don't believe you. It seems like if you can't quote Vygotsky or something, then you don't have any validity to speak about your *own* kids. Anyway, I'm not bothering with it anymore, now I'm just in it for a grade.

A soft-spoken Native Alaskan woman in her forties is a student in the Education Department of the University of Alaska. One day she storms into a Black professor's office and very uncharacteristically slams the door. She plops down in a chair, and, still fuming, says, "Please tell those people, just don't help us anymore! I give up. I won't talk to them again!"

And finally, a Black woman principal who is also a doctoral student at a well-known university on the West Coast is talking about her university experiences, particularly about when a professor lectures on issues concerning educating Black children:

If you try to suggest that that's not quite the way it is, they get defensive, then you get defensive, then they'll start reciting research.

I try to give them my experiences, to explain. They just look and nod. The more I try to explain, they just look and nod, just keep looking and nodding. They don't really hear me.

Then, when it's time for class to be over, the professor tells me to come to his office to talk more. So I go. He asks for more examples of what I'm talking about, and he looks and nods while I give them. Then he says that that's just my experiences. It doesn't really apply to most Black people.

It becomes futile because they think they know everything about everybody. What you have to say about your life, your children, doesn't mean anything. They don't really want to hear what you have to say. They wear blinders and earplugs. They only want to go on research they've read that other White people have written.

It just doesn't make any sense to keep talking to them.

Thus was the first half of the title of this text born—"The Silenced Dialogue." One of the tragedies in the field of education is that scenarios such as these are enacted daily around the country. The saddest element

is that the individuals that the Black and Native American educators speak of in these statements are seldom aware that the dialogue *has* been silenced. Most likely the White educators believe that their colleagues of color did, in the end, agree with their logic. After all, they stopped disagreeing, didn't they?

In response to [the "Skills and Other Dilemmas" article] I received numerous calls and letters from teachers, professors, and even state school personnel from around the country, both Black and White.

I have collected these statements since completing a recently published article (Delpit, pp. 37-41, this issue). In this somewhat autobiographical account, entitled "Skills and Other Dilemmas of a Progressive Black Educator," I discussed my perspective as a product of a skills-oriented approach to writing and as a teacher of process-oriented approaches. I described the estrangement that I and many teachers of color feel from the progressive movement when writing-process advocates dismiss us as too "skills oriented." I ended the article suggesting that it was incumbent upon writing-process advocates—or indeed, advocates of any progressive movement—to enter into dialogue with teachers of color, who may not share their enthusiasm about so-called new, liberal, or progressive ideas.

In response to this article, which presented no research data and did not even cite a reference, I received numerous calls and letters from teachers, professors, and even state school personnel from around the country, both Black and White. All of the White respondents, except one, have wished to talk more about the question of skills versus process approaches—to support or reject what they perceive to be my position. On the other hand, *all* of the non-White respondents have spoken passionately on being left out of the dialogue about how best to educate children of color.

How can such complete communication blocks exist when both parties truly believe they have the same aims? How can the bitterness and resentment expressed by the educators of color be drained so that the sores can heal? What can be done?

I believe the answer to these questions lies in ethnographic analysis, that is, in identifying and giving voice to alternative world views. Thus, I will attempt to address the concerns raised by White and Black respondents to my article "Skills and Other Dilemmas" (Delpit, pp. 37-41, this issue). My charge here is not to determine the best instructional methodology; I believe that the actual practice of good teachers of all colors typically incorporates a range of pedagogical orientations. Rather, I suggest that

the differing perspectives on the debate over "skills" versus "process" approaches can lead to an understanding of the alienation and miscommunication, and thereby to an understanding of the "silenced dialogue."

In thinking through these issues, I have found what I believe to be a connecting and complex theme: what I have come to call "the culture of power." There are five aspects of power I would like to propose as given for this presentation:

1. Issues of power are enacted in classrooms.
2. There are codes or rules for participating in power; that is, there is a "culture of power."
3. The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power.
4. If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier.
5. Those with power are frequently least aware of—or least willing to acknowledge—its existence. Those with less power are often most aware of its existence.

The first three are by now basic tenets in the literature of the sociology of education, but the last two have seldom been addressed. The following discussion will explicate these aspects of power and their relevance to the schism between liberal educational movements and that of non-White, non-middle class teachers and communities.¹

1. *Issues of power are enacted in classrooms.*

These issues include: the power of the teacher over the students; the power of the publishers of textbooks and of the developers of the curriculum to determine the view of the world presented; the power of the state in enforcing compulsory schooling; and the power of an individual or group to determine another's intelligence or "normalcy." Finally, if schooling prepares people for jobs, and the kind of job a person has determines her or his economic status and, therefore, power, then schooling is intimately related to that power.

¹ Such a discussion, limited as it is by space constraints, must treat the intersection of class and race somewhat simplistically. For the sake of clarity, however, let me define a few terms: "Black" is used herein to refer to those who share some or all aspects of "core black culture" (Gwaltney, 1980, p. xxiii), that is, the mainstream of Black America—neither those who have entered the ranks of the bourgeoisie nor those who are participants in the disenfranchised underworld. "Middle-class" is used broadly to refer to the predominantly White American "mainstream." There are, of course, non-White people who also fit into this category; at issue is their cultural identification, not necessarily the color of their skin. (I must add that there are other non-White people, as well as poor White people, who have indicated to me that their perspectives are similar to those attributed herein to Black people.)

2. *There are codes or rules for participating in power; that is, there is a "culture of power."*

The codes or rules I'm speaking of relate to linguistic forms, communicative strategies, and presentation of self; that is, ways of talking, ways of writing, ways of dressing, and ways of interacting.

3. *The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power.*

This means that success in institutions—schools, workplaces, and so on—is predicated upon acquisition of the culture of those who are in power. Children from middle-class homes tend to do better in school than those from non-middle-class homes because the culture of the school is based on the culture of the upper and middle classes—of those in power. The upper and middle classes send their children to school with all the accoutrements of the culture of power; children from other kinds of families operate within perfectly wonderful and viable cultures but not cultures that carry the codes or rules of power.

4. *If you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier.*

In my work within and between diverse cultures, I have come to conclude that members of any culture transmit information implicitly to co-members. However, when implicit codes are attempted across cultures, communication frequently breaks down. Each cultural group is left saying, "Why don't those people say what they mean?" as well as, "What's wrong with them, why don't they understand?"

Unless one has the leisure of a lifetime of "immersion" to learn...explicit presentation makes learning immeasurably easier.

Anyone who has had to enter new cultures, especially to accomplish a specific task, will know of what I speak. When I lived in several Papua New Guinea villages for extended periods to collect data, and when I go to Alaskan villages for work with Alaskan Native communities, I have found it unquestionably easier—psychologically and pragmatically—when some kind soul has directly informed me about such matters as appropriate dress, interactional styles, embedded meanings, and taboo words or actions. I contend that it is much the same for anyone seeking to learn the rules of the culture of power. Unless one has the leisure of a

lifetime of "immersion" to learn them, explicit presentation makes learning immeasurably easier.

And now, to the fifth and last premise:

5. *Those with power are frequently least aware of—or least willing to acknowledge—its existence. Those with less power are often most aware of its existence.*

For many who consider themselves members of liberal or radical camps, acknowledging personal power and admitting participation in the culture of power is distinctly uncomfortable. On the other hand, those who are less powerful in any situation are most likely to recognize the power variable most acutely. My guess is that the White colleagues and instructors of those previously quoted did not perceive themselves to have power over the non-White speakers. However, either by virtue of their position, their numbers, or their access to that particular code of power of calling upon research to validate one's position, the White educators had the authority to establish what was to be considered "truth" regardless of the opinions of the people of color, and the latter were well aware of that fact.

A related phenomenon is that liberals (and here I am using the term "liberal" to refer to those whose beliefs include striving for a society based upon maximum individual freedom and autonomy) seem to act under the assumption that to make any rules of expectations explicit is to act against liberal principles, to limit the freedom and autonomy of those subjected to the explicitness.

I thank Fred Erickson for a comment that led me to look again at a tape by John Gumperz² on cultural dissonance in cross-cultural interactions. One of the episodes showed an East Indian interviewing for a job with an all-White committee. The interview was a complete failure. Even through several of the interviewers appeared to really want to help the applicant. As the interview rolled steadily downhill, these "helpers" became more and more indirect in their questioning, which exacerbated the problems the applicant had in performing appropriately. Operating from a different cultural perspective, he got fewer and fewer clear clues as to what was expected of him, which ultimately resulted in his failure to secure the position.

I contend that as the applicant showed less and less aptitude for handling the interview, the power differential became ever more evident to the interviewers. The "helpful" interviewers, unwilling to acknowledge themselves as having power over the applicant, became more and more uncomfortable. Their indirectness was an attempt to lessen the power differential

² *Multicultural Britain: "Crosstalk,"* National Centre of Industrial Language training, Commission for Racial Equality, London, England, John Twitchin, Producer.

and their discomfort by lessening the power-revealing explicitness of their questions and comments.

When acknowledging and expressing power, one tends towards explicitness (as in yelling to your 10-year-old, "Turn that radio down!"). When de-emphasizing power, there is a move toward indirect communication. Therefore, in the interview setting, those who sought to help, to express their egalitarianism with the East Indian applicant, became more and more indirect—and less and less helpful—in their questions and comments.

Liberals...seem to act under the assumption that to make any rules of expectations explicit is to act against liberal principles, to limit the freedom and autonomy of those subjected to the explicitness.

In literacy instruction, explicitness might be equated with direct instruction. Perhaps the ultimate expression of explicitness and direct instruction in the primary classroom is Distar. This reading program is based on a behaviorist model in which reading is taught through the direct instruction of phonics generalizations and blending. The teacher's role is to maintain the full attention of the group by continuous questioning, eye contact, fingersnaps, hand claps, and other gestures, and by eliciting choral responses and initiating some sort of award system.

When the program was introduced, it arrived with a flurry of research data that "proved" that all children—even those who were "culturally deprived"—could learn to read using this method. Soon there was a strong response, first from academics and later from many classroom teachers, stating that the program was terrible. What I find particularly interesting, however, is that the primary issue in the conflict over Distar has not been over its instructional efficacy—usually the students did learn to read—but the expression of explicit power in the classroom. The liberal educators opposed the methods—the direct instruction, the explicit control exhibited by the teacher. As a matter of fact, it was not unusual (even now) to hear of the program spoken of as "fascist."

I am not an advocate of Distar, but I will return to some of the issues that the program—and direct instruction in general—raises in understanding the differences between progressive White educators and educators of color.

To explore those differences, I would like to present several statements typical of those made with the best of intentions by middle-class liberal educators. To the surprise of the speakers, it is not unusual for such content to be met by vocal opposition or stony silence

from people of color. My attempt here is to examine the underlying assumptions of both camps.

"I want the same thing for everyone else's children as I want for mine."

To provide schooling for everyone's children that reflects liberal, middle-class values and aspirations is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it. Some children come to school with more accoutrements of the culture of power already in place—"cultural capital," as some critical theorists refer to it (for example, Apple, 1979)—some with less. Many liberal educators hold that the primary goal for education is for children to become autonomous, to develop fully who they are in the classroom setting without having arbitrary, outside standards forced upon them. This is a very reasonable goal for people whose children are already participants in the culture of power and who have already internalized its codes.

But parents who don't function within that culture often want something else. It's not that they disagree with the former aim, it's just that they want something more. They want to ensure that the school provides their children with discourse patterns, interactional styles, and spoken and written language codes that will allow them success in the larger society.

It was the lack of attention to this concern that created such a negative outcry in the Black community when well-intentioned White liberal educators introduced "dialect readers." These were seen as a plot to prevent the schools from teaching the linguistic aspects of the culture of power, thus dooming Black children to a permanent outsider caste. As one parent demanded, "My kids know how to be Black—you all teach them how to be successful in the White man's world."

Several Black teachers have said to me recently that as much as they'd like to believe otherwise, they cannot help but conclude that many of the "progressive" educational strategies imposed by liberals upon Black and poor children could only be based on a desire to

"My kids know how to be Black—you all teach them how to be successful in the White man's world."

ensure that the liberals' children get sole access to the dwindling pool of American jobs. Some have added that the liberal educators believe themselves to be operating with good intentions, but that these good intentions are only conscious delusions about their

unconscious true motives. One of Black anthropologist John Gwaltney's (1980) informants reflects this perspective with her tongue-in-cheek observation that the biggest difference between Black folks and White folks is that Black folks *know* when they're lying!

Let me try to clarify how this might work in literacy instruction. A few years ago I worked on an analysis of two popular reading programs, Distar and a progressive program that focused on higher-level critical thinking skills. In one of the first lessons of the progressive program, the children are introduced to the names of the letter *m* and *e*. In the same lesson they are then taught the sound made by each of the letters, how to write each of the letters, and that when the two are blended together they produce the word *me*.

The biggest difference between Black folks and White folks is that Black folks *know* when they're lying!

As an experienced first-grade teacher, I am convinced that a child needs to be familiar with a significant number of these concepts to be able to assimilate so much new knowledge in one sitting. By contrast, Distar presents the same information in about forty lessons.

I would not argue for the pace of the Distar lessons; such a slow pace would only bore most kids—but what happened in the other lesson is that it merely provided an opportunity for those who already knew the content to exhibit that they knew it, or at most perhaps to build one new concept onto what was already known. This meant that the child who did not come to school already primed with what was to be presented would be labeled as needing "remedial" instruction from day one; indeed this determination would be made before he or she was ever taught. In fact, Distar was "successful" because it actually *taught* new information to children who had not already acquired it at home. Although the more progressive system was ideal for some children, for others it was a disaster.

I do not advocate a simplistic "basic skills" approach for children outside of the culture of power. It would be (and has been) tragic to operate as if these children were incapable of critical and higher-order thinking and reasoning. Rather, I suggest that schools must provide these children the content that other families from a different cultural orientation provide at home. This does not mean separating children according to family background, but instead, ensuring that each classroom incorporate strategies appropriate for all the children in its confines.

And I do not advocate that it is the school's job to change the homes of poor and non-White children to

match the homes of those in the culture of power. That may indeed be a form of cultural genocide. I have frequently heard schools call poor parents "uncaring" when parents respond to the school's urging, that they change their home life in order to facilitate their children's learning, by saying, "But that's the school's job." What the school personnel fail to understand is that if the parents were members of the culture of power and lived by its rules and codes, they would transmit those codes to their children. In fact, they transmit another culture that children must learn at home in order to survive in their communities.

"Child-centered, whole language, and process approaches are needed in order to allow a democratic state of free, autonomous, empowered adults, and because research has shown that children learn best through these methods."

People of color are, in general, skeptical of research as a determiner of our fates. Academic research has, after all, found us genetically inferior, culturally deprived, and verbally deficient. But beyond that general caveat, and despite my or others' personal preferences, there is little research data supporting the major tenets of process approaches over other forms of literacy instruction, and virtually no evidence that such approaches are more efficacious for children of color (Siddle, 1986).

Although the problem is not necessarily inherent in the method, in some instances adherents of process approaches to writing create situations in which students ultimately find themselves held accountable for knowing a set of rules about which no one has even directly informed them. Teachers do students no service to suggest, even implicitly, that "product" is not important. In this country, students will be judged on their product regardless of the process they utilized to achieve it. And that product, based as it is on the specific codes of a particular culture, is more readily produced when the directives of how to produce it are made explicit.

There is little research data supporting the major tenets of process approaches over other forms of literacy instruction, and virtually no evidence that such approaches are more efficacious for children of color.

If such explicitness is not provided to students, what it feels like to people who are old enough to judge is that there are secrets being kept, that time is being wasted, that the teacher is abdicating his or her duty to teach. A doctoral student in my acquaintance was assigned to a writing class to hone his writing skills. The student was

placed in the section led by a White professor who utilized a process approach, consisting primarily of having the students write essays and then assemble into groups to edit each other's papers. That procedure infuriated this particular student. He had many angry encounters with the teacher about what she was doing. In his words:

I didn't feel she was teaching us anything. She wanted us to correct each others' papers and we were there to learn from her. She didn't teach anything, absolutely nothing.

Maybe they're trying to learn what Black folks knew all the time. We understand how to improvise, how to express ourselves creatively. When I'm in a classroom, I'm not looking for that, I'm looking for structure, the more formal language.

Now my buddy was in [a] Black teacher's class. And that lady was very good. She went through and explained and defined each part of the structure. This [White] teacher didn't get along with that Black teacher. She said that she didn't agree with her methods. But I don't think that White teacher *had* any methods.

Teachers do students no service to suggest, even implicitly, that "product" is not important. In this country, students will be judged on their product regardless of the process they utilized to achieve it.

When I told this gentleman that what the teacher was doing was called a process method of teaching writing, his response was, "Well, at least now I know that she *thought* she was doing *something*. I thought she was just a fool who couldn't teach and didn't want to try."

This sense of being cheated can be so strong that the student may be completely turned off to the educational system. Amanda Branscombe, an accomplished White teacher, recently wrote a letter discussing her work with working-class Black and White students at a community college in Alabama. She had given these students my "Skills and Other Dilemmas" article (Delpit, 1986) to read and discuss, and wrote that her students really understood and identified with what I was saying. To quote her letter:

One young man said that he had dropped out of high school because he failed the exit exam. He noted that he had then passed the GED without a problem after three weeks of prep. He said that his high school English teacher claimed to use a

process approach, but what she really did was hide behind fancy words to give herself permission to do nothing in the classroom.

The students I have spoken of seem to be saying that the teacher has denied them access to herself as the source of knowledge necessary to learn the forms they need to succeed. Again, I tentatively attribute the problem to teachers' resistance to exhibiting power in the classroom. Somehow, to exhibit one's personal power as expert source is viewed as disempowering one's students.

[Indirect teaching] feels like...secrets being kept, that time is being wasted, that the teacher is abdicating his or her duty to teach.

Two qualifiers are necessary, however. The teacher cannot be the only expert in the classroom. To deny students their own expert knowledge is to disempower them. Amanda Branscombe, when she was working with Black high school students classified as "slow learners," had the students analyze RAP songs to discover their underlying patterns. The students became the experts in explaining to the teacher the rules for creating a new RAP song. The teacher then used the patterns the students identified as a base to begin an explanation of the structure of grammar, and then of Shakespeare's plays. Both student and teacher are expert at what they know best.

The second qualifier is that merely adopting direct instruction is not the answer. Actual writing for real audiences and real purposes is a vital element in helping students to understand that they have an important voice in their own learning processes. Siddle (1988) examines the results of various kinds of interventions in a primarily process-oriented writing class for Black students. Based on readers' blind assessments, she found that the intervention that produced the most positive changes in the students' writing was a "mini-lesson" consisting of direct instruction about some standard writing convention. But what produced the *second* highest number of positive changes was a subsequent student-centered conference with the teacher. (Peer conferencing in this group of Black students who were not members of the culture of power produced the least number of changes in students' writing. However, the classroom teacher maintained—and I concur—that such activities are necessary to introduce the elements of "real audience" into the task, along with more teacher-directed strategies.)

"It's really a shame but she (that Black teacher upstairs) seems to be so authoritarian, so focused on skills and so

teacher directed. Those poor kids never seem to be allowed to really express their creativity. (And she even yells at them.)"

This statement directly concerns the display of power and authority in the classroom. One way to understand the difference in perspective between Black teachers and their progressive colleagues on this issue is to explore culturally influenced oral interactions.

In *Ways With Words*, Shirley Brice Heath (1983) quotes the verbal directives given by the middle-class "townspeople" teachers (p. 280):

- "Is this where the scissors belong?"
- "You want to do your best work today."

By contrast, many Black teachers are more likely to say:

- "Put those scissors on that shelf."
- "Put your name on the papers and make sure to get the right answer for each question."

Is one style more authoritarian than another?

He said that his high school English teacher claimed to use a process approach, but what she really did was hide behind fancy words to give herself permission to do nothing in the classroom.

Other researchers have identified differences in middle-class and working-class speech to children. Snow et al. (1976), for example, report that working-class mothers use more directives to their children than do middle- and upper-class parents. Middle-class parents are likely to give the directive to a child to take his bath as, "Isn't it time for your bath?" Even though the utterance is couched as a question, both child and adult understand it as a directive. The child may respond with, "Aw Mom, can't I wait until ...," but whether or not negotiation is attempted, both conversants understand the intent of the utterance.

By contrast, a Black mother, in whose house I was recently a guest, said to her eight-year-old son, "Boy, get your rusty behind in that bathtub." Now I happen to know that this woman loves her son as much as any mother, but she would never have posed the directive to her son to take a bath in the form of a question. Were she to ask, "Would you like to take your bath now?" she would not have been issuing a directive but offering a true alternative. Consequently, as Heath suggests, upon entering school the child from such a family may not understand the indirect statement of the teacher as a direct command. Both White and Black working-

class children in the communities Heath studied "had difficulty interpreting these indirect requests for adherence to an unstated set of rules" (p. 280).

But those veiled commands are commands nonetheless, representing true power, and with true consequences for disobedience. If veiled commands are ignored, the child will be labeled a behavior problem and possibly officially classified as behavior disordered. In other words, the attempt by the teacher to reduce an exhibition of power by expressing herself in indirect terms may remove the very explicitness that the child needs to understand the rules of the new classroom culture.

A Black elementary school principal in Fairbanks, Alaska, reported to me that she has a lot of difficulty with Black children who are placed in some White teachers' classrooms. The teachers often send the children to the office for disobeying teacher directives. Their parents are frequently called in for conferences. The parents' response to the teacher is usually the same: "They do what I say; if you just *tell* them what to do, they'll do it. I tell them at home that they have to listen to what you say." And so, does not the power still exist? Its veiled nature only makes it more difficult for some children to respond appropriately, but that in no way mitigates its existence.

I don't mean to imply, however, that the only time the Black child disobeys the teacher is when he or she misunderstands the request for certain behavior. There are other factors that may produce such behavior. Black children expect an authority figure to act with authority. When the teacher instead acts as a "chum," the message sent is that this adult has no authority, and the children react accordingly. One reason this is so is that Black people often view issues of power and authority differently than people from mainstream middle-class backgrounds. Many people of color expect authority to be earned by personal efforts and

Middle-class parents are likely to give the directive to a child to take his bath as, "Isn't it time for your bath?".... By contrast, a Black mother...said to her eight-year-old son, "Boy, get your rusty behind in that bathtub."

exhibited by personal characteristics. In other words, "the authoritative person gets to be a teacher because she is authoritative." Some members of middle-class cultures, by contrast, expect one to achieve authority by the acquisition of an authoritative role. That is, "the teacher is the authority because she is the teacher."

In the first instance, because authority is earned, the teacher must consistently prove the characteristics that

give her authority. These characteristics may vary across cultures, but in the Black community they tend to cluster around several abilities. The authoritative teacher can control the class through exhibition of personal power; establishes meaningful interpersonal relationships that garner student respect; exhibits a strong belief that all students can learn; establishes a standard of achievement and "pushes" the students to achieve that standard; and holds the attention of the students by incorporating interactional features of Black communicative style in his or her teaching.

The attempt by the teacher to reduce an exhibition of power by expressing herself in indirect terms may remove the very explicitness that the child needs to understand the rules of the new classroom culture.

By contrast, the teacher whose authority is vested in the role has many more options of behavior at her disposal. For instance, she does not need to express any sense of personal power because her authority does not come from anything she herself does or says. Hence, the power she actually holds may be veiled in such questions/commands as "Would you like to sit down now?" If the children in her class understand authority as she does, it is mutually agreed upon that they are to obey her no matter how indirect, soft-spoken, or unassuming she may be. Her indirectness and soft-spokenness may indeed be, as I suggested earlier, an attempt to reduce the implication of overt power in order to establish a more egalitarian and non-authoritarian classroom atmosphere.

If the children operate under another notion of authority, however, then there is trouble. The Black child may perceive the middle-class teacher as weak, ineffectual, and incapable of taking on the role of being the teacher; therefore, there is no need to follow her directives. In her dissertation, Michelle Foster (1987) quotes one young Black man describing such a teacher:

She is boring, boring.² She could do something creative. Instead she just stands there. She can't control the class, doesn't know how to control the class. She asked me what she was doing wrong. I told her she just stands there like she's meditating. I told her she could be meditating for all I know. She says that we're supposed to know what to do. I told her I don't know nothin' unless she tells me. She just can't control the class. I hope we don't have her next semester (pp. 67-68).

But of course the teacher may not view the problem as residing in herself but in the student, and the child may once again become the behavior-disordered Black boy in special education.

What characteristics do Black students attribute to the good teacher? Again, Foster's dissertation provides a quotation that supports my experience with Black students. A young Black man is discussing a former teacher with a group of friends:

We had fun in her class, but she was mean. I can remember she used to say, "Tell me what's in the story, Wayne." She pushed, she used to get on me and push me to know. She made us learn. We had to get in the books. There was this tall guy and he tried to take her on, but she was in charge of that class and she didn't let anyone run her. I still have this book we used in her class. It's a bunch of stories in it. I just read one on Coca-Cola again the other day (p. 68).

To clarify, this student was *proud* of the teacher's "meanness," an attribute he seemed to describe as the ability to run the class and pushing and expecting students to learn. Now, does the liberal perspective of the negatively authoritarian Black teacher really hold up? I suggest that although all "explicit" Black teachers are not also good teachers, there are different attitudes in different cultural groups about which characteristics make for a good teacher. Thus, it is impossible to create a model for the good teacher without taking issues of culture and community context into account.

And now to the final comment I present for examination:

"Children have the right to their own language, their own culture. We must fight cultural hegemony and fight the system by insisting that children be allowed to express themselves in their own language style. It is not they, the children, who must change, but the schools. To push children to do anything else is repressive and reactionary."

A statement such as this originally inspired me to write the "Skills and Other Dilemmas" article. It was first written as a letter to a colleague in response to a situation that had developed in our department. I was teaching a senior-level teacher education course. Students were asked to prepare a written autobiographical document for the class that would also be shared with their placement school prior to their student teaching.

One student, a talented young Native American woman, submitted a paper in which the ideas were lost

² Editor's note: The colons [::] refer to elongated vowels.

because of technical problems—from spelling to sentence structure to paragraph structure. Removing her name, I duplicated the paper for a discussion with some faculty members. I had hoped to initiate a discussion about what we could do to ensure that our students did not reach the senior level without getting assistance in technical writing skills when they needed them.

Tell [children of color] that their language and cultural style is unique and wonderful but that there is a political power game that is also being played, and if they want to be in on that game there are certain games that they too must play.

I was amazed at the response. Some faculty implied that the student should never have been allowed into the teacher education program. Others, some of the more progressive minded, suggested that I was attempting to function as gatekeeper by raising the issue and had internalized repressive and disempowering forces of the power elite to suggest that something was wrong with a Native American student just because she had another style of writing. With few exceptions, I found myself alone in arguing against both camps.

No, this student should not have been denied entry to the program. To deny her entry under the notion of upholding standards is to blame the victim for the crime. We cannot justifiably enlist exclusionary standards when the reason this student lacked the skills demanded was poor teaching at best and institutionalized racism at worst.

However, to bring this student into the program and pass her through without attending to obvious deficits in the codes needed for her to function effectively as a teacher is equally criminal—for though we may assuage our own consciences for not participating in victim blaming, she will surely be accused and convicted as soon as she leaves the university. As Native Alaskans were quick to tell me, and as I understood through my own experience in the Black community, not only would she not be hired as a teacher, but those who did not hire her would make the (false) assumption that the university was putting out only incompetent Natives and that they should stop looking seriously at any Native applicants. A White applicant who exhibits problems is an individual with problems. A person of color who exhibits problems immediately becomes a representative of her cultural group.

No, either stance is criminal. The answer is to *accept* students but also to take responsibility to *teach* them. I decided to talk to the student and found out she had

recognized that she needed some assistance in the technical aspects of writing soon after she entered the university as a freshman. She had gone to various members of the education faculty and received the same two kinds of responses I met with four years later: Faculty members told her either that she should not even attempt to be a teacher, or that it didn't matter and that she shouldn't worry about such trivial issues. In her desperation, she had found a helpful professor in the English Department, but he left the university when she was in her sophomore year.

We sat down together, worked out a plan for attending to specific areas of writing competence, and set up regular meetings. I stressed to her the need to use her own learning process as insight into how best to teach her future students those "skills" that her own schooling had failed to teach her. I gave her some explicit rules to follow in some areas; for others, we devised various kinds of journals that, along with readings about the structure of the language, allowed her to find her own insights into how the language worked. All that happened two years ago, and the young woman is now successfully teaching. What the experience led me to understand is that pretending that gatekeeping points don't exist is to ensure that many students will not pass through them.

Now you may have inferred that I believe that because there is a culture of power, everyone should learn the codes to participate in it, and that is how the world should be. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. I believe in a diversity of style, and I believe the world will be diminished if cultural diversity is ever obliterated. Further, I believe strongly, as do my liberal colleagues, that each cultural group should have the right to maintain its own language style. When I speak, therefore, of the culture of power, I don't speak of how I wish things to be but of how they are.

I further believe that to act as if power does not exist is to ensure that the power status quo remains the same. To imply to children or adults (but of course the adults won't believe you anyway) that it doesn't matter how you talk or how you write is to ensure their ultimate failure. I prefer to be honest with my students. Tell them that their language and cultural style is unique and wonderful but that there is a political power game that is also being played, and if they want to be in on that game there are certain games that they too must play.

But don't think that I let the onus of change rest entirely with the students. I am also involved in political work both inside and outside of the educational system, and that political work demands that I place myself to influence as many gatekeeping points as possible. And it is there that I agitate for change—pushing gatekeepers to open their doors to a variety of

styles and codes. What I'm saying, however, is that I do not believe that political change toward diversity can be effected from the bottom up, as do some of my colleagues. They seem to believe that if we accept and encourage diversity within classrooms of children, then diversity will automatically be accepted at gatekeeping points.

I believe that will never happen. What will happen is that the students who reach the gatekeeping points—like Amanda Branscombe's student who dropped out of high school because he failed his exit exam—will understand that they have been lied to and will react accordingly. No, I am certain that if we are truly to effect societal change, we cannot do so from the bottom up, but we must push and agitate from the top down. And in the meantime, we must take the responsibility to *teach*, to provide for students who do not already possess them, the additional codes of power.

My colleagues...seem to believe that if we accept and encourage diversity within classrooms of children, then diversity will automatically be accepted at gatekeeping points.... What will happen is that the students who reach the gatekeeping points...will understand that they have been lied to and will react accordingly.

But I also do not believe that we should teach students to passively adopt an alternate code. They must be encouraged to understand the value of the code they already possess as well as to understand the power realities in this country. Otherwise they will be unable to work to change these realities. And how does one do that?

Martha Demientieff, a masterly Native Alaskan teacher of Athabaskan Indian students, tells me that her students, who live in a small, isolated, rural village of less than two hundred people, are not aware that there are different codes of English. She takes their writing and analyzes it for features of what has been referred to by Alaskan linguists as "Village English," and then covers half a bulletin board with words or phrases from the students' writing, which she labels "Our Heritage Language." On the other half of the bulletin board she puts the equivalent statements in "standard English," which she labels "Formal English."

She and the students spend a long time on the "Heritage English" section, savoring the words, discussing the nuances. She tells the students, "That's the way we say things. Doesn't it feel good? Isn't it the absolute best way of getting that idea across?" Then

she turns to the other side of the board. She tells the students that there are people, not like those in their village, who judge others by the way they talk or write.

We listen to the way people talk, not to judge them, but to tell what part of the river they come from. These other people are not like that. They think everybody needs to talk like them. Unlike us, they have a hard time hearing what people say if they don't talk exactly like them. Their way of talking and writing is called "Formal English."

We have to feel a little sorry for them because they have only one way to talk. We're going to learn two ways to say things. Isn't that better? One way will be our Heritage way. The other will be Formal English. Then, when we go to get jobs, we'll be able to talk like those people who only know and can only really listen to one way. Maybe after we get the jobs we can help them to learn how it feels to have another language, like ours, that feels so good. We'll talk like them when we have to, but we'll always know our way is best.

Martha then does all sorts of activities with the notions of Formal and Heritage or informal English. She tells the students,

In the village, everyone speaks informally most of the time unless there's a potlatch or something. You don't think about it, you don't worry about following any rules—it's sort of like how you eat food at a picnic—nobody pays attention to whether you use your fingers or a fork, and it feels so good. Now, Formal English is more like a formal dinner. There are rules to follow about where the knife and fork belong, about where people sit, about how you eat. That can be really nice, too, because it's nice to dress up sometimes.

The students then prepare a formal dinner in the class, for which they dress up and set a big table with fancy tablecloths, china, and silverware. They speak only Formal English at this meal. Then they prepare a picnic where only informal English is allowed.

She also contrasts the "wordy" academic way of saying things with the metaphoric style of Athabaskan. The students discuss how book language always uses more words, but in Heritage language, the shorter way of saying something is always better. Students then write papers in the academic way, discussing with Martha and with each other whether they believe they've said enough to sound like a book. Next, they

take those papers and try to reduce the meaning to a few sentences. Finally, students further reduce the message to a "saying" brief enough to go on the front of a T-shirt, and the sayings are put on little paper T-shirts that the students cut out and hang throughout the room. Sometimes the students reduce other authors' wordy texts to their essential meanings as well.

The following transcript provides another example. It is from a conversation between a Black teacher and a Southern Black high school student named Joey, who is a speaker of Black English. The teacher believes it very important to discuss openly and honestly the issues of language diversity and power. She has begun the discussion by giving the student a children's book written in Black English to read.

Teacher: What do you think about that book?

Joey: I think it's nice.

Teacher: Why?

Joey: I don't know. It just told about a Black family, that's all.

Teacher: Was it difficult to read?

Joey: No.

Teacher: Was the text different from what you have seen in other books?

Joey: Yeah. The writing was.

Teacher: How?

Joey: It use more of a southern-like accent in this book.

Teacher: Uhm-hmm. Do you think that's good or bad?

Joey: Well, uh, I don't it's good for people, down this a way, cause that's the way they grow up talking anyway. They ought to get the right way to talk.

Teacher: Oh. So you think it's wrong to talk like that?

Joey: Well ... [Laughs]

Teacher: Hard question, huh?

Joey: Uhm-hmm, that's a hard question. But I think they shouldn't make books like that.

Teacher: Why?

Joey: Because they not using the right way to talk and in school they take off for that and li'l chirren grow up talking like that and reading like that so they might think that's right and all the time they getting bad grades in school, talking like that and writing like that.

Teacher: Do you think they should be getting bad grades for talking like that?

Joey: [Pauses, answers very slowly] No ... No.

Teacher: So you don't think that it matters whether you talk one way or another?

Joey: No, not long as you understood.

Teacher: Uhm-hmm. Well, that's a hard ques-

tion for me to answer, too. It's, ah, that's a question that's come up in a lot of schools now as to whether they should correct children who speak the way we speak all the time. Cause when we're talking to each other we talk like that even though we might not talk like that when we get into other situations, and who's to say whether it's—

Joey: [Interrupting] Right or wrong.

Teacher: Yeah.

Joey: Maybe they ought to come up with another kind of ... maybe Black English or something. A course in Black English. Maybe Black folks would be good in that cause people talk, I mean Black people talk like that, so ... but I guess there's a right way and wrong way to talk, you know, not regarding what race. I don't know.

Teacher: But who decided what's right or wrong?

Joey: Well that's true ... I guess White people did.

[Laughter. End of tape.]

Notice how throughout the conversation Joey's consciousness has been raised by thinking about codes of language. This teacher further advocates having students interview various personnel officers in actual workplaces about their attitudes toward divergent styles in oral and written language. Students begin to

"We have shown that oppression can arise out of warmth, friendliness, and concern. Paternalism and a lack of challenging standards are creating a distorted system of evaluation in the schools."

Massey, Scott, & Dornbusch

understand how arbitrary language standards are, but also how politically charged they are. They compare various pieces written in different styles, discuss the impact of different styles on the message by making translations and back translations across styles, and discuss the history, apparent purpose, and contextual appropriateness of each of the technical writing rules presented by their teacher. And they practice writing different forms to different audiences based on rules appropriate for each audience. Such a program not only "teaches" standard linguistic forms, but also explores aspects of power as exhibited through linguistic forms.

Summary

To summarize, I suggest that students must be taught the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life, not by being forced to attend to

hollow, inane, decontextualized subskills, but rather within the context of meaningful communicative endeavors; that they must be allowed the resource of the teacher's expert knowledge, while being helped to acknowledge their own "expertness" as well; and that even while students are assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes and about the power relationships they represent.

Will Black teachers and parents continue to be silenced by the very forces that claim to "give voice" to our children?

I am also suggesting that appropriate education for poor children and children of color can only be devised in consultation with adults who share their culture. Black parents, teachers of color, and members of poor communities must be allowed to participate fully in the discussion of what kind of instruction is in their children's best interest. Good liberal intentions are not enough. In an insightful study entitled "Racism without Racists: Institutional Racism in Urban Schools," Massey, Scott, and Dornbusch (1975) found that under the pressures of teaching, and with all intentions of "being Nice," teachers had essentially stopped attempting to teach Black children. In their words: "We have shown that oppression can arise out of warmth, friendliness, and concern. Paternalism and a lack of challenging standards are creating a distorted system of evaluation in the schools" (p. 10). Educators must open themselves to, and allow themselves to be affected by, these alternative voices.

In conclusion, I am proposing a resolution for the skills/process debate. In short, the debate is fallacious; the dichotomy is false. The issue is really an illusion created initially not by teachers but by academics whose world view demands the creation of categorical divisions—not for the purpose of better teaching, but for the goal of easier analysis. As I have been reminded by many teachers since the publication of my article, those who are most skillful at educating Black and poor children do not allow themselves to be placed in "skills" or "process" boxes. They understand the need for both approaches, the need to help students to establish their own voices, but to coach those voices to produce notes that will be heard clearly in the larger society.

The dilemma is not really in the debate over instructional methodology, but rather in communicating across cultures and in addressing the more fundamental issue of power, of whose voice gets to be heard in determining what is best for poor children and children of color. Will Black teachers and parents continue to be silenced

by the very forces that claim to "give voice" to our children? Such an outcome would be tragic, for both groups truly have something to say to one another. As a result of careful listening to alternative points of view, I have myself come to a viable synthesis of perspectives. But both sides do need to be able to listen, and I contend that it is those with the most power, those in the majority, who must take the greater responsibility for initiating the process.

To do so takes a very special kind of listening, listening that requires not only open eyes and ears, but open hearts and minds. We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment—and that is not easy. It is painful as well, because it means turning yourself inside out, giving up your own sense of who you are, and being unwilling to see yourself in the unflattering light of another's angry gaze. It is not easy, but it is the only way to learn what it might feel like to be someone else and the only way to start the dialogue.

We must learn to be vulnerable enough to allow our world to turn upside down in order to allow the realities of others to edge themselves into our consciousness.

There are several guidelines. We must keep the perspective that people are experts on their own lives. There are certainly aspects of the outside world of which they may not be aware, but they can be the only authentic chroniclers of their own experience. We must not be too quick to deny their interpretations, or accuse them of "false consciousness." We must believe that people are rational beings, and therefore always act rationally. We may not understand their rationales, but that in no way militates against the existence of these rationales or reduces our responsibility to attempt to apprehend them. And finally, we must learn to be vulnerable enough to allow our world to turn upside down in order to allow the realities of others to edge themselves into our consciousness. In other words, we must become ethnographers in the true sense.

Teachers are in an ideal position to play this role, to get all of the issues on the table in order to initiate true dialogue. This can only be done, however, by seeking out those whose perspectives may differ most, by learning to give their words complete attention, by understanding one's own power, even if that power stems merely from being in the majority, by being unafraid to raise questions about discrimination and voicelessness with people of color, and to listen, no, to

hear what they say. I suggest that the results of such interactions may be the most powerful and empowering coalescence yet seen in the educational realm—for all teachers and for all the students they teach.

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DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE What it is starting to look like.



Annie, we agreed not to hit. Take a time out at your earliest convenience.

What Does "Developmentally Appropriate" Mean?

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A year or so ago I attended a reunion of women who, like me, had been legislative fellows sponsored by the Center for Women in Government at the State University of New York at Albany. All of these women are deeply committed to supporting policies that will improve the lives of women and children. I was engaged in a lively debate about the benefits of Federal legislation (U.S. PL 99-457) to increase the participation of "at-risk" 3- to 5 year-old children in early intervention programs for the handicapped. Such children are said to be developmentally "behind" their peers because of social, emotional, language, or cognitive factors, although their "handicap" may not be precisely identified at this early age. When I said that I didn't believe in identifying children as disabled before they had experienced whatever it was they were supposed to learn, I was asked: "Aren't you a developmentalist?" The question gave me pause.

Would a developmentalist isolate children who already know a lot about written language and literacy from those who do not? Does a developmentalist believe that early school programs can be powerful equalizers of children's literacy experiences so that all children achieve with their peers? Or does a developmentalist believe that there has to be a "bottom" group of children who fail because they're "not ready"?

These differences should not become the rationale for not teaching all children whatever it is they need to know to participate fully in literature culture of our schools.

As it turns out, *developmental learning* or *developmentally appropriate instruction* are the new buzz words for educating young (and not so young) children. Like all buzz words, "developmentally appropriate instruction" can have multiple interpretations.

There are few who would quibble with the argument that children differ from each other in important

ways. As research studies have demonstrated again and again, children differ in language use and social competence, children differ in their memory for what

There is a trap in the concept of *developmental appropriateness*.

we as teachers view as important, and children differ in the attention they are willing to invest in the tasks we present as our literacy curriculum. Most important, I would argue that children differ in the personal literacy histories they bring to school and families differ in the resources they have to promote the educational well-being of their children.

In her book, *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print*, psychologist Marilyn Adams (1990) tells us that middle-class children typically come to school with thousands of hours of guidance about print—story book reading, message writing, letter identification and so on—from parents, preschool teachers, educational toys, and television, whereas less advantaged children may have no such experiences. Nonetheless, all parents—regardless of social class—value education for their children. The sociologist Annette Lareau (1989), for example, suggests in her book that the "home advantage" enjoyed by children of middle and upper classes is not money per se, but rather parents' knowledge of how schools work. Like middle-class parents, working-class parents expect their young children to learn to read in the first grade. However, working-class parents are not able to compensate at home when the first grade curriculum turns out to be weak or their children have trouble keeping up.

In short, there are real differences in the development and histories of children. If we want to personalize our instruction, engage children, and make them feel valued, these differences must inform what we do and say in our interactions with children. Yet these differences should not become the rationale for not teaching all children whatever it is they need to know to participate fully in literature culture of our schools.

A trap for poor children?

I believe there is a trap in the concept of *developmental appropriateness*. Not long ago, the National Association for the Education of Young Children broadly defined *developmental appropriateness* as a concept related to both "predictable sequences of growth and change that

Developmental appropriateness has been interpreted to mean that reading and writing are "academic skills" that do not belong in child-centered early childhood programs and that there is no role for adult modeling or teaching in so-called "active" learning environments.

occur in [most] children in the first 9 years of life" and to the "individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as the individual personality, learning style, and family background" (1986, p. 5). In practice, however, developmental appropriateness has been interpreted to mean that reading and writing are "academic skills" that do not belong in child-centered early childhood programs and that there is no role for adult modeling or teaching in so-called "active" learning environments. Artificial dichotomies that pit academic learning against social learning, direct-instruction versus activity-based models, and academics versus child development have been

In many publicly funded early childhood programs for poor children it is considered developmentally inappropriate to display the letters of the English alphabet or even sing the alphabet song.

set up. As the early childhood researcher Susan Robinson (1990) found, preschool teachers are reluctant to display print, read extended stories, or allow children to write because they are not sure these trappings of our literate culture are appropriate for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Unfortunately for the poor children, the restrictions of such developmentally appropriate practices are most burdensome for them. Private nursery schools and other early childhood programs can and do teach whatever they please, often providing instruction in not only written English but also, say, some Spanish or French, and perhaps the Hebrew alphabet or a few Chinese words as well. By contrast, in many publicly funded early childhood programs for poor children it is considered developmentally inappropriate to display the letters of the English alphabet

or even sing the alphabet song. One African-American teacher told me that Head Start doesn't believe in teaching kids to write:

The goal is self-esteem. Maybe 25 years ago when they started the program, kids were so delayed they needed a whole year of social skills. That's not the case now. The program assumes the children are stupid. . . . There's no money for books and paper. . . . circle time is not supposed to last longer than 10 minutes. . . . and they are not supposed to do whole group activities.

Yet this same teacher noted that children were screened both in preschool and in kindergarten for developmental benchmarks such as being able to retell stories and print some letters of the alphabet. When children perform poorly, it is attributed to their delayed development or disability, rather than to the paucity of experiences and opportunities to explore written language and literary understandings.

When children perform poorly, it is attributed to their delayed development or disability, rather than to the paucity of experiences and opportunities to explore written language and literary understandings.

Developmental metaphors: Flowers or scaffolds?

For some Piagetian psychologists or Gesell developmentalists, children's development is biologically fixed and the timetable cannot be influenced by instruction. Teachers may be admonished not to tamper with the unfolding maturation of the child. For those who hold this view, to say that development may be accelerated is to propose the unthinkable.

In fact, the contemporary "hot-house" metaphors of the late 1980s and early 1990s not only espouse this position, but they are indeed reminiscent of much earlier times. Amariah Brigham, an influential 19th century physician, and many of his turn-of-the-century peers believed that "cultivating intellectual faculties of children before they are six or seven" would harm body and soul:

Early mental excitement will serve only to bring forth beautiful but premature flowers, which are destined soon to wither away, without producing fruit. (cited in Kaestle & Vinovskis, 1980, p.59)

According to these doctors, more than an hour of school for children under 8 years old would induce the "morbid condition of precocity," which could lead to "imbecility or premature old age." Arnold Gesell, an

On the other hand, teachers who hold remedial or interactionist views of development (the scaffold metaphor) revise their instruction, not their expectations for learning, when children are not progressing.

influential physician of the next century, related human development to "neural ripening," and a prominent progressive educator of the same time period, Carleton Washburne, identified the mental age of 6 1/2 years as the optimal time to begin to teach reading. Over the years, these theories have persisted within certain school communities, even though no credible evidence supports them. As late as 1988, David Elkind, early childhood educator and author of several books on the "hurried child" and "miseducation" of children, cited Washburne's 1930s work as testimony to the wisdom of teaching children to read at 7 or 8 years old, rather than at younger ages.

We should not look at development as something that *limits* what children can accomplish as learners and what we can accomplish as teachers.

Unfortunately, in our culture, a child who is 8 years old and not a reader is in deep trouble at school. The irony of it all is that no child needs to be in that kind of trouble. We are so much smarter now than we were in the 1800s and early 1900s about how children come to literacy.

Believing in ourselves as teachers

The interaction between *instruction* and *development* is complex, and an uncontested definition of the relationship does not exist. Nonetheless, our own beliefs about the relationship are extremely important. As researchers Mary Lee Smith and Lorrie Shepard (1988) discovered, teachers who hold a nativist view (the flower metaphor) do not believe they can accelerate development of children who arrive unready for kindergarten. Such teachers urge parents to give children the "gift of time" by holding them out of school for an extra year or by placing them in developmental kindergartens or other transitional-grade classrooms. These teachers retain children deemed unready to go on and classify them as developmentally delayed and in need of special education services. The nativist perspective might preclude reading to children who prefer to spend all of their time at the sandbox. Children who claim that they cannot write a story or their names might not be

invited to explore with paper and pens if we believe that children's thinking passes through invariant stages regardless of how we support their learning.

On the other hand, teachers who hold remedial or interactionist views of development (the scaffold metaphor) revise their instruction, not their expectations for learning, when children are not progressing. These teachers believe in themselves as able to "bring children along." We should not look at development as something that *limits* what children can accomplish as learners and what we can accomplish as teachers. Rather, the individual and variable development of children is an opportunity to personalize our instruction. As teachers, we must celebrate and affirm, but also *extend and elaborate* each child's developing knowledge of written language.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths [of Buddha]. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth we transcend it. Once we truly know that life is difficult—once we truly accept and understand it—then life is no longer difficult. Because once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters."

M. Scott Peck, M.D. in *The Road Less Traveled*

DEBATE

Introduction to the Debate: Professionals in the field of early childhood education long have held that the design and implementation of educational programs for young children should be informed by current knowledge and theories of early childhood development. Accordingly, in 1987, the National Association for the Education of Young Children published its guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice (DAP; Bredekamp, 1987). Since their dissemination, these guidelines have had great influence on educational programs for preschoolers and children in the early elementary grades.

Along with the spread of DAP, some significant challenges have been presented to early childhood educators during the past several years by a combination of social, political and economic factors. These factors include the passage of P.L. 99-457, the trend toward state-funding of pre-kindergarten programs, the efforts to achieve full inclusion of children with disabilities within mainstream settings, and the growing numbers of children who require daycare, who come from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and who live in poverty. Thus, early childhood educators now are required to serve an increasingly diverse population of young learners, and to meet the needs of children who have disabilities or are considered "at-risk" in mainstream settings.

Because the DAP recommendations were originally intended for programs serving typically developing youngsters, early childhood professionals are confronted with the challenge of reconciling apparent inconsistencies between "developmentally appropriate practices" and current "best practices" in early childhood special education (ECSE) for disabled and at-risk pre-schoolers. The resulting tension has led to considerable, often heated, debate among early childhood educators. Differences between typical DAP and ECSE sometimes have been represented as a straightforward dichotomy between laissez-faire, child-directed and highly structured, teacher-directed programs. The issues involved are considerably more complex than such a simplistic analysis would suggest. The following two articles highlight the debate and help to frame some of the critical issues. The first article critiques DAP and offers a common perspective from ECSE. The next article by Johnson and McChesney Johnson defends DAP. Finally, we discuss the issues presented by both perspectives in "Bridging the Gap" on pages 81 to 85. *Ruth Kaminski and Sean Carey*

Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Appraising Its Usefulness for Young Children with Disabilities

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Abstract: Recently, many educators have advocated the use of the Developmentally Appropriate Practice approach in preschool programs for young children who are developing normally, as well as for young children with special needs. This article reviews the rationales and basic premises of both the Developmentally Appropriate Practice approach and early childhood special education. We highlight areas in which developmentally appropriate practice guidelines overlap those of early childhood special education. We also point out the insufficiencies of these guidelines for planning, carrying out, and evaluating early childhood special education programs. We provide a selective literature review to clarify issues that still separate the two areas and discuss the implications of these divisions for future integration efforts. Finally, we offer suggestions for standards that should guide the evaluation of all programs that serve young children with disabilities.

In recent years, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and other organizations representing professionals in early education have taken strong positions advocating the use of "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" as a guide for designing and evaluating programs that serve young children (Bredekamp, 1987). While this approach was advocated originally for programs for normally developing young children, many persons are urging the

The primary message that becomes evident in the application of [the NAEYC] guidelines is that teachers and parents should not push young children to achieve when they are very young.

wholesale adoption of this approach for programs serving young children with disabilities, as well (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1989). The authors of the present article caution that the principles of Developmentally Appropriate Practice may not be sufficient as guideposts for planning, carrying out, and evaluating early childhood special education programs.

Though the concepts of age appropriateness and individual appropriateness are the primary concepts defining Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) as stated in the NAEYC guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987), the primary message that becomes evident in the application of these guidelines is that teachers and parents should not push young children to achieve when they are very young (Elkind, 1986). The philosophy of early education, based on the notion that young children learn differently from older children and adults, proposes that preschool programs should be child-centered, allowing children to make choices about what is to be learned. While this approach may be logical for typical young children, it falls short as a standard of effective programming for young children with disabilities. Nonetheless, some early childhood educators are advocating wholesale adoption of the developmentally appropriate framework for all programs that serve young children, including those with disabilities (Berkeley & Ludlow, 1989), and are urging a departure from some of the more structured approaches to teaching that have been documented to be effective in early childhood special education.

The purpose of this article is to discuss some of the basic premises of the Developmentally Appropriate Practice approach and reflect on their usefulness for early childhood special education (ECSE) programs. (Note: Throughout this article, the term ECSE refers to the continuum of early childhood services that are available to young children with disabilities. This

includes, but is not limited to, settings in which only children with disabilities are served.) We will examine the rationale and basic premises for both DAP and ECSE and discuss points of overlap and separation between the two approaches. We point out two critical areas that distinguish DAP from ECSE, and discuss the implications of these differences for future integration efforts. Finally, the article suggests standards for evaluating the delivery of ECSE services.

Rationale and Basic Premises

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

In 1987, the NAEYC published a position statement outlining DAP for preschool students (Bredekamp, 1987). This statement was accompanied by descriptions of classroom practices that the organization considered either appropriate or inappropriate for normally developing young children. One of its primary messages was that preschool environments should emphasize exploratory play activities rather than formal academic instruction.

DAP guidelines urge teachers to adjust classroom expectation and curricula to fit the individual needs of the students, rather than expecting children to conform to rigid, and often arbitrary, classroom rule and curricular demands (Bredekamp, 1987; Bredekamp & Shepard, 1989; Shepard & Smith, 1988). The guidelines suggest that teachers be concerned with the "goodness of fit" between individual students and instructional situations, and that they should strive to match appropriate instructional techniques and opportunities to the child's current developmental level. Citing the theories of Vygotsky and Piaget, DAP proponents contend that instruction on curricula items that are too far behind the child's current developmental level will result, at best, in acquisition of minimal levels of rote, nonfunctional information, and at worst, in failure, decreased motivation, and increased levels of child stress (Bredekamp, 1987; Elkind, 1987). NAEYC published this statement in reaction to early educators' growing concerns about increasing academic demands made in preschool and kindergarten classrooms, parental and societal pressure on young children to excel in academics and other domains, and general misconceptions about how young children learn (Bain, 1981; Elkind, 1981, 1986; Manning & Manning, 1981).

The DAP guidelines suggest that teachers should not attempt to direct or tightly structure learning experiences (Manning & Manning, 1981). They maintain that highly structured, adult-directed activities are counterproductive to young learners and that early childhood instruction should take place during child-initiated, child-directed play activities. The proponents of DAP also assert that artificial motivation systems (e.g., tokens, stickers, or high rates of teacher praise) are

unnecessary and disruptive to the learning environment. They contend that young children are intrinsically motivated to learn based on their desire to understand their environment (Bredekamp, 1987; Elkind, 1987). They further maintain that highly structured programs that use teacher-directed instructional methods and artificial motivation systems are detrimental to the overall emotional well-being and self-esteem of young children.

Early Childhood Special Education

Certainly, those who work in the field of early childhood special education would concur that programs should not place unreasonable demands on children nor sacrifice children's emotional well-being to rigid goals and practices. However, ECSE entails additional concerns that must be addressed by any approach to practice. While DAP has focused primarily on preventing attempts to artificially accelerate the progress of children who are developing normally, the explicit mission of ECSE is to produce outcomes that would not occur in the absence of intervention or teaching. Thus, the rationale and basic premises of ECSE reflect this distinctive focus.

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The development of ECSE has been driven by a growing recognition that it is essential to provide *intervention* for children with special needs as early and comprehensively as possible in the least restrictive setting. Many theoretical models of intervention coexist in early childhood special education; their common goal is to "prevent or ameliorate the effects of a handicapping condition or problems that have a high probability of manifesting themselves as developmental or school-related difficulties in late life" (Linder, 1983, p. 1). The rationale for early intervention is based on substantial literature that indicates that delay in acquiring basic skills seriously impedes a child's acquisition of more complex skills, often leads to secondary disabilities, and many limit a child's future access to educational and occupational opportunities (Bloom, 1964; Bricker, 1989; Meisels & Shonkoff, 1990). "The intent of early intervention is to take action *before* problems become full blown and provide help *before* children fall far behind their peers" (Peterson, 1987, p.

73). Zigler (1978) pointed out that, because time is such an important factor in early intervention programs, efficiency is critical in the planning and delivery of services to young children with special needs.

An examination of some of the basic premises of early childhood special education reveals points of convergence and divergence with those of Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

DAP guidelines suggest that...children will learn best through nondirective instructional procedures.

First, programs serving young children with special needs must offer a range of services that vary in intensity based on the needs of the children they serve. The result is a curriculum that is much broader-based than a curriculum suggested by DAP guidelines. Curriculum, by definition, includes both content (what to teach) and procedure (how to teach). DAP guidelines suggest that the curricular content for early childhood programs should be strongly based on children's developmental levels, and that children will learn best through nondirective instructional procedures. Children with special needs sometimes do not have the prerequisite skills to benefit from the learning opportunities afforded to normally developing children. For example, some disabilities may prevent children from engaging in spontaneous interactions with their environments (Odom & McEvoy, 1990). For these children, adult intervention might be necessary to guide their behavior and structure beneficial opportunities (Beckman, Robinson, Jackson, & Rosenberg, 1988; Bricker, 1989; Peterson, 1987).

For...children [with special needs], adult intervention might be necessary to guide their behavior and structure beneficial opportunities.

Second, programs serving young children with special needs must develop individualized teaching plans consisting of goals and objectives that are based on a careful analysis of the child's strengths and weaknesses, and on skills required for future school and nonschool environments. This premise is somewhat different from the emphasis on individualization in the DAP guidelines. The concept of individualization in DAP focuses on the programs' need to provide activities and equipment that are wide-ranging enough to meet the needs of individual children who possess a broad range of interests and skills. While

this inclusionary approach is in step with current trends toward integration of children with special needs in mainstream environments, it lacks the precision that early interventionists require for insuring the appropriateness of each child's educational program.

The DAP guidelines imply, however, that children will be most engaged when they are free to choose their own activities. This may not hold true for some children with disabilities who cannot or will not initiate activities independently.

Third, assessment must be derived from many sources, be carried out across settings, and be frequent enough to monitor children's progress toward their individual goals and objectives. DAP guidelines contain a similar emphasis on multisource evaluation and stress the inappropriateness of relying exclusively on standardized measures. They fail, however, to stress the importance of continuous measurement of young children to monitor their progress within a curriculum. In fact, the DAP guidelines appear to reject active promotion of developmental progress as a program goal. They do not suggest assessment alternatives that would meet the monitoring requirements that are critical to insuring appropriate placement of young children with disabilities in curriculum areas that are mandated by federal law (P.L. 99-457).

Fourth, instructional methodologies/procedures for teaching young children with special needs should be effective, efficient, functional, and normalized. According to Bailey and McWilliam (1990), by definition, *effective* procedures result in skill acquisition, *efficient* procedures make best use of instructional time, *functional* procedures promote generalization, and *normalized* procedures use the least intrusive and most natural techniques. Seldom do instructional procedures uphold all four of these standards to the same degree. ECSE traditionally has emphasized the first two criteria (i.e., effectiveness and efficiency) for judging the quality of teaching procedures but incorporates all four into its programs; the DAP guidelines focus on the last criterion (i.e., normalization). For example, the DAP guidelines state that "adults facilitate a child's successful completion of tasks by providing support, focused attention, physical proximity, and verbal encouragement" (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 10).

Clearly, all teachers of young children must have a range of teaching strategies at their disposal. The teachers of young children with special needs, however, face the challenge of classrooms of children with individual and, perhaps, very different needs. These

teachers need a variety of teaching strategies, some of which emphasize efficiency and result in rapid skill acquisition, some of which are functional and promote skill generalization, and some of which are highly normalized. Teachers must then have the awareness and skills to choose from a range of procedures, depending on many factors: the skill or behavior to be taught; the need for expediency in producing behavior change; the amenability of the behavior to less intrusive or more normalized procedures; the social acceptability of the procedure, as judged by parents, teachers, and other team members; and empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of the technique. The DAP guidelines, in offering a single approach for teaching, place undue restrictions on the options for teaching young children with disabilities.

Fifth, whatever types of instructional procedures are employed by the teacher, they should result in high levels of active involvement and participation in activities. The DAP guidelines state that "teachers prepare the environment for children to learn through active exploration and interaction with adults, other children, and materials.... The process of interacting with materials and people results in learning" (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 3).

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This DAP principle is directly aligned with the importance placed on active engagement in early intervention (Carta, Sainato, & Greenwood, 1988; McWilliam, Trivette, & Dunst, 1985). The DAP guidelines imply, however, that children will be most engaged when they are free to choose their own activities. This may not hold true for some children with disabilities who cannot or will not initiate activities independently. Teachers of young children with special needs must realize that if students with special needs are to participate fully in free-choice activities, specific instructional strategies may be required to teach students to initiate, use materials appropriately, and make choices. Without such training, some children with disabilities may not access the opportunities for learning and interaction that are available in their environment.

Sixth, programs serving young children with special needs should focus on strengthening the abilities of families to nurture their children's development and to promote

normalized community adaptation. The DAP guidelines also place strong emphasis on parental involvement, but not to the extent that is found in early intervention programs. The focus of the DAP guidelines is on regular communication between home and school, and on the importance of parental participation in making decisions about their child's care and education (Bredekamp, 1987). DAP guidelines do not acknowledge parent and family needs as a focus of services, as they are in ECSE programs. According to Johnson, McGonigle, and Kaufman (1989), families should be provided with services in a way that promotes the integration of the child and the family into the community.

Seventh, programs serving young children with special needs must be outcome-based, with specific criteria, procedures, and timelines used to determine if individual children progress toward stated outcomes. This principle is paramount in early childhood special education, just as it is in special education in general. Simply put, young children with special needs must be provided services that are educationally beneficial (*Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson School v. Rowley*, 1982), and programs providing those services have the burden of proof to substantiate that those benefits are being made (P.L. 99-457). This is perhaps the area of greatest discrepancy between what is required in ECSE programs and the guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

[Accountability] is perhaps the area of greatest discrepancy between what is required in ECSE programs and the guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

Accountability is a bedrock principle in early intervention practice; DAP guidelines, however, were developed in reaction to an "accountability culture" (Hatch & Freeman, 1988), which, when applied to education, pushes for demonstrations of pupil progress on competency-based and norm-referenced tests. This has resulted in a downward shift of academic expectations into early primary and early childhood education programs (Elkind, 1986; Kamii, 1985; Sava, 1987). "The consequence of this pressure for accountability is that young children are being pushed to do more than they are developmentally ready to do" (Hatch & Freedman, 1988, p. 145). Programs that serve young children with special needs, however, need to demonstrate that they are moving children forward, toward the goal of increasing normalization. If a child does not demonstrate such progress, the teacher must be alerted to make changes in the program or to intensify efforts so that some progress is realized.

DAP guidelines, however, were developed in reaction to an "accountability culture."

These contrasting positions on accountability reflect key philosophical differences about the validity of intervention to accelerate a child's development. The DAP guidelines are based on the premise that young children who are developing normally do not need much more than a safe, carefully planned environment that encourages the type of cognitive and social interactions and responses that will prepare them for future, more structured educational and noneducational settings. This view is consistent with the Piagetian notion of readiness, which assumes that children acquire new knowledge and increasingly complex understanding only through experience (Kamii, 1985). This perspective of learning maintains that children develop according to predetermined stages, and early training will not move the child through that sequence of development any faster. Advocates of this viewpoint contend that formal or more intense instruction in the early years will not accelerate children's development—and may even prove harmful (Elkind, 1986). In contrast, the field of ECSE is based on the environmentalist position that it is possible to accelerate children's developmental progress beyond rates that would occur without intervention (Hayden & Dmitriev, 1975; Ramey & Bryant, 1982; Ramey, Bryant, & Suarez, 1985). But those interventions must consist of more than well-planned, safe, and nurturing environments. Children need *direct* intervention that addresses their specific individual needs (Odom & McEvoy, 1990; Peterson, 1987).

Summary

Obviously, the DAP guidelines have much in common with some of the basic premises of ECSE. Both approaches agree that curricula for programs for young children must be broad enough to include children with varying interests and skill levels. Both agree with the concept of individualization, and about the importance of identifying naturalistic opportunities for instruction and using child-initiated activities for implementing instructional interactions. Finally, both agree that children learn best in programs that foster active participation with instructional materials and in programs that promote the active involvement of parents. However, in spite of these areas of overlap in their basic premises, there remain two major issues that separate the two camps: (a) whether teacher-directed programs have deleterious effects on young children, and (b) whether interventions can change the developmental course of a young child with special needs. The section

below provides a select review of some of the research studies surrounding these issues.

Research Evidence

Does Formal Instruction Produce Deleterious Effects on Young Children?

The debate over formal instruction for young children has been hotly contested in the early childhood literature (e.g., Gallagher & Sigel, 1987; Gersten, Darch, & Gleason, 1988; Hiebert, 1988). However, to date, there is little research to support the claims that formal instruction is detrimental—or, conversely, that an approach following DAP guidelines is especially efficacious in enhancing child development. Unfortunately, the literature on the topic consists primarily of theoretically/philosophical discussions (e.g., Kamii, 1985; Manning & Manning, 1981), program descriptions (e.g., Myers & Maurer, 1987), and anecdotal reports of case studies (Elkind, 1987). Even some of the often-cited empirical studies reporting deleterious outcomes are equivocal, have limited generality, or are difficult to interpret because of methodological limitations. Some of those studies are reviewed below.

One of the most commonly cited studies reporting damaging long-term outcomes resulting from early formal instruction was conducted by Schweinhart, Weikart, and Larner (1986). Those authors examined the follow-up data of children from low socioeconomic groups who participated in different high quality preschool programs: High/Scope, Direct Instruction, and traditional nursery school. Children from all groups exhibited gains in I.Q. scores during preschool and had similar levels of school achievement over time. At age 15, however, the students in the direct instruction group reported the highest rates of delinquent activities, the poorest relationships with their families, and the least participation in school-sponsored activities. The authors interpreted these data to suggest that early exposure to high levels of teacher direction was related to juvenile delinquency in adolescence. However, a plausible and untested alternative explanation could have been that delinquent activities were related to demographic characteristics of the direct instruction group (e.g., a comparatively higher percentage of males from single-parent families) (see Shinn, Ramsey, Walker, Stieber, & O'Neill, 1987).

Other research that has been cited to document the deleterious effects of structured programming was conducted recently on a sample of nondisabled children from middle and upper class families. This series of studies by Hyson and her colleagues (Hirsh-Pasek, Hyson, Rescorla, & Cone, 1989; Rescorla, Hyson, Hirsh-Pasek, & Cone, in press) found that children who attended academic-focused preschools and had "high

pressure" mothers were more likely to demonstrate test anxiety than were other students but were *not* more likely to demonstrate superior academic achievement. In these studies, however, one cannot completely separate effects due to preschool activities from those of the mothers' behavior. It is quite plausible that continuous experience from birth with a high pressure mother would be more influential than the comparatively limited experience in preschool. Furthermore, the authors' discussion of these results focuses on the possible deleterious effects of academic preschools and virtually ignores positive child outcomes that were associated with such schools in their studies (e.g., higher self-confidence in a testing situation and lower levels of dependent and hostile behavior in the classroom). In summary, these studies have not provided convincing evidence that teacher-directed instruction is harmful, nor have they substantiated that adherence to developmentally appropriate practice (e.g., child-directed and nonacademic in focus) leads to better outcomes for average children or, more importantly, *for children who are at risk or who have disabilities.*

Can Intervention Change the Developmental Course of a Young Child with Special Needs?

A basic construct underlying ECSE is that, for some children, adult-structured programming is necessary to enhance their development and mitigate progressive delay and the emergence of secondary disabilities. One particularly clear line of investigation that relates to this issue has focused on programs for children with Down syndrome. The literature has documented a typical progressive decline in the developmental status of children with Down syndrome over the early childhood years (Hanson, 1981). One program designed to prevent such a decline was reported by Hanson and Schwarz (1978). Beginning approximately 14 weeks after birth, children participated with their parents in structured intervention activities focused on building specific skills. In comparison to previously published data on similar children, the children in this study achieved motor and perceptual-motor milestones at considerable earlier ages than children with Down syndrome who had not received intervention. Similar improvements have been found for preschoolers with Down syndrome who participated in home-based or center-based programs that included direct and incidental teaching methods focused on communicative development (Kysela, Hillyard, McDonald, & Ahlston-Taylor, 1981). Over 6- to 14-month periods, children receiving intervention exhibited accelerated gains on norm-referenced tests of cognitive and linguistic development.

Conclusions from current research on the efficacy of early intervention in this area must be qualified, due to methodological limitations, such as the lack of true

control groups. Nevertheless, with careful consideration of such limitations, reviewers of this literature have concluded that the aggregate of results from diverse studies provides consistent evidence that early, structured intervention can be effective in preventing predicted developmental declines for children with Down syndrome (e.g., Bricker, 1989; Guralnick & Bricker, 1987).

Nevertheless, with careful consideration of such limitations, reviewers of this literature have concluded that the aggregate of results from diverse studies provides consistent evidence that early, structured intervention can be effective in preventing predicted developmental declines.

A second line of research focused on the efficacy of structured ECSE programs for children with autism or autistic-like behaviors. In a series of studies, Strain and his colleagues examined the effectiveness of an intensive integrated preschool program for young children with autism that included structured individualized programming (Hoyson, Jamieson, & Strain, 1984; Strain, Jamieson, & Hoyson, 1986). After 2 years, in the program, target children doubled their scores on the Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP) (Sanford & Selman, 1981), and both their LAP scores and their rates of social interaction with peers were comparable to those of children without disabilities in the program.

The effectiveness of specific program components was demonstrated through single-subject research strategies. This research clearly illustrates how intensive adult-structured intervention can produce remarkable improvements in the prognosis for children with autism (Guralnick, 1988; Simeonsson, Olley, & Rosenthal, 1987).

The studies cited above, as well as many others, provide empirical support for the effectiveness of structured interventions for young children with special needs, and demonstrate that failure to intervene places children at relatively greater risk for developmental decline and restricted future educational opportunities (Guralnick & Bennett, 1987). Yet, to date, research has not included direct comparisons of structured interventions and the unstructured, child-directed strategies advocated by DAP proponents. However, it would appear that, currently, the burden of proof is on the proponents of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, to demonstrate the effectiveness of relatively unstructured educational approaches for young children with special needs.

Implications for Integration of Young Children with Disabilities

The debate between ECSE and DAP takes on particular significance with regard to the issue of integration. Does the divergence of opinion over the effects of structured procedures and the role of direct intervention on development create insurmountable barriers to integrating young children with disabilities into regular early education settings? Does the need for intervention or specialized services for young children with disabilities require specialized restrictive settings? The overwhelming response to these questions in the ECSE literature is "No" (Bricker, Bruder, & Bailey, 1982; Guralnick, 1990; Hanson & Hanline, 1989; Jenkins, Odom, & Speltz, 1989; Odom & McEvoy, 1990). The need is not for specialized settings but for specialized teaching (McLean & Hanline, 1990; Taylor, 1988). Special instruction—instruction that is effective, efficient, functional, and normalizing—can be delivered in integrated settings. As Taylor contends, integration should not be confused with services that are less intense. Our

Studies...provide empirical support for the effectiveness of structured interventions for young children with special needs, and demonstrate that failure to intervene places children at relatively greater risk for developmental decline and restricted future educational opportunities.

current challenge as early childhood special educators is to devise program models in which special instruction can be delivered in nonspecialized settings. These models do exist (e.g., Dunlap, Robbins, Dollman, & Plien, 1988; Johnson, Rogers, Johnson, & McMillan, 1989; Peck, Killen, & Baumgart, 1989). In addition, more naturalistic teaching procedures that can be accommodated into integrated settings are being generated by ECSE (see Odom & McEvoy, 1990). Nonetheless, as we develop models of integration, we must continue to strive for the standards of quality that have been our tradition in ECSE.

Standards for Evaluating ECSE

Despite the current popularity of the DAP approach, the empirical question of its value for children with and without disabilities remains unanswered. The efficacy of the DAP approach must be evaluated using standards common to high quality ECSE programs before we can advocate a complete integration of DAP into ECSE best practices. Thus, the challenge before us is to

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hood programs. The primary goal of the intervention, and therefore its primary criterion for evaluation, must be

Until the question of efficacy of the DAP approach is answered, however, ECSE should do nothing less than advocate programs that use instructional strategies that have proven to be effective, efficient, and functional in as normalizing a context as possible.

its effectiveness for promoting children's optimal functioning. Thus, while social validity or acceptability is an explicit goal for ECSE programs, it can only be used as a secondary dependent variable (Schwartz & Baer, 1990). Program acceptability without demonstrated effectiveness is an insufficient outcome; yet, conversely, even the most effective early intervention program that is not acceptable to members of the child's family and educational environment also is not adequate. Therefore, if components of the DAP approach improve the effectiveness as well as the acceptability of early intervention programs, they should be considered essential elements of ECSE best practices. If, however, DAP improves the acceptability of the program while proving to be detrimental to child outcomes, this approach becomes a liability rather than an asset to early intervention programs.

Conclusions

The danger to the field of early intervention would be in adopting the guidelines of DAP to the potential exclusion of principles and practices that we know are important for the instructional effectiveness of ECSE programs. The current empirical support for the effectiveness of the DAP approach is limited in scope, particularly for young children with special needs. Yet, it would not be prudent to dismiss the potential contributions of DAP for early childhood intervention without further investigation. Proponents of DAP should be encouraged to undertake research that will demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach for all children with and without disabilities. Meanwhile, the goal of ECSE should continue to be the provision of the best possible services to young children with disabilities. If incorporating aspects of the DAP approach is demonstrated to facilitate this goal, then we should encourage such an integration. Until the question of efficacy of the DAP approach is answered, however, ECSE should do nothing less than advocate programs that use instructional strategies that have proven to be effective, efficient, and functional in as normalizing a context as possible.

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DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

What it is starting to look like.



I see you are not ready for spelling. Would you like to do show and tell?

Clarifying the Developmental Perspective in Response to Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell

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Abstract: A reaction to Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell is given to shed light on the meaning of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) for early childhood education (ECE) and for early childhood special education (ECSE). Evidence is offered that nondirective instructional models are indeed beneficial in early childhood and that, moreover, they are effective and workable with special needs children. DAP is viewed as a working hypothesis and as a continuous variable, not as a dichotomous variable. Areas of needed work are suggested to further identify and articulate the relationships between the two sister disciplines of ECE and ECSE.

In the preceding article of this issue, Carta, Schwartz, Atwater, and McConnell attempted to clarify the overlap between the suggested "best practices" of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and those recommended by experts in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). They concluded that although developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) as advocated by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) may serve as a necessary guidepost for planning, implementing, and evaluating ECSE programs, it would most certainly not be sufficient for professionals coming from either orientation to rely solely on DAP as a guide when working with children with disabilities or families across a continuum of ECE services or settings (e.g., "institutionalized," "integrated," "mainstreamed," etc.). By examining seven basic premises of ECSE and comparing them with DAP, Carta et al. drive home a central point that "while DAP has focused primarily on preventing attempts to artificially accelerate the progress of children who are developing normally, the explicit mission of ECSE is to produce outcomes that would not occur in the absence of intervention or teaching" (p. 60).

A cardinal principle of ECSE and Early Intervention (EI) is "to provide *intervention* for children with special needs as early and comprehensively as possible in the least restrictive setting" (Carta et al., p. 60, this issue). Time is urgent lest children with disabilities fall even further behind their normally developing peers. This

"widening gap" phenomenon often derives from the multiplicative or mushrooming effects of delays and impairments in early motoric and conceptual acquisitions in those children so affected. Consequently, an almost "medical model mentality" (and the associated intervention tools of assessment and instruction) is needed to secure precision and structure within systematic educational intervention. The challenge, so to speak, is to nip various problems in the bud to the fullest possible extent. This attitude, with its accompanying technology, is decidedly absent in DAP, and may in fact have been intentionally excluded in its formulation. Certainly, systematic intervention and programmed environments (i.e., pre-planned, structured, teacher-led, goal-focused) are solid cornerstones of EI and sound practice in ECSE; this is not the case in ECE, at least not to the same degree.

Our purpose in this article is to offer a critique of Carta et al. aimed at clarifying and explaining the developmental perspective and DAP vis-à-vis both ECE and ECSE. Specifically, we take issue with and seek to augment the selective literature review contained in the second half of the article and centered on (a) "whether teacher-directed programs have deleterious effects on young children" and (b) "whether interventions can change the developmental course of a young child with special needs" (pp. 63-64). We reframe these questions, slanting them from our developmental perspective, to read: (a) What are the benefits of

nondirective instructional models? (b) Are nondirective (i.e., open-framework, inquiry-based) teaching strategies effective and workable with special needs children? We draw distinctions not made in Carta et al. first between child-centered and interaction-centered learning (vs. task-centered learning), and second between *developmentally appropriate* instruction and

Enhancement of the quality of experiences afforded to young children was obviously the original intent, but it soon became apparent that DAP could serve political and advocacy aims in negotiating with the educational establishment and dealing with the public-at-large. A "flag to rally around" would be very helpful for public relations. Compromises were accepted to achieve this aim.

evaluation versus *developmental* instruction and evaluation. Furthermore, the difference between *horizontal learning* and *vertical learning*, the dilemma of contingency teaching (i.e., solving the problem of the match), and reckoning with "child effects" on adult change agents are discussed to cast some light on the perennial problems of knowing *how* to teach young children and knowing *why* we are teaching them, complementing a concern with the what, where, when, and who questions. DAP is recast as a continuum, not a dichotomous qualifier.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

DAP was born from meetings of the NAEYC in the mid-80s in an effort to foster professional identity and visibility for the early childhood practitioner, administrator, supervisor, teacher educator, curricular specialist, and the like (Bredekamp, 1987, 1991). Enhancement of the quality of experiences afforded to young children was obviously the original intent, but it soon became apparent that DAP could serve political and

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advocacy aims in negotiating with the educational establishment and dealing with the public-at-large. A "flag to rally around" would be very helpful for public relations. Compromises were accepted to achieve this

aim. For instance, a "majority rules" *modus operandi* prevailed with Montessori and constructivist (e.g., Piagetian) contingencies figuratively, if not literally, elbowing behaviorists out of meeting rooms and committees when DAP was being drafted. Consensus concerns dominated and it was assumed that it would be difficult enough for Montessorians and Piagetians to agree and well-nigh impossible to get either to agree with behaviorists about DAP (Powell, 1990). Accordingly, the position paper or policy statement on DAP that emerged slighted behaviorists and learning theorists. Few ECE professionals of whichever educational philosophical persuasion, it should be noted, entertained any delusions that "minority" position papers from information processing theorists, social cognitive or learning theorists, or behaviorists would have been out of order or unimportant. The overriding concern was to build consensus and to advance the field of ECE as a whole and to enhance the status of the profession. Showing that there are quality standards to be concerned about, over and beyond minimum state regulations, also motivated this movement. Finally, it should be stressed that the purpose of the position statement put out by NAEYC was to define *developmentally*

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appropriate as a major but *not as the only* determinant of a quality ECE program. (See Bredekamp [1991], Jipson [1991], Kessler [1991], and Spodek [1985, 1991] for further discussion of the history and the contemporary issues surrounding the emergence and development of DAP.)

DAP was never seen as needing to be exclusively or even primarily based on the research literature.

Furthermore, DAP was never seen as needing to be exclusively or even primarily based on the research literature. DAP was not to be "etched in stone," to be dogmatically adhered to for years unending. Rather, the DAP guidelines were to reflect state-of-the-art craft knowledge informed by scholarly knowledge (i.e., theoretical and empirical evidence from the research literature). Folklore and personal accounts of best practices passed on from one generation of teachers to the next counted a great deal. Changes and revisions were expected to accommodate new developments in edu-

cation and science, in families, and in society. In other words, DAP was conceived as a living document. The types of citations used to reference the NAEYC publication of DAP guidelines clearly indicate a reliance on sources other than articles reporting original empirical data (i.e., bona fide research). Indeed, DAP is anchored heavily by "how-to" practical books, textbooks, think pieces, and reviews. Only 13 of 125 references cited in the DAP report were original reports of research (Kontos, 1989). A "full-proof case" on what is best for young children in educational and childcare settings is clearly

DAP assumes that knowledge is built during the process of the person interacting with the object. Knowledge is not discovered by the child as it is transmitted from the teacher or the lesson as it unfolds.

not pretentiously assumed. DAP needs to be understood in this light. DAP is not dogma, but a working hypothesis (Kostelnik, 1992). In time, DAP might develop to come to serve both ECE and ECSE, separately and in merger.

Critique of Carta et al.

Carta et al. stated that "the philosophy of early education ... proposes that preschool programs should be child centered" (p. 59). This is Carta et al.'s first listed distinguishing characteristic of DAP. It is a misrepresentation of DAP. DAP is not child centered, nor is it age based. Rather, it is child sensitive and experienced based.

DAP, like the baby bear's chair in the story of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," is neither too hard nor too soft, but is just right! DAP is neither teacher centered nor learner centered, neither lesson or task centered nor child centered in a permissive sense; rather, DAP is child sensitive and "interaction centered." Not focusing primarily on either the learner (child centered) or on the curriculum (skill centered),

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DAP seeks to balance or to integrate the two, recognizing the basic interactional nature of learning and instruction. Constructivism as an educational philoso-

phy that undergirds DAP assumes that knowledge is built during the process of the person interacting with the object. Knowledge is not discovered by the child as it is transmitted from the teacher or the lesson as it unfolds. Nor is what the child obtains from the learning encounter merely an invention, made up from inside the child's developing mind. Learning in the short term and development in the long term are processes that pertain to the interaction among the persons, the objects, and the context.

No-nonsense, back-to-basics academic programs that stress storage and retrieval of static knowledge are "too hard" and thus are developmentally inappropriate, and maturational "Let Mother Nature Take Her Course," or child- or play-centered programs are "too soft" and are likewise inappropriate for children. The developmental approach, in contrast to the academic or the maturational approach, is the third prevailing force in ECE and takes a contextualized, holistic view of the child and asks not what *can* children learn but what *should* and *do* children learn. The teacher must be an astute observer of children's activities and behavior in all areas of the curriculum, understand the curricular area and the development of the child in relation to the curricular area, and provide for learning opportunities accordingly. A balance is sought between teacher-led or convergent-thinking activities and child-initiated or divergent activities. The teacher does not accommodate to the child all the time in all ways, nor, on the other hand, expect of the child overly rigid adherence to the task or what might be called the teacher's agenda (Katz, 1991).

In this view, Carta et al. mistakenly claimed that one of DAP's primary messages is "that preschool environments should emphasize exploratory play activities rather than formal academic instruction" (p. 59). The adult's role in early childhood settings that enroll children with diverse educational needs, including special educational needs, is much more active than what Carta et al. suggested in their article. Extremes are oppositional, but the current charge in the field of ECE has been to articulate pedagogy and curriculum that captures finer gradations between these end points (Johnson, 1988). For example, teachers using DAP guidelines involve themselves in guided self-discovery instruction and inquiry-based teaching. Epistemic (information-seeking) and ludic (self-assimilatory) behaviors are both recognized as legitimate targets of process and outcome as play has become a more differentiated construct, seen as reflecting and furthering the child's learning and development. To be sure, DAP touts an *intellectual* curriculum, not an academic one, hoping to reduce the toll of curriculum-disabled young children who suffer from "learned stupidity" and "damaged disposition" (Katz, 1987). Illustrations of model

preschool curriculum programs at the cusp of ECE and representing the developmental approach include Lillian Katz's (Katz & Chards, 1989) project approach, Sigel's (1987) *Educating the Young Thinker*, Weikart's (Weikart & Schweinhart, 1987) High/Scope Model, Tuft University's (Wexler-Sherman, Gardner, & Feldman, 1987) Project Spectrum, and Forman's (Forman & Hill, 1984; Forman & Kuschner, 1977) school for constructivist play. All these programs share a commitment to DAP and open-framework learning and eschew didactic, academic instruction.

No-nonsense, back-to-basics academic programs that stress storage and retrieval of static knowledge are "too hard" and thus are developmentally inappropriate...

Still, it would be unfair to characterize DAP-inspired programs in ECE as against the use of directive procedures. Teachers following DAP ideally aspire toward precision contingency teaching, thus becoming as directive as needed under specific circumstances. Contingency teaching entails reading cues from the child in the task context and seeking the optimal degree of structure and direction. DAP is a dynamic continuum, not the kind of fixed "either/or" proposition that Carta et al. made it out to be (Kostelnik, 1992).

DAP guidelines are intended to be flexible and to suggest various approaches to successful teaching, a far cry from Carta et al.'s accusation that DAP is restrictive "in a single approach for teaching" (p. 61). Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but myopia can be an infliction suffered by outsiders or the uninformed. Is there an unconscious but nevertheless pernicious blind spot operating? Recall Jerome Bruner's (1986) quip that, given our research base, "There is no reason save ideology and the exercise of political control, to opt for a single model of the learner" (p. 200). One cannot help but wonder whether this straw man set up by Carta et al. likewise is motivated by an ideological intent. In any case setting sides like this tends to generate more heat than light on the important underlying issues.

Critical distinction is drawn between DAP, as the concept has taken on meaning in the field of ECE, and developmental programs, either assessment or instruction, as used in ECSE. As alluded to in the preceding two paragraphs, DAP seeks to integrate the teacher's and the child's agenda to allow for meaningful engagements and satisfying and worthwhile learning or assessment encounters. DAP is *authentically* individualized. There is a willingness to change the task to fit the specific situation as well as the learner's needs and

level of interest at the time. In the field of ECSE, excluding individualized service or program plans, individualized developmental assessment or developmental instruction is often *not authentically* individualized and thus becomes developmentally inappropriate practice. This occurs whenever mastery to criterion is insisted on. The only dimension that really varies then is time or number of trials to successful completion. As Lillian Katz (1987) commented, individualization in such cases is "time-on-task, time-on-deadly-task" (p. 156). In stark contrast, authentically individualized practice requires an openness to the dynamic processes that transpire in real time whenever the child is engaged in a potential learning situation. Vital is the willingness on the part of the teacher or diagnostician to take full advantage of what the child contributes to the situation.

As noted earlier, DAP is based on theory, but it is important to note that it is not itself a theory, but rather a set of guiding principles for curriculum and instruction as well as for assessment. Practices that should change as a function of developmental status and the learner's prior experiences fall under the general rubric of DAP. Some practices, this implies, are always appropriate or inappropriate regardless of the learner's status. For instance humiliating the learner, exhibiting disrespect, or condemning a child's future as hopeless are always inappropriate practices, whereas manifesting respect for the learner is always appropriate. As Katz (1991, 1992) has noted, developmental principles underlie DAP, such as the younger the child the more necessary it is to recognize the importance of "horizontal learning" as opposed to "vertical learning." *Horizontal learning* pertains to expansion and enrichment resulting from the child's making connections and acquiring concepts from his or her experiences in the

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immediate sense, on a day-to-day basis. *Vertical learning*, in contrast, is learning for the distant future, steps in a curricular spiral or sequence. Horizontal learning is contextualized, relevant, and meaningful to the child whereas vertical learning often is not, the latter making logical sense to the adult teacher but not to the child.

There always needs to be some of each type of learning encouraged even as the child matures and the added demand for vertical learning becomes developmentally appropriate. Unfortunately, many interventions in special education harp on vertical learning at the expense of horizontal learning even with young learners and are thus ipso facto developmentally inappropriate. Special educators have a tendency to deny the ability of special children to assume responsibility for their own learning (Wang, 1990). These roles of self-responsibility and self-instruction are characteristics of an active learner who participates in the learning process with the teacher.

Horizontal learning must not be replaced by vertical learning as is more often the case in programs governed by the strictures of behaviorism as opposed to constructivism.

Another major problem concerns Carta et al.'s claim that DAP focuses on normalization, "the DAP guidelines focus on the last criterion (i.e., normalization)" (p. 61). Although it is true that ECE considers *normalization*, *contextualism*, and *ecological validity* to be of paramount importance, it is misleading to suggest that it does so at the expense of the remaining three criteria of models of instruction or educational programming in general (i.e., *effectiveness*, *efficiency*, and *functionality*). Certainly, all educators seek and assume that their labors will result in learning (effectiveness) and that this learning will stabilize (transfer across situations) and endure over time (functionality). Indeed, a strength of DAP and the developmental perspective in general is its strong emphasis on the long-term consequences for the child of any intervention. Whereas the premium put on time and energy ("bang for the buck" or the efficacy of instruction criterion) may not be as important for ECE as it is for ECSE, nevertheless it does remain a consideration. Moreover, as Carta et al. confessed, stability and durability of effects has remained a serious problem even in exemplary EI programs, particularly those that stress vertical learning and neglect horizontal learning. One is reminded of the tale of the tortoise and the hare, with DAP stressing the point that it is not how fast or how far the child can be made to go, but *how well* the child goes. A balanced emphasis on all four criteria of models of instruction (i.e., *effectiveness*, *efficacy*, *functionality*, and *normalization*) obviously is the ideal to seek. At issue is how we know when the "catch-up" or the "not fall further behind" obsession with special needs children becomes the "psychology of more" or the "life is great when you

accelerate" syndrome, with children falling victim to the "hothousing effect" (Gallagher & Sigel, 1987) or "miseducation" (Elkind, 1987). Generalization and transfer are then doomed and children become "curriculum-disabled" (Elkind, 1983). Horizontal learning must not be replaced by vertical learning as is more often the case in programs governed by the strictures of behaviorism as opposed to constructivism.

Evidence in Favor of Open-Framework Instructional Models

Selected data are presented suggesting the benefits of nondirective instructional models. Note that all of the model preschool programs at the cusp of the field of ECE alluded to earlier in this article (e.g., Katz & Chard, 1989; Sigel, 1987) have supporting documentation and testimony in relation to nonhandicapped children (cf. Roopnarine & Johnson, 1987). Accordingly, we will seek to show that there is evidence that nondirective (i.e., open-framework, inquiry-based) teaching strategies are effective and desirable with special needs children, to augment the review presented by Carta et al. If the jury is in agreement that open-framework instructional models are all right for special needs youngsters, *a fortiori*, the verdict should be accepted for nonhandicapped children.

Whereas currently available research supports the conclusion that EI has significant and positive effects on young children with handicaps (Casto & Mastropieri, 1986), less is known about the effects of different types of intervention on at-risk or special needs young children. Most of the evaluative intervention studies that are longitudinal in nature have focused on socioeconomically disadvantaged children, and not on "at-risk" populations or on those with handicaps (e.g., Lazar & Darlington, 1982; Schweinhart, Berrueta-Clement, Barnett, Epstein, & Weikart, 1985). Still, there is scattered evidence that nondirective intervention works well for the latter types of children. Research has been done examining both teacher-child and parent-child teaching strategies.

Investigations conducted at the University of Washington on children from 3 to 6 years of age with developmental delays have contrasted direct instruction and cognitive mediated learning curricular models of early education (Cole, Mills, Dale, & Jenkins, 1991; Cole, Mills, & Dale, 1989; Dale & Cole, 1988). Direct instruction, developed by Engelmann and his colleagues (Becker, 1977; Becker, Engelmann, & Thomas, 1975), is teacher directed and fast paced and uses highly structured presentation of content focused on academic skills. Mediated learning is based on the work of Feuerstein (Feuerstein, Rand, Hoffman, & Miller, 1980), modified by Haywood (Burns et al., 1983) for preschoolers, and emphasized the development and

generalization of the cognitive processes of input, elaboration, and output (i.e., cognitive processes of comparison, classification, perspective-changing, and sequencing), rather than specific academic content. These studies have shown that both models result in significant gains in cognitive and academic skills following intervention. Any differential effects of the two contrasting models diminish by the second year postintervention, although the overall benefits of EI appear to continue. Furthermore, Cole et al. (1991) most recently reported that youngsters with especially mild handicaps versus those with more severe handicaps benefit from integrated classroom instruction. Children with mild handicaps seem to be able to benefit from the increased complexity and higher expectations found in integrated programs. On the other hand, children with more severe handicaps fared much better in "pull-out" programs with other children with disabilities. Heightened tolerance for diversity among children and increased parental satisfaction, however, were advantages associated only with the integrated model. Outcomes varied considerably by individual student.

The field seems to be moving from the separate camps, inductive and deductive approaches, to a unified camp where both approaches are acceptable depending on the child, the context, and the lesson.

Powell (1982) investigated how well student teachers could implement nondirective (i.e., "playful") versus directive (i.e., "instructional") language intervention procedures with five 2- and 3-year-old children with cognitive and language delays. Analysis of videotapes indicated that student teachers were capable of performing the intervention procedures. Moreover, the nondirective intervention procedures were effective in increasing the percentage of opportunities during which children comprehended and produced object names. The results revealed that children's comprehension and production of the object names generalized across semantic relations and pragmatic functions. The findings support an ecological approach to language learning (Warren & Kaiser, 1986, 1988) and more generally support the "social milieu" versus direct instruction strategy in EI (Hayes, 1989).

Warren and Kaiser (1986) have examined the effects of incidental teaching to develop communicative competence in language-impaired children. This form of teaching emphasizes interaction between the participants in an unstructured setting. Incidental teaching focuses on the child's interest at the moment, utilizes

the child's language strengths, and draws the child forward in language development through techniques such as expansion and modeling. Warren and Kaiser (1986) endorse incidental teaching as a promising method of language intervention especially in the area of generalizability to other situations. It should be noted that Warren and Kaiser (1988) have witnessed a "convergence" in language intervention approaches. The field seems to be moving from the separate camps, inductive and deductive approaches, to a unified camp where both approaches are acceptable depending on the child, the context, and the lesson.

The Transaction Intervention Program (TRIP) developed by Mahoney and Powell (1986, 1988) in Connecticut represents another success story for the developmental perspective in ECSE. TRIP is characterized by turn taking and the interactive match (e.g., decreasing the frequency of directives, following the child's lead). TRIP originally was implemented in home-based public school programs for birth to 3-year-old children with handicaps, and more recently has been put to use in broader contexts. Analyses revealed that parents most effective in using TRIP strategies of turn taking and interactive match were highly responsive and sensitive and relatively child oriented and nondirective with their children. Furthermore, TRIP strategies were significantly and positively associated with relative developmental gains that the children made during the interventions. Mahoney and Powell concluded:

Directive instructional procedures are not necessary to promote the development of young handicapped children. The TRIP model is incompatible with many current early childhood special education practices that emphasize direct instruction ... a responsive, child-oriented approach, in which children are encouraged to engage in activities that interest them and that they enjoy, is an effective means for achieving the developmental objectives of early intervention. (p. 94)

However, Mahoney and Powell's correlational data cannot test directional hypotheses.

Corroborating evidence comes from Slater (1983) who developed and assessed the impact of nondirective parental teaching strategies based on Sigel's (1982) distancing theory of the development of representation competence. Sigel's system defines language complexity as a function of the degree the speaker represents concepts distant in time and place from the listener. Strategies are used in context, naturalistically, and often in open question form. Working with intergenerational retarded families in central rural

Wisconsin, Slater over the course of 6 weeks taught mothers from one third of the families to use "high-level" distancing strategies (e.g., infer, plan, propose alternatives, evaluate outcomes, etc.), from one third of the families to use "low-level" strategies (e.g., label, produce information, observe, demonstrate), and from one third of the families no particular strategy at all (i.e., control group). Preschool children at risk for mental retardation from both experimental treatments significantly outperformed the control group children on the Verbal, Quantitative, and Memory subscales of the McCarthy. The high-level distancing group was more successful in enhancing their children's ability to score well on the Numerical Memory, Verbal Memory II, and Opposite Analogies subtests of the McCarthy than either the low-level distancing or the control group.

Rather than a "teach now, expect learning now" orientation, better to have a "teach now, expect learning later" attitude.

From Education Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton come further reports of the benefits of nondirective distancing strategies versus directive low-level or controlling strategies with preschoolers with handicaps (Sigel, McGillicuddy-DeLisi, Flaughner, & Rock, 1983). These researchers studied 160 families, half with a preschool-age child diagnosed by a service external to ETS (e.g., public school child study team, Project Child, speech and hearing clinics, etc.) as having a language or communication disorder. Intensive study was undertaken of family functioning and child well-being. Among the significant results these investigators reported, "we have shown that parent's use of didactic-controlling strategies related negatively to the children's performance on virtually all of our tasks" (i.e., cognitive task battery). They concluded:

The implication of this research for those working with communication handicapped children is clear. Since distancing strategies do relate positively to communication handicapped children's representational competence, practitioners might be well to incorporate these findings into their own practice. We have identified the negative outcomes for didactic controlling strategies—suggesting that there might be a self-fulfilling prophecy operating here, both for practitioners and for parents—the less able the child is judged, the more didactic and the cycle begins. (p. 94)

Clearly, all educators, parents and teachers alike, must solve the problem of the match to be optimally

effective with learners. Using contingency teaching strategies that emphasize "child effects" is required for a solution. In ECSE, unfortunately, one often finds teachers inadvertently stymieing young children with handicaps by being overbearing and providing an inordinate amount of structure and direction (Wolock, 1990). Failure to recognize the vital importance of the child's role in learning (i.e., constructivistic processes) can preempt chances for the learner's consolidation, meaning, and functionality. Reductionistic and decontextualized approaches to tasks and learning typically go hand in hand with highly structured lessons and teacher directiveness defeating good intention. Long-term goals for the child suffer when teachers insist on their own immediate reinforcement derived from seeing the child make the overtly correct but superficial response in the short run. DAP requires a "decoupling" of teaching and an expectation of immediate learning. Rather than a "teach now, expect learning now" orientation, better to have a "teach now, expect learning later" attitude. The stress of evaluation is thereby minimized and an ambience can prevail in support of the child's overall development. Holistic, contextualized "horizontal" learning opportunities allow children to gravitate to where and when they will derive meaning.

Conclusion

To question the applicability of developmentally appropriate practice in ECSE suggests a misunderstanding of DAP's framework and justification for educational practice. DAP implies a continuum of teaching practice ranging from highly directive or didactic to low directive or facilitative teaching behaviors. Recognizing this continuum, the practitioner adjusts teaching methods to match the experiences and abilities of the individual child and to suit the content and context of the lesson. Taking into account "child effect," the practitioner employs "contingency teaching" or the least directive teaching methods applicable to the learning situation. In this vein, highly structured learning encounters and directive techniques can be developmentally appropriate depending on the child and the situation. Structure and direction is imposed as a function of the needs of the learner. Obviously, for some learning purposes, such as the storage and retrieval of static knowledge (i.e., rule learning, basic facts), *all children* require more direct teaching, at least initially. On the other hand, for other educational purposes, such as spontaneous play periods for consolidating and expressing knowledge and skills, *all children* must have less structure and direction from the teacher or the practice is indeed unsound.

The justification for the use of DAP in all educational experiences rests on two factors. First, DAP is based on

a *dynamic* view of development, the changes that occur within individuals over time. The normative view of development, the traditional perspective, is grounded on norms or milestones of development and individual variation. The dynamic view of development, in contrast, considers development as cumulative change with emergent properties; both individual differences and developmental level are important (Bredekamp, 1991; Katz, 1991). Teaching strategies, lesson design, and curriculum development and evaluation are determined after considering developmentally appropriate, individually appropriate, and contextually appropriate features for the lesson.

Second, both child development theory and curriculum theory form the foundation of DAP. DAP is recognized as appropriate "schooling for democratic living" (Bredekamp, 1991; Kessler, 1991). This political justification for using DAP is based on the philosophy of participatory democracy where the individual is engaged in the process. In early childhood education, this finds expression by noting the individual's needs and interests of the child and the family. Given the spirit of P.L. 99-457 and its enthusiastic reception by all professionals, one would be hard-pressed to find fault with using DAP or NAEYC's most recently published position statement on curriculum (NAEYC, 1991) in ECSE. Both documents recognized the importance of individual initiative and empowerment for attaining educational goals. Both ECE and ECSE should accept these statements, thereby supporting a paradigm shift in philosophy away from an overreliance on traditional efficacy or technical models of the curriculum and psychometric models of evaluation, and toward incorporating a more developmental, constructivistic, and humanistic comprehensive early childhood education. Those institutions of teacher education that have not already done so are urged to consider moving in this direction.

DAP is recognized as appropriate "schooling for democratic living."

Future Directions

The fields of ECE and ECSE need to work toward understanding each other better, although we may not always end up agreeing with each other. Various terms appear to have different meanings depending on the orientation of the user—terms such as *developmental*, *individualization*, *child centered*, *mastery to criterion*, *direct teaching*, and *free play*, among others. Moreover, each side undoubtedly holds some, if not many, erroneous presuppositions about the other, or is unaware of important conceptual distinctions that exist. Continued

dialogue or debate would be healthy, and we are grateful to Carta et al. for igniting this particular discussion. In closing, we would like to make three recommendations—one philosophical, one practical, and one research linked.

Acquisition of knowledge and skills is a narrow objective and fails this broader purpose [economic, social, and civic justice], a most serious limitation of all educational programs based on the production metaphor or the efficacy model of instruction, which places high priority on specifying objectives, the precise measurement of skill, and educational accountability.

A philosophical challenge we would like to raise is for us to seek some consensus across our fields on what the goal of education is for *all* young children. Once this goal is articulated, it should be easier to come to agreement about how to reach that goal. We propose that the goal of education is the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a variety of areas, and the ability and disposition to use one's knowledge and skills in a variety of ways and settings for the solution of problems (e.g., practical, social, economic, philosophical, etc.), and as a contribution to society. Although not all students will achieve the same level of the goal, we must move away from the attitude that some people are worth more than others (which is implicit in our national educational goals, Executive Office of the President, 1990). All children have abilities and skills. Mutual respect and acceptance of each other's intrinsic worth are fundamental for our society to aspire toward economic, social, and civic justice. This goal, although an ideal, is worthy of our best selves as a nation and as a member of the larger global community.

Acquisition of knowledge and skills is a narrow objective and fails this broader purpose, a most serious limitation of all educational programs based on the production metaphor or the efficacy model of instruction, which places high priority on specifying objectives, the precise measurement of skill, and educational accountability. Can EI, ECE, and ECSE programs that focus on the procedural aspects of curriculum planning (i.e., the how-to, not the what and why) give up their technological orientation to education without losing their identity or compromising their mission? Can they keep their orientation and yet still somehow come to agree with those who reject their orientation about the goal of education? How so? Discussion must continue

on the metatheoretical level as most assuredly differing world views or value-based metaphors underpin much of our debate.

Although integrated or merged programs leading to dual certification in ECE and ECSE would be ideal, this path is not likely to be well trodden for some time to come.

On a practice or policy level, we recommend that together we work on a clear statement of DAP as a continuous variable and not a dichotomous variable, and one that is inclusive across our sister disciplines, thus rejecting the concept of exceptionality appropriate practice, as this would be subsumed under DAP properly defined and articulated. In addition, this statement would include a full explanation of the need for least restrictive teaching practices to suit the child, the lesson content, and the context. Least restrictive environment includes teaching style. Overuse of highly directive teaching is not least restrictive. Examples of the successful (and unsuccessful) use of both nondirective and highly directive teaching techniques with special needs and nonhandicapped children would aid the fields of ECSE and ECE in recognizing the usefulness of DAP guidelines for *all* early childhood settings. Better appreciating when it is appropriate to be directive and when it is more appropriate to be nondirective will greatly help us to flesh out the continuum. Can those in ECSE who specialize more on one side of this continuum work together with those in ECE who specialize more on the other side of the continuum, transcending our turf battle instincts and our tendencies to frown on the practices we understand less well and use less often?

Preservice teacher education endeavors can help the next generation of teachers to better orient to each other's fields. Although integrated or merged programs leading to dual certification in ECE and ECSE would be ideal, this path is not likely to be well trodden for some time to come. As an alternative, cooperation and sharing between institutions and programs of teacher preparation in ECE and ECSE should increase, both in terms of exchanging methods and theory information, as well as related practice. Across-field guest lectures, spot observations, and "mini-practice assignments" can comprise components of coursework within the student's parent program. We believe that a high priority should be given to helping new teachers read cues from the child, a skill necessary for contingency teaching but not stressed in teacher preparation.

Finally, we urge research and evaluation of DAP and its development. Unlike questions of "appropriate versus inappropriate" practice, developmental appro-

priateness is an empirical question. The appropriateness question is a matter of ethics or morality (e.g., it is inappropriate across the board to engage in harsh or punitive teaching), whereas the developmental appropriateness question can be addressed by research. We need to sort out issues that either divide or unite us that can be settled empirically from those that cannot be settled empirically. How is DAP related to child outcomes or the content of adult-child interaction? How are these relations modified depending on how DAP is operationalized? Many such questions are amenable to empirical investigation and should be addressed. Finally, the gap between theory and practice in ECSE and in ECE is yet another policy concern that requires our attention. Collaborative research and advocacy are urged as more programs become inclusive and require the expertise from both sides. We hope more gates will swing open along the fence that separates ECE from ECSE.

Author's Note

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Developmentally Appropriate Practice and Early Childhood Special Education: Bridging the Gap

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It is tempting to respond in a highly critical, even dismissive, manner to the Johnson and McChesney Johnson article. Statements such as "DAP, like the baby bear's chair in the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' is neither too hard not too soft, but is just right!" (p. 72) almost invite ridicule. The article is somewhat misleading and even confusing at times. For example, Johnson and McChesney Johnson fail to acknowledge that Warren & Kaiser's (1986) incidental teaching strategies build on a long line of research initiated by behaviorists at least ten years before they were elbowed "out of meeting rooms and committees when DAP was being drafted" (p. 71) (cf. Hart & Risley, 1975). Indeed, it might be difficult for a naive reader to isolate the critical features that distinguish DAP from non-DAP, based on the information presented in this article.

Nevertheless, rather than declaring a definite winner in the debate over DAP—although Carta et al. appear to be the clear winners of this round, based on the rational, scholarly manner in which they present and support their arguments—we suggest that the debate needs to continue. However they represent or defend their position, proponents of DAP continue to shape the fields of early childhood education (ECE) and early childhood special education (ECSE). What is needed is constructive communication around DAP as it affects issues in ECE and ECSE.

To that end, we present a preliminary analysis of some of the main issues raised in the preceding articles. In particular, we frame our analysis and recommendations in terms of how DAP and ECSE typically describe their assumptions about the learner, desired outcomes and preferred instructional strategies.

The articles by Carta and colleagues (pp. 58-69, this issue) and Johnson and Johnson (pp. 70-80) represent two perspectives on the original DAP guidelines proposed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), as they relate to practice in ECSE. It must be kept in mind that alternative interpretations of DAP guidelines and their relevance to ECSE exist. In addition, practice in and both ECSE and ECE continues to evolve.

In their reaction to Johnson and McChesney Johnson, Carta, Atwater, Schwartz, and McConnell (in press) point out several areas of agreement between ECSE and DAP: (a) importance of individualization, (b) de-emphasis of standardized assessment, (c) integration of curriculum and assessment, (d) importance of child-initiated activities, (e) importance of active engagement, (f) emphasis on social interaction, and (g) importance of cultural diversity. Carta et al. (in press) emphasize areas of congruence out of a concern that a simplistic DAP-ECSE dichotomy defines ECSE practice too narrowly. Current research and practice in ECSE, for example, emphasizes child-initiated and routine daily activities (e.g., snack, play) as contexts for instruction (e.g., Bricker & Cripe, 1992; Hart & Rogers-Warren, 1978; Warren & Kaiser, 1986) and contends that minimally intrusive strategies should be used before more directive intervention strategies (Wolery & Fleming, 1993).

Similarly, proponents of DAP contend that their position often has been described too narrowly, and therefore, unfairly. Kostelnik (1992), for example, states that unstructured classrooms, lack of teacher directed instruction, and absence of academic content are "myths" commonly associated with DAP. In a 1992 NAEYC publication on appropriate curriculum and assessment for young children, Bredekamp and Rosegrant contribute a section on "correcting misinterpretations of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)":

DAP does not mean that teachers don't teach and that children control the classroom This view equates child-initiated learning with chaos. It would be naive to pretend that there are not some classrooms that claim to be developmentally appropriate in which teachers abdicate responsibility and chaos does ensue, but these classrooms are *not* developmentally appropriate. The truth is that good early childhood programs are, of necessity, highly organized and structured environments that teachers have carefully prepared and in which teachers are in control. (p. 5)

It is evident that misperceptions and misrepresentations abound regarding DAP and ECSE. NAEYC is, in fact, currently in the process of reviewing and revising the DAP guidelines. A recent trend in both ECE and ECSE focuses on finding common ground between the two fields. A number of professionals from both disciplines have called for professional unification in the interests of better serving *all* young children and families (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992; Burton, C.B., Hains, A.H., Hanline, M.F., McLean, M., & McCormick, K. 1992; Miller, 1992; Mahoney, Robinson, & Powell, 1992; Wolery, Strain, & Bailey, 1992).

DAP is based on the assumptions that children can develop without specific intervention and that to provide specific intervention may, in fact, be detrimental to development.

The importance of individualization, for example, is a fundamental principle of ECSE. Although the DAP guidelines do not provide specific strategies for how to adapt curriculum and instruction to meet individual needs of children, the need to do so is clearly recognized. For example, the NAEYC guidelines for appropriate curriculum and assessment includes a chapter on principles of best practice for achieving potentials of children with special needs written by leaders of the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (Wolery, Strain, & Bailey, 1992). The trend in ECSE toward providing ecologically-based intervention also is viewed as being congruent with principles of DAP (Carta et al., in press)

While acknowledging that ECSE and DAP may share at least some general principles, ECSE practices, by necessity, go beyond the guidelines of DAP in order to meet the needs of young children with disabilities. As stated by Wolery, Strain, and Bailey (1992), "The guidelines are the context in which appropriate early education of children with special needs should occur; however, a program based on the guidelines alone is not likely to be sufficient for many children with special needs" (p. 106).

This is the predominant issue as we see it. We have grouped the main differences between ECSE and DAP under three broad categories: assumptions about the learner, desired outcomes, and preferred instructional strategies. Simply describing differences, however, will only continue to divide practitioners and fractionalize services. Therefore, in an attempt to move toward greater unification between the fields and ultimately to provide better services to children and families, we make some recommendations for bridging the ECSE-DAP divide.

Assumptions About the Learner

The field of early intervention was founded on the theoretical assumptions that: (a) developmental progress can be enhanced in children with disabilities and (b) in order to enhance their developmental progress, children with disabilities require more and/or different early experience from typically developing peers (Bricker & Veltman, 1990). In contrast, the DAP guidelines were written in opposition to the downward extension of formal schooling practices to accelerate development of *typically developing* children. DAP is based on the assumptions that children can develop without specific intervention and that to provide specific intervention may, in fact, be detrimental to development. Thus, it may be difficult for DAP-oriented early childhood educators to accept interventions designed for the purpose of accelerating development because they may perceive such interventions as having deleterious effects.

How can we bridge the gap? As educators of young children, ECE and ECSE personnel must come to some agreement about the need for specific interventions to accelerate development of children who have disabilities or diverse learning needs. A common assertion of early childhood teachers when confronted with the issue is that some children simply are not "ready" for instruction in a particular skill. The evidence that some children with disabilities will not learn, or will learn more slowly than their typically developing peers, without direct and systematic assistance must be pointed out (Wolery, Ault, & Doyle, 1992). It must be clear that when early childhood special educators talk about accelerating development, they are *not* talking about teaching reading to infants or about attempting to train

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children to perform tasks for which they do not have the necessary pre-skills. In DAP terms, ECSE professionals provide the necessary support to facilitate a child's growth from her current to her next stage of development.

Desired Outcomes

Another area of difference between DAP and ECSE concerns the type and specificity of outcomes that are expected for children. Goals in ECE programs are generally more broadly stated than those in programs for young children with disabilities. According to Bredekamp and Rosegrant (1992), developmentally

appropriate curricula should provide long-range goals in the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical domains, and should attend to the development of desirable attitudes and dispositions, skills and processes, knowledge and understanding (p. 19). A sample of goals from a DAP curriculum might include: (a) to develop a positive attitude toward learning; (b) to experience a sense of self esteem, (c) to expand verbal communication skills, (d) to acquire concepts and information leading to a better understanding of the world; (e) to enhance large muscle skills, (f) to enhance and refine small muscle skills.

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In contrast, services for young children with disabilities are designed to produce quite specific, measurable changes in children's behavior that will enable the child to function independently in current and future environments. Goals for a child in an ECSE program usually include an operational definition of a target skill or behavior, conditions under which the behavior may be performed, and criterion statements describing how well the skill should be performed. Because goals are not identified and specified to the same degree for individual children in early childhood programs, some early childhood educators view a focus on specific goals or goal driven instruction as inappropriate practice.

How can we bridge the gap? It must be explained that goal-driven instruction is necessary for children with diverse learning needs and that specific goals are not necessarily inappropriate. Bredekamp and Rosegrant (1992) state that in DAP classrooms, specific goals are appropriate if they take into account a child's age and individual patterns of learning and development, are respectful of the child's needs and interests, and address all areas of human functioning, not just narrowly defined basic skills. Although that last criterion may be difficult to meet, we suggest that goal-driven instruction in ECE or ECSE is appropriate as long as the goals are appropriate.

What are appropriate goals? Bailey and Wolery (1992) describe desired characteristics of goals for young children. First, goals for young children in ECSE programs are considered appropriate if they are functional. Functional goals are those goals that result in increased independence for a child, allow the child to learn more complex or advanced skills, permit the child to be placed in a less restrictive environment, and/or enable the family to more easily deal with the child. In addition, functional goals are age appropriate,

socially valid, achievable, and address all phases of learning (i.e., acquisition, fluency, maintenance, generalization, and adaptation). We would argue that these criteria for functional goals are compatible with those proposed by Bredekamp and Rosegrant for developmentally appropriate goals. We would argue further that some goals that might be described by DAP proponents as "narrowly defined basic skills"—such as development of phonological awareness skills—also meet these criteria and therefore are developmentally appropriate.

Comprehensive assessment to select appropriate goals is critically important. Curriculum-based assessment is more likely to lead to functional (and developmentally appropriate) goal selection than the use of standardized, norm-referenced tests. We suggest the following guidelines for assessing young children:

1. Assessment should include a variety of measures in a variety of settings including observations in natural settings.
2. Assessment should be linked to the curriculum and result in a detailed description of the child's behavior as well as a list of functional skills as potential goals and objectives.
3. Assessment activities should involve the child's family.
4. Assessment activities should be conducted by professionals from different disciplines.

Because goals are not identified and specified to the same degree for individual children in early childhood programs, some early childhood educators view a focus on specific goals or goal-driven instruction as inappropriate practice.

Although ECSE goals may not focus specifically on attitudes, we believe that a child's progress toward meeting appropriate functional goals can lead to the development of positive dispositions and attitudes. For example, a child with limited verbal skills may feel good about himself when he gains the necessary skills to communicate verbally with his peers. Likewise, a child who learns to decode fluently is more likely to feel good about himself and develop a love for reading than the child who cannot decode.

Preferred Instructional Strategies

Instructional programs in ECSE and DAP differ generally in the degree to which (a) instruction is pre-planned, structured, and directed and (b) progress monitoring procedures are focused and systematic.

Although ECSE goals may not focus specifically on attitudes, we believe that a child's progress toward meeting appropriate functional goals can lead to the development of positive dispositions and attitudes.

Although the field of ECSE is replete with a variety of empirically-based strategies that can be used with individual children to promote development of specific skills, DAP guidelines do not provide any strategies for individualizing instruction to meet the needs of children who are not developing typically. Indeed, because of the emphasis on child-directed and unstructured activities, many ECE teachers interpret attempts

Because of the emphasis on child-directed and unstructured activities, many ECE teachers interpret attempts to impose structure or teacher direction...as being incompatible with DAP.

to impose structure or teacher direction, including empirically-supported strategies common in ECSE, as being incompatible with DAP. Some examples of practice considered inappropriate according to NAEYC include the following:

1. Children are expected to sit down, attend, listen, and participate during small group times
2. Teacher-directed instruction is employed during small group sessions
3. Instruction occurs in content areas such as math, science, social studies, and thinking skills. Times are set aside for small group instruction in these areas.

How can we bridge the gap? Wolery et al. (1992) state that more systematic and structured assessment and instructional strategies in ECSE are "defensible, appropriate, and necessary" because many children with special needs have disabilities or delays that (a) make them dependent upon others, (b) keep them from learning well on their own, (c) cause them to develop more slowly than their typically developing peers, and (d) may interfere with learning and cause additional handicaps (p. 107). To bridge the gap, ECE and ECSE professionals first need to reach a consensus regarding the need for more systematic instruction for some children. There is increasing awareness and acceptance of this principle from the leaders of NAEYC (cf. Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992). Agreement on the

particular instructional strategies to be used is the next step.

Instructional strategies in ECSE represent a broad range of purposeful environmental manipulations from structuring of the physical and social environment to using very specific and direct response prompting strategies and stimulus modifications (Wolery & Fleming, 1993). A trend toward an ecological approach to intervention with young children has gained broad support and acceptance by leaders in the field of ECSE

ECE and ECSE professionals first need to reach a consensus regarding the need for more systematic instruction for some children.

in recent years. Instructional approaches such as incidental teaching (Hart & Risley, 1968; 1975) milieu approaches to language intervention (Hart & Rogers-Warren, 1978; Warren & Kaiser, 1986; Warren & Rogers-Warren, 1985), and activity-based intervention (Bricker & Cripe, 1991) embody several elements consistent with some of the DAP guidelines. These principles are: (a) emphasis on child-initiated activity; (b) provision of intervention within daily activities and familiar contexts, and (c) use of environmental arrangement strategies to facilitate development and learning (Bricker & Veltman, 1990; Carta et al., in press; Wolery & Fleming, 1993).

Ecologically-based instructional strategies in ECSE may help to bridge the gap when used according to the following recommendations, adapted from Wolery and Fleming (1993): First, if child benefit in terms of learning is equal, then more natural, less restrictive, and less intrusive strategies should be employed. Thus, environmental arrangements and naturalistic strategies such as incidental teaching would be used before

The bottom line, however, is that the effectiveness and efficiency of instructional procedures and arrangements are more important than their naturalness, their intrusiveness, or their restrictiveness.

more intrusive response prompting strategies if data indicated that such strategies were equally effective. Similarly, if child benefit in terms of learning is equal, more child-directed strategies and arrangements are preferred to teacher-directed strategies. The bottom line, however, is that the effectiveness and efficiency of instructional procedures and arrangements are more

important than their naturalness, their intrusiveness, or their restrictiveness. This last point is a point that we strongly support but that ECE professionals may disagree with.

Fowell and Lawton (1992) assert that programs serving young children need to be concerned with *both* developmental *and* instructional theory. They describe

The research base supporting DAP does not currently exist.

a program that includes a balance of both small group teacher-directed activities and less formal child-directed activities. A closer examination of this program, including investigation of outcomes would be useful. The above recommendations point to the need for systematic assessment of individual child progress toward outcomes. Indeed, evaluation of progress toward individual goals and objectives is a primary source of evaluation of ECSE programs. Ongoing progress monitoring is critical in ECSE and needs to be more focused and systematic than that used for typically developing children in regular early childhood classrooms.

As a final caveat, it is important that decisions regarding instruction be made based upon empirical findings. The research base supporting DAP does not currently exist (Carta et al., this issue; Grossen, this issue). Systematic research is needed to investigate the adequacy of DAP in producing positive outcomes for young children with diverse learning needs. Before research can be undertaken, however, developmentally appropriate practice needs to be more clearly operationalized. The lack of a clear definition of DAP only contributes to misperceptions and continued debate rather than the kind of collaboration and dialogue that is needed to provide effective early childhood services for all children.

Summary

This response to Carta et al. and Johnson and Johnson attempted to summarize briefly the prevailing issues related to developmentally appropriate practice and early childhood special education with the intent of facilitating constructive dialogue between ECE and ECSE professionals. Points of convergence and divergence between ECSE and DAP were presented to help the reader to better understand DAP and the current trends in ECSE. Recommendations for bridging the gap were provided to encourage communication between professionals from differing perspectives. Certainly, the issues remain complex ones, and this sum-

mary is but a preliminary examination of the issues. It is important that further clarification and discussion of these issues continue. In addition, clearer definition of DAP as well as systematic research on the effectiveness of DAP remains a critical need.

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The Classroom Cure: A Medical Doctor Shows Educators How to Find What Works

Joanne Hatton

Staff writer for the *Alberta Report*

Reprinted from Alberta Report, March 15, 1993, with permission.

Abstract: *The Alberta Report recently described the story behind the development of the videotape Failing Grades by Dr. Joe Freedman, a radiologist. The videotape is focusing the Canadian educational debate on the use of child-directed methods.*

The past few years have not been easy ones for Canada's \$30-billion-a-year schooling industry. Beset from within by burgeoning criminal and social problems among youth, it is beset from without by increasingly irate parents, media, governments and business interests, all charging that the little red school house of yore has become a large, unstructured, undisciplined, unfocused place where children's self-esteem matters more than learning. The main response of this education establishment so far has been to dismiss all such criticism as uninformed "teacher-bashing." A new video being released this week refutes that.

Failing Grades is the brainchild of Red Deer radiologist Dr. Joe Freedman, a parent of two daughters. He has spent the past five years trying to fathom the teaching industry's peculiar logic and disintegrating performance. As a medical man, Dr. Freedman believes in following rational methods to discover hard facts. Indeed, he was initially puzzled at how few facts were available about a business that consumes some 5% of Canada's Gross Domestic Product. He was further surprised to find that the limited research available showed that the new educational methods now in use don't work. With a modest \$58,000 in assistance from five governments and some of the biggest corporations in the country, Dr. Freedman has devoted his spare time for the past year producing *Failing Grades*. He was helped by co-host Mark Holmes, a maverick reformer who teaches educational administration at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

The video first establishes that the system is in reality failing, and then zeroes in on three mutually reinforcing reasons: the dominant philosophies don't work, families are less interested, and the system is too bureaucratic, monopolistic and unaccountable. After reviewing the research, however, Dr. Freedman and his co-host Dr. Holmes then present three solutions: restoring accountability through regular achievement testing; allowing teachers the freedom to choose their

own methods while requiring that they remain up to date on current research; and allowing parents within the public school system to choose whatever kind of school they want.

As a medical man, Dr. Freedman believes in following rational methods to discover hard facts. He was... surprised to find that the limited research available showed that the new educational methods now in use don't work.

Although his own academic credentials do not extend beyond medicine, Dr. Freedman has quietly become one of the most knowledgeable and respected educational critics in Canada. The video was supported financially by the federal department of the Secretary of State, the education departments of B.C., Alberta, New Brunswick and Newfoundland, and a host of business sponsors, including Syncrude Canada, the Royal Bank, the Bank of Nova Scotia, Kodak, Sherritt Gordon, the Canadian Council of Professional Engineers, the Alberta and Saskatchewan Chambers of Commerce and a number of smaller companies.

As Dr. Freedman readily admits, *Failing Grades* is not light entertainment. It is 73 minutes (edited to 58 for television) of crisp fact, and it debunks all the main myths and pat answers which now pervade education. For instance:

- That more money and smaller classes will improve performance.
- That children's self-esteem is a prerequisite to learning.
- That Asian education systems, which consistently outperform North America's, consist primarily of mindless drills and memorization which lead to high rates of student suicide.

- That coaching students individually works better than addressing the whole class at once.
- That spiral curriculum (in which topics are introduced year after year with increasing levels of sophistication) is superior to sequential one-time presentation of material.
- That performance will improve if students are encouraged to work at their own pace, rather than meet high expectations set by the teacher.

"All these assumptions are wrong," writes Dr. Freedman in an essay which accompanies the video. On the screen, Dr. Freedman and Dr. Holmes present the by now familiar and depressing results of Canadian performance on international tests in math and science over the past decade and the declining performance in the Canadian basic skills test over the past 30 years.

Educators argue that international test results are misleading because Asian and European countries stream students and only the best ones write the tests. However, among younger age groups, nine- and 13-year-olds, students are not streamed and the results for the older students have been adjusted for streaming. In addition, Drs. Holmes and Freedman point out that the standardized tests include those topics which all students have studied. They exclude many things that European and Asian systems teach that our system either introduces at a much later date or doesn't get around to at all. The critics highlight, for example, an almost identical lesson on refraction of light in German and Alberta science texts. The only difference is that German children learn it in Grade 7 and the Canadians in Grade 11.

Far more serious, however, because it is so common, is the example of Sarah, an Alberta child in her third year of school, who has learned almost nothing of reading, writing and spelling. She was passed along to Grade 4 with a glowing report card from her teacher when in reality, she had not mastered skills required in Grade 1.

The [videotape] highlights...an almost identical lesson on refraction of light in German and Alberta science texts. The only difference is that German children learn it in Grade 7 and the Canadians in Grade 11.

Having established the weaknesses in the Canadian system, the pair then look at the research, primarily from the U.S., on effective schools and teaching methods. With the aid of charts and graphs and interviews with leading scholars, the video presents the results of long term studies involving thousands of students and their performance on measured outcomes in core subjects.

On the subject of reading, results demonstrate that while there is some purpose in teaching young children to be aware of context and available illustration (a new technique known as "whole language"), the means by which most youngsters learn fastest and best is phonics (learning to sound each letter, and then learning the exceptions). Similarly, the traditional system in which

There is no large-scale research to support the "child-centred" approach which emphasizes individual instruction.

the teacher presents a scripted lesson plan to the whole class works better than the newer methods of class fragmentation and work-at-your-own-speed with coaching from the teacher. This has been found to be particularly true with less gifted children. By contrast, there is no large-scale research to support the "child-centred" approach which emphasizes individual instruction. The "direct instruction" model in which the teacher deals with the whole class at once, ironically, also produces children with higher self-esteem than those models which are specifically designed to raise self-esteem. The progressive abhorrence of correcting children's mistakes is likewise groundless. Students do demonstrably better when their errors are pointed out.

The theorists have proven remarkably careless, he says, about the fact that they are experimenting with real children who will face real damage every time some new fad is tried and doesn't work.

Teaching methods are not the only determinant of school success. The video points out that school organization has a "significant impact on academic achievement." According to Drs. Holmes and Freedman, the available research reveals unambiguously that the most effective schools stress academic achievement rather than merely creating a friendly atmosphere, frequent objective tests rather than occasional subjective teacher assessments, orderly school climate over uninhibited self-expression, and active partnership with parents rather than token consultation.

This contradicts most current trends in Canadian schools: the "program continuity" and "continuous progress" models practised in Alberta, the "Year 2000" initiative in B.C., and all the other child-centred models which have arisen in the past generation. That parents aren't aware of it doesn't surprise Dr. Freedman. Nobody, he says, has much incentive to tell them. What

astounds him is that very few teachers have ever heard of it either. The faculties of education simply do not teach such material to aspiring teachers, says Dr. Freedman. They have a particular philosophical approach which they are determined to promote without any measured empirical research to back it up.

Teachers should be allowed to choose their own methods in the classroom and the system needs to be made more accountable.

The theorists have proven remarkably careless, he says, about the fact that they are experimenting with real children who will face real damage every time some new fad is tried and doesn't work. "I would never let a doctor try out some new medical practice on my wife or child without knowing that it had been exhaustively tested and proven to be effective."

Indeed, the Freedman contention is so enormous that the educational establishment may have some difficulty dealing with it. For example, Dr. Bob Jackson, head of elementary education at the University of Alberta, says that faculty members are aware of many of the authorities that Dr. Freedman cites, and a few even specialize in some of these areas. Students may get exposed to such studies in some of their classes. "We do not adopt these theories and propagandize them, however," he cautions. The faculty promotes the "reflective" teaching model, he says, which integrates theory and experience in the classroom. There are bodies of research which do not support the positions that Dr. Freedman presents in his video, he maintains. He doesn't know if he'll see the Freedman video. He concludes unenthusiastically, "I'm sure it will come up."

It's precisely this kind of attitude that infuriates Dr. Freedman. He believes that if teachers are professionals, it is incumbent on them to ensure that they are on top of the current research in education. A small but growing number of parents have been driven to study the research, and he challenges teachers to do the same. He states flatly at the beginning of the video that the presentation is not "teacher-bashing."

The video will be sent to every school board chairman in the country. He hopes that they will recommend it to teachers, administrators and parent groups. Whether they do or not, the tape with its accompanying essay and bibliography sells for \$17.95 (see advertisement on page 91).

It would probably be a mistake to assume that classroom teachers are unanimously as enthralled with progressive methods as the faculties, specialists, and central administrators who created and put it into practice. In a study released last week by the Alberta Teachers' Association entitled *Trying to Teach*, many rank-and-filers expressed the same frustrations that Dr. Freedman does about the current state of the industry.

Many reject and resent the rash of changes that have descended on classrooms over the past decade. Some lament being forced to use methods that are untested or ineffective. Others point to contradictions in what's expected. While they are being pushed to individualize their teaching, provincial authorities are also stressing standardized, province-wide testing in Grades 3, 6 and 9.

Dr. Holmes...sees small signs that the system may be about to shift directions.

Larry Booi, who headed the ATA committee doing the survey, says the job has become incredibly stressful and difficult. He agrees with Dr. Freedman on at least two points. Teachers should be allowed to choose their own methods in the classroom and the system needs to be made more accountable.

That bit of common ground is encouraging. Dr. Holmes says he sees small signs that the system may be about to shift directions. He believes that those in control—administrators, superintendents and the like—are getting more autocratic and are having to go to greater and greater lengths to crush dissent. That can only mean, says Dr. Holmes, that the pressure for reform is beginning to threaten the present progressive establishment. He and Dr. Freedman both hope to add a good deal more pressure with *Failing Grades*.

The unrelenting quest of an extraordinary Joe

Many Alberta teachers and principals have never heard of Dr. Joe Freedman. On the other hand, mention his name to some of the more "progressive" educational administrators or curriculum experts and the reaction is often one of stony silence or dismissal. The attitude clearly says: What does he know? He's just some doctor from Red Deer.

Joseph Phelan Freedman is indeed a physician and head of diagnostic imaging at Red Deer Hospital. That's his day job where he spends 40-50 hours a week. Then there's his sideline: forty more hours a week and most of his holiday time working on school reform. In this latter capacity, his name is well known across the country to government officials, business groups, edu-

cation reporters and parents looking for direction and advice.

So what is it that pushes this Fort Murray-born, Edmonton-raised, auto mechanic's son from the radiology department into the realm of the classroom? As a young man he read *Why Johnny Can't Read* by Rudolph Flesch and resolved that if he had children, he would "school-proof" them. He taught both of his daughters to read. Once they were in school he, like thousands of parents, chafed in silent frustration at so much squandered opportunity to develop excellence.

That changed, he recalled, just over four years ago. He read a newspaper article criticizing the school system. That night when he returned home from work he found a survey from his daughters' school awaiting him. "Only three of the 33 questions on the survey even touched academics," he recalls. He erupted. He sat down, wrote his own survey asking about outcomes, comparisons with other countries, uniforms in the schools, teaching methods. He fired off his survey to school board officials and included a copy to then-education minister Jim Dinning. The minister sent back a stiff rebuttal to most of the points. The board officials set up a meeting. It was friendly, polite, and utterly useless, recalls Dr. Freedman. "I realized the problems had to be dealt with at a higher level."

Shortly after that, he heard about a proposed watering down of the high school science curriculum. He phoned the university science department for confirmation and jumped into action. He contacted the Alberta Medical Association, which called a press conference demanding that the province rethink the plan.

He also got in touch with Don Currie at the Alberta Chamber of Resources. That group too lobbied the government on the issue. The curriculum was withdrawn and rewritten to the satisfaction of most of the critics.

The issue got Dr. Freedman reading the research on education and comparisons between systems. He sought out the scholars who did the research, broadening the scope from the secondary system to the lower grades. He again approached the Chamber of Resources to sponsor a study of international comparisons in education. Roughly 16,000 copies of that study, released a year ago, have been circulated throughout North America.

His cool research-based approach in this very heated debate has earned him the respect of governments, business people and scholars. Not only did he coax money out of the cash-strapped federal government for his video *Failing Grades*, several provincial governments also contributed to the production even though much of the research presented discredits their own current programs and enthusiasms.

Dr. Freedman is counting on public pressure, from both parents and business, to force the teaching establishment to do its homework. "I tell superintendents and consultants who won't consider the research that they themselves are the problem. I can eliminate them by merely writing a cheque and sending my kids to private schools." But most children, he adds, can't go to private schools and are therefore hostage to the irresponsibilities of the reigning educational autocracy.

Signs of revolt in Ontario and B.C.

Parents and teachers who don't agree with the currently popular child-centred approach to education often find themselves isolated and ignored in the local school. Those frustrations have led an increasing number of like-minded people to form groups both for support and to lobby government and local authorities to change their approach. In Alberta, most such groups work at an individual school level on a particular issue. In other provinces, however, particularly Ontario, groups are proliferating and networking at a furious pace. "That's because we have the worst system in the country," says Barb Smith, head of Quality Education Network (QEN). "You guys in Alberta are lucky you don't live here."

QEN was formed about a year ago and now boasts 6,000 members from all across Canada. Mrs. Smith, who co-founded the group with Debra Kerr, now a Calgary resident, says she got involved when she noticed her Grade 5 son, a gifted student, couldn't spell "had" or "girl." His versions were "hade" and "gurll."

His teacher, she recalls angrily, reassured her that he was so smart he'd have a secretary to do all his spelling.

She met with other disgruntled parents and QEN was born. It sends out newsletters citing research on reading and learning and sponsors public meetings with prominent speakers. QEN will actively promote Dr. Joe Freedman's video *Failing Grades* to its members. She hopes it will be a catalyst for change and drive parents and business people to get involved. "After all," she says, "business bears the cost of our poor education system."

QEN spawned another reform group, Educators For Quality Education, representing about 300 teachers. As public employees, teachers are usually a pretty timid group when it comes to public protest, but these ones are alarmed at the failure of "child-centred or activity-based learning," explains president Marty Cugelman.

The emphasis on play and individualized instruction has led to rapidly declining standards. Now, he says, colleges and universities in Ontario are expected

to lower their standards to meet the level of incoming students. "They are not allowed to use entrance exams to deny admission," he says and they simply don't have the resources to catch students up once they're in.

Now...colleges and universities in Ontario are expected to lower their standards to meet the level of incoming students.

In B.C., the province's Year 2000 initiative has sparked protest from many inside and outside the system. It led to the formation of Concerned Adults for Responsible

Education (CARE), a parent group which opposes the new direction. Year 2000, much like Alberta's "program continuity" model, emphasizes child-directed learning, the whole language approach to reading and an emphasis on self-esteem. Children pass through the system often without acquiring basic reading, writing and math skills according to critics.

Helen Raham leads the B.C. Teachers Association for Excellence in Education. She says that Year 2000 has no effective assessment component to determine whether or not the experiments are working. She agrees with Dr. Freedman that external testing is an essential part of educational programs. Her group will also promote the Freedman video to parent organizations.

Failing Grades

produced by Dr. Joe Freedman, M.D.

"A hard-hitting video that exposes the growing disaster of progressive education..."
Alberta Report

Two Canadian doctors present an analysis of educational research, including the data from *Project Follow Through*, the largest educational study funded by the U.S. Government, in a very graphic, easy to understand format, as they identify and debunk the main myths that are keeping North American students from excelling. These myths include: that coaching students individually works better than addressing the whole class at once; that children's self-esteem is prerequisite to learning; that a spiral curriculum, that recycles the same information every year, is superior to a sequential program; that student performance will improve if children are encouraged to work at their own pace rather than meet the expectations of the teacher.

For a copy of the 76 minute VHS videotape and the two accompanying booklets (the essay and annotated bibliography), please send check or money order for \$17.95 US (\$19.95 Canadian funds), payable to the Society for Advancing Educational Research, to:

Society for Advancing Educational Research
c/o VICOM Limited
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CANADA T5M 3Z1

The annotated bibliography may be ordered separately by sending \$3.00 US to:

Society for Advancing Educational Research
57 Allan Close
Red Deer, Alberta
CANADA T4R 1A4

About "Failing Grades": Redirecting Canada's Educational Debate

Joe Freedman

Society for Advancing Educational Research, Red Deer, Alberta

Editor's Comment: Joe Freedman, creator of the videotape Failing Grades, describes his purpose and some of the thought that went into creating the videotape.

An intense debate is going on all across Canada about the quality of our country's K-12 education. All too often, educational leaders have hijacked that debate. They have either denied that a serious problem exists or have directed the debate to issues of funding, family, breakdown, and social disadvantage.

I want it redirected to the educational research on "what works" in the classroom, to how effective schools operate, and to the different educational philosophies and high achievement levels in the schools of our strongest international competitors. In doing so, it is possible to directly address the social and economic problems children bring with them to the classroom.

The videotape "Failing Grades" is not an ordinary television program. It is meant to inform and not entertain. The issues are complex and must be discussed with care and accuracy. As a result, the videotape has a serious style and is unavoidably lengthy (76 minutes).

The videotape presumes that if crucial educational research is explained in plain language, then parents, trustees, teachers, business leaders, and the media can understand. It further presumes the viewers' interest in public education, concern for their children and their country's prospects, and a willingness to engage in a thorough discussion of educational practices.

Up to now, only superficial analyses of the issues have occurred in the increasingly frequent discussions on education in our public media. Worse, educational research has been largely ignored. This is a serious mistake. But things are changing. Many parents are already searching out, reading, and then sharing research from their educators' own journals. These parents are concerned about many current methods and want to know "what works" in schools and classrooms. Much of what they find is at variance with practice in their schools. Even worse, many of their children's teachers and educational leaders are simply not aware of the research. Surely, educational professionals should be doing at least as much as these parents.

Many myths endure in educational circles, and in many cases, conventional wisdom is not supported by

the research. For example, Canadian educators generally believe that more money and smaller classes improve student outcomes; that self-esteem serves as a necessary foundation for student accomplishment; that Asian educational practices feature mindless drills and memorization, leading to frequent student suicide; that child-centred methods are more effective than alternative methods; that individualization is a more effective basis for instruction than large group or whole class instruction; that spiral curricula have been proved superior to step-by-step sequential curricula; and that children learn better if they choose "their own rate" than if they are directed by teachers. *All these assumptions are wrong.*

The research described in the videotape and listed in the annotated bibliography is based on measure students outcomes. That means the research is based on results, not on the process used to obtain them. Not only that, but the studies are properly validated. That means they have been repeated by other researchers, and, where appropriate, proper experimental control groups have been utilized.

Equally important, some of North America's most prestigious scholars appear in the program and share their research with viewers directly. I believe this adds to the credibility of the educational research videotape and strengthens its message.

There are some important caveats:

1. This is not an exercise in "teacher bashing." Where criticism is presented, it is directed at educational practice and the system, not at classroom teachers;
2. Schools are not much worse than they used to be. The evidence goes both ways in that regard. The problem is that higher levels of knowledge and skills are required of virtually all our students when they emerge from high school. We must do better than we used to. Other countries are improving; so must we;
3. I am aware that the Canadian system is stronger in many respects than the American. However, while much of the data that follows comes from

the United States, most of the research applies equally to Canadian schools.

A theme that underlies production for the videotape is that it is the effort of a dissatisfied parent. He is not alone. Many thousands across the country are seriously concerned about the degree to which their children are acquiring adequate levels of knowledge and skills as well as solid traditional values. When these parents have made their concerns known, they have been consistently and rather arrogantly rebuffed by school officials. That is a constant theme across Canada: lack of educators' responsiveness to the parent clients who provide the children and pay for the system.

Another constant underlying theme is that the flow of educational information in Canada has been a fiasco. Apart from a number of influential and defensive educational leaders, most knowledgeable Canadians agree that the quality of our K-12 system of education is seriously wanting.

The media have often sensationalized the quality issue and treated it superficially. Business leaders have attacked without doing their homework. The "quiet revolution in educational research" doesn't find its way into the classroom. Worst of all, educational leaders have acted as information gatekeepers, withholding much of the bad news and laundering much of what they do release.

Is there legitimate concern about the quality of our education? You be the judge. The business community is increasingly and bluntly critical. Hundreds of corporate leaders are upset. They are speaking out, in some cases testing graduates before hiring them, and, through their associations, actually studying education in Canada in an increasingly thorough fashion. Such studies have been published by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council on national Issues, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and the Corporate-Higher Education Forum. The problem is that almost no teachers have read them and rarely have parents.

Public policy groups are concerned, too. Studies critical of Canadian education policy and results have been released by the Conference Board of Canada, the Institute for Research in Public Policy, the Ontario Premier's Council, the Science Council of Canada, and the Economic Council of Canada. Again, they are not widely known by educators or parents.

To their credit, the print media are increasingly making the effort to analyse the issues. The *Globe and Mail*, for example, has led by publishing a steady stream of articles on Canadian education. Its editors have chosen to address the issues repeatedly. As well, they have designated a National Education Report and created a weekly educational column by Andrew Nikiforuk. His "Fifth Column: On Education" on

Fridays is eagerly awaited by many thousands of readers across the country. Many other publications have also been prominently airing the issue (e.g., the *Maclean's* newsmagazine cover story, January 11, 1993).

Post-secondary institutions have cautiously put forward their own concerns. High failure rates in introductory courses in mathematics and the sciences have led them to press Ministries of Education for improvement. Many have been so distressed by the writing skills of entering students that they offer remedial English and writing courses. Many professors have publicly commented that, over the course of their careers, they have sensed deterioration in the academic preparedness of students entering from high school.

Parents are increasingly restive. Private schooling is luring more parents than ever, and the number of them home schooling is growing exponentially. Angry parents groups are springing up across the country. They are actually reading the research in their educators' own journals to find out "what works" and then networking with each other all across the country, sharing the findings. These are just a few indications of a system that is profoundly dysfunctional.

And what happens when all this reaches the teachers? The answer is that most of it never reaches them because they don't read it, and their professional literature doesn't encourage them to do so.

I believe it is time that large numbers of educators actually choose to read a few of these studies. Not all; just a few. We suggest these three:

Ontario, Premier's Council Report. (1990). *People and Skills in the New Global Economy*. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Corporate-Higher Education Forum. (1990). *To Be Our Best: Learning for the Future*. Montreal: Author.

Economic Council of Canada. (1992). *A Lot to Learn: Education and Training in Canada*. Ottawa: Author.

All are short, plainly worded, and balanced in their point of view. If you only have the stomach for one, choose the last. It is the most recent, sophisticated, and passionate. At one point, it cried out, "If these figures do not improve, our school system will produce well over one million new functional illiterates over the next 10 years. This is a most alarming prospect, and our first priority must be to prevent it" (p. 8). How can any educator turn away from such a warning?

About the Author

Joe Freedman, M.D., is a radiologist in Red Deer, Alberta. Dr. Freedman began investigating educational research when he was asked to rate his daughter's school on a survey that had almost no questions relating to academics. He now directs the Society for Advancing Educational Research, a non-profit organization.

Influx of Immigrants Changes School Choice in Holland

Laurel Shaper Walters
Staff Writer for the Christian Science Monitor

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Editor's Comment: Holland provides an example of how school choice might work in a pluralistic society like ours.

LEIDEN, NETHERLANDS—As interest in school choice continues to build in the United States, the Netherlands' 85-year-old system of free public and private schooling offers some insight into the long-term effects of educational choice.

By provision of their constitution, Dutch parents can send their children to either public schools or private religious schools. And all these schools are equally subsidized by the government.

Several times a year, schools throughout the Netherlands advertise their services to the public. Newspapers carry ads, and schools distribute colorful brochures.

Principals shine up their school premises and invite the parents of prospective students in for tours. "We have evening and Saturday visits when we have only friendly teachers in the schools," jokes Fred de Zoete, principal of the public Louise de Coligny School in Leiden.

Most parents are looking for a school whose teachers and administrators have similar values and religious beliefs. "There's no big difference between schools," Mr. de Zoete says. "The biggest difference is the image that the parents have of the school. They may think that because there is a higher percentage of ethnic minorities here that the education level is lower."

As the immigrant population in the Netherlands has grown, many Dutch parents have begun to segregate their children from immigrant students.

Louise de Coligny had almost no ethnic minorities a decade ago. Today, 10 percent of the students are from ethnic minorities. "This is not a problem for Dutch parents now," de Zoete says. "But if this percentage should increase, they will want to send their children to another school."

The Roman Catholic school next door has almost no minority children. "Out of 1,500 students about 10 are minorities," de Zoete says. He suspects that the administrators next door are steering ethnic minority stu-

dents away from their school and encouraging them to apply instead at Louise de Coligny. "It's better for their image," de Zoete says of the Catholic school. As a public school, Louise de Coligny is obligated to admit any student who applies. Private schools have the option of rejecting students.

Since the majority of immigrants are flooding into the larger cities in Holland, schools in Amsterdam show even more evidence of segregation. Augustinus College was founded as a private school in the Bylmer section of Amsterdam nearly 15 years ago. At that time, the Bylmer was a newly planned region designed for middle-class residential housing.

"We started here as pioneers," says assistant headmaster Nicolette Schulman. "Within a few years, the whole idea collapsed. The immigrants came in, and the middle class moved out. It's really becoming a kind of ghetto."

Augustinus College is suffering because of the neighborhood's image. "As the area becomes worse, the school is considered worse," says Gerard Koster, an English teacher at the school. "Sometimes we feel we are fighting a losing battle."

In the past few years, the school's enrollment has dropped from 1,200 students to 760. The remaining students represent more than 30 different ethnic groups. Only 15 percent are white, native-Dutch students.

"Now we have very few students in the highest levels," Ms. Schulman says. "We may have to close down that part of the school. But before that happens, we'd merge with other schools. It's like in business, you have to find partners."

The Dutch government is encouraging struggling schools throughout the country to merge into larger institutions. As the number of schools has continued to climb over the years, administrative costs and inefficiency have become a problem.

The growing multicultural character of society in the Netherlands is straining the nation's tradition of

school choice and denominational education. Many private schools are breaking with their religious roots and accepting any student who applies, just as the public schools do.

"Not all of our students are Christian—a lot of them are Muslim," Schulman says. "We're not really in a position to turn students down."

"White flight" from schools with increasing numbers of immigrant students is growing. "It's very hard to turn the tide," Schulman says. "Society as we see it around us does not want to mix."

Most Dutch educators value the advantages of a free-choice education system. But concerns about the consequences are increasing.

"If you have the competition, it's better for your school. You think more about your product," de Zoete says. "But it has to be honest competition."

"The immigrants came in, and the middle class moved out. It's really becoming a kind of ghetto."

— Nicolette Schulman,
assistant headmaster

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The Association for Direct Instruction is a non-profit organization dedicated to dissemination of information on effective, research-proven practices for schools. ADI publishes a quarterly magazine *Effective School Practices* featuring research from the field, implementation descriptions from schools around the world, and expert, easy-to-understand answers to questions about the problems school personnel face in teaching, supervising or administering every day. ADI also sponsors workshops, publishes books, and markets other products that are available to members at a discount. Please consider becoming a sustaining member. ADI is increasing its efforts to promote the use of proven practices in schools and your contributions will help.

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1993 WISCONSIN SUMMER CONFERENCE ON DIRECT INSTRUCTION

August 11 – 13, 1993

Madison, Wisconsin

The 1993 Wisconsin Summer Conference on Direct Instruction will be held at the Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin campus from August 11–13, 1993. Preconference activities will be held at the Memorial Union on August 9–10, 1993. The Memorial Union is located on beautiful Lake Mendota where swimming and boating activities are available to the public. The Union is within easy walking distance of the Capitol, the Civic Center, the Elvehjem Museum of Art, Memorial Library, State Street's quaint shops, and a variety of restaurants.

Each conference day will begin with a plenary session at which featured speakers will deliver addresses of interest to all participants. For the remainder of each day, participants may choose from a variety of small-group sessions in which intensive training in the use of Direct Instruction methods and materials will be provided. These training sessions are appropriate for regular and special education teachers and administrators.

Come and meet with educators who are committed to effective instruction for ALL students.

FEATURED SPEAKERS

Wednesday, August 11

8:45 – 10:15 a.m.

"Direct Instruction as Contronym and Eonimine"

Ed Kameenui

- Associate Dean of the Division of Learning and Instruction
- Associate Professor
University of Oregon

Thursday, August 12

8:45 – 10:15 a.m.

"Building a Bridge Between Spoken Language and Print"

Vicki Snider

- Associate Professor
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Friday, August 13

8:45 – 10:15 a.m.

"Mountain View Elementary School: A Case for Restructuring"

Joel Davidson

- Principal
- Kathie Remick
- Instructional Leader
Mountain View Elementary School
Phoenix, Arizona

PRESENTERS

Craig Darch, Theresa Day, Jane Jung, Diane Kinder, Tami McGrattan, Patrice Riggan,
Kathy Schaeffer, Sue Syverud, Sara Tarver, Carrie Thomas

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For information about:

- conference content or credit course, call Professor Tarver at (608) 263-5791
- conference registration, call Chris Dzemske at (608) 262-2452
- parking, housing, CEUs or DPI clock hours, call Julie Seaborg at (608) 262-5315

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