

Broadening the Horizon: Recognizing, Accepting, and Embracing Differences to Make a Better World for Individuals with Special Needs



Proceedings for the Eleventh Biennial Conference of the International Association of Special Education

Alicante, Spain – July 12- 16, 2009

Editors

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Denton, Texas USA

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An independent publication of the International Association of Special Education in collaboration with the Institute for Behavioral and Learning Differences
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ISBN 978-0-615-28364-7

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Preface

Biennially, at the conference of the International Association of Special Education (IASE), educators from around the world gather to share ideas, learn from each other, make new friends, and establish new professional networks. Through this conference, we are able to celebrate our accomplishments toward providing better services to children and youth with unique life challenges. Simultaneously, we are made more cognizant of the enormity of the work that remains to be done in all sectors of the world in order to conserve and enhance the potential of the next generations.

IASE is pleased to sponsor the 2009 conference on *Broadening the Horizon: Recognizing, Accepting, and Embracing Differences to Make a Better World for Individuals with Special Needs*. Individuals whose proposals were accepted for presentation at the conference were invited to submit a short paper representative of their presentation to be reviewed and included in the conference proceedings. Although many presenters did not take advantage of the opportunity to submit manuscripts, others did. We feel certain you will find the manuscripts interesting and you will want to learn more about many of the topics. For your information, we have provided addresses and/or e-mail addresses to facilitate your efforts to make contact with authors.

As editors of the proceedings, we want to express our appreciation to those who submitted manuscripts and to the numerous individuals who assisted in the review process. Further, we sincerely appreciate the work of the editorial staff at the University of North Texas' Institute for Behavioral and Learning Differences who helped produce the final product.

Each of you are challenge to continue the great work you are doing!

Lyndal M. Bullock
Mickie Wong-Lo
Robert A. Gable
Cristina Cardona

TRUE LEADERSHIP IN SPECIAL EDUCATION REQUIRES UNITY BETWEEN RHETORIC AND ACTIONS

Nancy J. Aguinaga

Leadership in special education implies knowledge and application of professional behaviors, decisions, and ethics. Disparities noted between rhetoric and actions of special education faculty were motivating factors for a doctoral cohort to explore understanding of disability as it relates to professional roles. Implications conclude that it is imperative for best practices to be modeled on every level of leadership.

Background

One member of a special education doctoral cohort with a bilateral hearing impairment in the severe/profound range began the doctoral experience with a group of four other candidates, none of whom has a disability. Early in the program, several challenges emerged in regard to appropriate accommodations at national, state and local conferences. For accommodations to fail at special education conferences for teacher educators was astounding to this cohort at this level of the professional field.

As a cohort, it was decided to informally research barriers that were encountered for two primary reasons. First, individually the cohort wanted to further their own understanding of the challenges many with disabilities have (including their colleague) in terms of both a friend and as a teacher educator in an effort to be better at both. Second, they hoped to share the experience to compel other teacher educators to reflect on their actions to promote change. The questions explored included: (a) Do we, in higher education/special education, practice what we preach? (b) Are we inclusive thinkers that place the needs of those with disabilities within our professional and educational circles to the forefront as we teach our teacher candidates to do? (c) Do we do so with a spirit of advocacy and ethical responsibility that we strive to impart to our students? and (e) Do we take the extra step to break down social barriers as well? In short, do we really “*get it?*”

Connection to Cultural Studies

Analysis of written reflections following the year long experience demonstrated evidence of connections with critical theory work on oppression in cultural studies (Brantlinger, 2001; Eagleton, 1990; Shanahan & Jones, 1999; Young, 1990). Three components of oppression aligned with experiences noted by the cohort through behaviors and actions of leaders in special education: powerlessness, exploitation, and marginalization. Requests for accommodations in professional settings would seem straightforward in a field that teaches special education law as it pertains to accommodations. This limiting view reveals personal attitudes as they relate to expectations in regard to individuals with disabilities. Teacher educators cannot expect those we lead (whether they are students with disabilities, teacher candidates, or general education personnel) to fully understand the impact of their actions (which are often stronger than words) if we fail to demonstrate inclusive practices on both professional and personal levels.

Discussion

Individuals with disabilities do not typically find interest in special education teaching, policy, or research. There may be a reason for this as there seems to be a sense of surprise when meeting an individual with a significant disability as a colleague in teacher education, as noted by the example of appropriate accommodations in international, national, state and local special education conferences. The implication is that those in the field of special education may see themselves as distant from individuals with disabilities. Someone who taught special education in the field's formative years may not expect one of their "clienteles" to become one of their peers.

Lessons learned through this experience include that the importance of engaging in open dialogue with individuals with exceptionalities about supports and accommodations cannot be underestimated. However, it is important to recognize that the conversation may need to begin by either party in the conversation, rather than relying on the person with a disability to ask explicitly for what they need. While the assumption may be that leaders in special education apply the principles they routinely teach as best practices, the disparity between *knowing what to do* (as we teach our teacher candidates' best practices for special education) and *actually doing it* was evidenced in numerous situations. In addition, advocating for individuals to receive appropriate accommodations in all settings (school or conference), regardless of perceived barriers is critical. While there are challenges such as funding to overcome, failure to do so sends a message that defies understanding at this level. It is also important to increase personal awareness of attitudes and practices to promote active change in ourselves to develop truly inclusive social practices. While communication barriers present challenges that push us out of our comfort zone, we cannot expect teacher candidates to fully understand the impact of their own actions (again, often stronger than words) if we fail to demonstrate inclusive practices personally. Lastly, it is important to take ownership of personal habits and behaviors in the classroom to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities at all levels.

Incorporating these lessons learned to teaching special education teacher candidates are important first steps in our journey in higher education. We entered the field at this level to be leaders in special education and feel we have the professional responsibility to (a) engage our students deeper thinking about inclusive philosophies and barriers, (b) demonstrate decision-making for accommodations at all levels, and (c) model an inclusive spirit by assisting in breaking down all barriers--functional and social. If we are not truly demonstrating leadership in special education and bridging the gap between rhetoric and actions, how can we expect our students to go forth and become effective teacher leaders?

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OVERCOMING ABILITY BARRIERS: CREATING INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Melissa M. Jones

Many students with disabilities and their families are recognizing the value of a college experience as having life-changing potential, resulting in an increase of the number of students with disabilities enrolling in college programs in the United States. Not only are more students with mild learning or physical disabilities accessing college, but also students with more significant intellectual differences. As a result, individuals who experience cognitive delays, who need support to learn, live, grow, and be productive members of our communities, are no longer left out of the conversation regarding equality and accessibility for learning at the post secondary level (Grigal, Neubert, & Moon, 2001). By participating in both the academic and social aspects of a college campus, individuals with more significant disabilities are able to learn the needed skills for successful transition to adulthood (Transition, 2004).

In order to meaningfully participate in campus life, students with intellectual differences need support to access learning and social opportunities. Two common barriers students with disabilities have reported to hinder their success in college include both a lack of understanding and acceptance concerning disabilities, and a lack of self-advocacy skills (Lehmann, Davies, & Laurin, 2001). Add these to the academic rigor of college courses, and the need for support becomes even more obvious.

Mentoring Partnerships

To address the need on one university campus, mentoring partnerships between undergraduate special education majors and college students who have intellectual disabilities have been

established. It is considered a *partnership* because both parties ultimately benefit from the experience (Stoddard, 2003). Students with cognitive disabilities gain support for the academic and/or social needs they have, and special education majors gain valuable experience making accommodations, promoting self-advocacy, fostering relationships, and collaborating with others, including their mentoring partners. Each semester, mentoring partnerships are established based upon student need and matching schedules. All mentors volunteer, choosing the mentoring service-learning project among a variety of options in one of their required courses. By maintaining a mentoring log and periodically reflecting on their experiences, mentors receive service credit toward a final project grade.

Through a collaborative process, mentoring plans are developed with each student who has a disability, with specific schedules and needed supports outlined. The goal is to decrease the amount of support a student needs over time as each becomes more academically and socially independent. Mentors might attend classes, meet during scheduled study times, or simply eat lunch and attend campus activities with their mentoring partners. A student with a disability may have one or multiple mentoring partners, creating an actual community of support.

Preliminary Results

The mentoring program described is still in its infancy, with four students currently on campus who received mentoring support from twenty mentors over four semesters. Through a qualitative analysis of the efforts, some preliminary findings concerning the effectiveness of the mentoring initiative for bolstering inclusive campus communities were gathered. Artifacts including professor interviews, mentoring plans, meeting notes, email communications, peer mentor reflections, and final projects were analyzed to determine the strengths of the initiative, as well as current barriers.

Overall, students involved in the mentoring initiative quickly mastered the social aspects of college life, accessing the student union for food and entertainment, independently using campus recreational facilities, negotiating the campus, locating buildings and classrooms, and meeting new people. These students have also successfully mastered some of the course content, engaging in class activities and completing assignments, enhancing their overall knowledge and confidence. University professors across content areas who have taught students with intellectual disabilities have demonstrated genuine concern and interest in the students, even though many have expressed feelings of inadequacy due to their inexperience of teaching students with such diverse learning needs. In general, the students with disabilities and their families, their mentoring partners, and the professors, indicate positive outcomes for all involved.

While many minor issues have surfaced over the course of two academic years, a lack of study skills by the students with disabilities remains the most common factor endangering the academic success of students with intellectual differences. These include not only note-taking and homework completion, but also regular use of the internet and online instructional tools such as Blackboard, indicating the need for further support in these areas.

Discussion

Limitations exist in this small case study, making it inappropriate to generalize the findings across college campuses. From the experience, more questions than answers emerged which suggested a field of study ripe for further investigation. When we open our campuses to individuals who otherwise might not participate in college, the campus community experiments with and practices how to embrace differences as a valued commodity in the community.

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THE SPANISH VERSION OF SUPPORTS INTENSITY SCALE-SIS: A UNIQUE TOOL FOR ASSESSING AND PLANNING SUPPORT NEEDS IN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES POPULATION

Alba Ibáñez García
Miguel Ángel Verdugo Alonso

At the end of the 20th century, an intellectual disability (ID) was understood to be a discrepancy between a person's abilities, context exigencies, and the supports that play a key role on their interaction, thus reducing the disadvantages of having the disability (Luckasson et al., 2002). In this way, the measurement of the type and intensity of the individual support needs is turned into

a nuclear aspect of the 1992's System and, later, of the 2002 one (Schalock, 1999; *Schalock, Luckasson, & Shogren, 2007*). The consequence was the development of tools like the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS).

Nowadays, the SIS is the best tool to determine the profile and intensity of the support needs of a person with ID. It changes the traditional way of assessing and having contact with people with ID, taking on prospects that are more positive in the personal planning of their lives, and addressing the professional practices with more inclusive criteria.

Method

A committee of experts' initial validation of the provisional version, and compilation of documentation by the coordinating committee to complete the adaptation process carried out the translation and adaptation of the SIS in several stages: initial translation, back translation, concordance, and synthesis.

The final version of the SIS was applied to a sample of 885 individuals with ID. The participants were selected through a random nonprobabilistic sampling based on the access and availability of professionals at the centers for persons with ID from 20 provinces of Spain. The sample was composed by 61.5% (N= 538) of males and 38.5% (N= 337) of females, both of them with a range of age between 15 and 76 years, with an average of 34.6 (SD = 11.77). More than 90% of the participants had an IQ below 51.

The standardization process included different reliability analyses: internal consistency, reliability based on the scale's factorial structure, test-retest reliability, reliability inter-scorer, and concordance among testers. Several validity types were determined. These included (a) content validity [the original SIS has been further developed by having all 49 items evaluated by expert judge]; (b) criteria validity [through a comparison between the scores obtained in the different subscales and estimations of supporting needs calculated by external interviewer]; (c) construct validity [relation between scores and age, interrelations between the scales, relation with the disability level and the level of adaptive behavior, relation between the evaluated and perceived support needs, and correlations among each scale's items and the corresponding total and exploring factorial analysis of the scale's structure]; and (d) discrimination validity [establishing the discrimination values of the subscales resulting scores for the different estimation groups of supporting needs and adaptive behavior].

Results

In all cases, the results have been positive. The Spanish adaptation of SIS shows reliability and validity properties that have reached, and in some cases, exceeded those reported by the authors of the original SIS (Thompson et al., 2004; Verdugo, Arias, Ibáñez, & Gómez, L., 2006). Therefore, we can say that the current Spanish version achieves the objectives for which it was designed, and gives all the guarantees to be used. Having the Spanish adaptation of the Supports Intensity Scale-SIS will allow individualized plans to be developed and strategies centred on each person with a disability, instead of planning from a global perspective of services.

Discussion

No doubt an adaptation research study seemed the best system-level change model. The current Spanish version of SIS may be regarded as fulfilling the objectives for which it was initially designed. The objectives included serving as (a) an evaluation tool to determine the support needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, (b) a useful planning tool for ISP development and implementation, and (c) a potential tool to include in resource allocation and funding models (Verdugo, Arias, & Ibáñez 2007). The good properties of the Spanish version of SIS are guaranteed, but we need to go on studying the possibilities and uses of this tool. In this way, related to the educational area, SIS has all the domains required to identify post-secondary support needs for a student with an ID including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation. In consequence, it would be good for the field to start this positive approach from an early age, for example, while the child is still in the school system. Finally, the supports paradigm and the model centred on the improvement of the quality of life of the person with ID (Schalock & Verdugo, 2003) provide the necessary elements to develop person-centred planning strategies addressed to reduce the support needs and to improve the more relevant indicators to the quality of life of the above mentioned person (Schalock & Verdugo, 2007).

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WHEN IS LOW RISK TRULY LOW RISK FOR LOW-INCOME LEARNERS?

Gwendolyn Cartledge

Amanda Yurick

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In recent years, much attention has been given to response to intervention (RTI), which is predicated on the position that providing evidence-based intensive interventions can potentially ward off school failure and the effects of mild disabilities. RTI is a multilayer paradigm, providing levels of intervention to meet the needs of individual students, and increasing the intensity of the instructional support at each successive tier. This programming is designated for students considered to be “at-risk” or when these students exhibit academic unresponsiveness in the previous tiers.

RTI interventions are particularly important for urban and culturally diverse learners who are disproportionately impacted by conditions of academic failure and mild disabilities (Harry & Klinger, 2007). RTI interventions are implemented with students who show markers of potential academic risk. Low risk learners are expected to thrive with the general education instruction that meets the criteria of an evidence-based curriculum. The question raised in this study is how well do urban learners designated as “low risk” thrive compared to their higher risk classmates who had been identified as high risk and received small group interventions.

Method

This is the follow-up of a three-year study where high-risk students received early literacy interventions and the reading performance of both high-risk and low-risk students was

systematically monitored. The student participants in this study were a follow-up sample of 41 urban second-grade students from two K-5 elementary schools in a large mid-western urban school district. Students were primarily from low socioeconomic families and included Caucasian, African American, and Somalian children. In the first year, 93 kindergarten children were identified into high (n=61) and low (n=32) risk groups, based on performance on the DIBELS (Good & Kaminsky, 2002). Only high-risk students received phonological interventions (Early Reading Intervention, Simmons & Kame'enui, 2003) through small group instruction during year one. At the end of the first year, students were further divided into strong responders (n=25), weak responders (n=36), and comparisons (n=32). Students who met benchmark were designated as strong responders. For all three years of the study comparison or low-risk children received only the classroom instruction, which according to the specified curriculum included code-based reading instruction. The second year only the poor responders received small group instruction. The third year none of the children received special intervention. Oral reading fluency and comprehension were monitored for all three groups.

Results

Data from reading tests (WJ-III; Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001), tests of phonological awareness (Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing; CTOPP; Wagner, Torgesen, & Rashotte, 1999), and DIBELS were analyzed through multiple linear regressions for all three groups. The major findings from all assessments were that (a) the secondary interventions benefited the initially high-risk students and (b) students who showed the lowest risk in kindergarten evidenced the slowest rate of growth even compared to the poorest responders from the treatment group. With the DIBELS assessment, for example, during the third year the oral reading fluency (ORF) recommendations represented a 15.39% improvement for the strong responders, 14.28% improvement for the poor responders, but for the comparison students 0% improved and 21.43% regressed. Similarly, students at the intensive level fell from 30.77% to 15.39% for the strong responders, from 92.86% to 85.71% for the weak responders, but students at the intensive level increased from 28.57% to 50.02% for the comparison students.

Discussion

Overall, the findings show that intervention students benefited from the supplementary instruction. The strong responders made the most gains, performing largely at grade level. The slow responders failed to meet expected ORF benchmarks but continued to make progress. Comparison students, on the other hand, presented a trajectory of diminishing returns. Many of the comparison students were actually regressing throughout the period of this study with no steps taken by school personnel to provide interventions. Most of these students showed little or no risk in kindergarten, and, although the schools collected benchmark data, they apparently did not act on these assessments. None of the comparison students were singled out for interventions by the schools during the second and third years of this study. This suggests that even in low-performing schools where reading needs are most critical, instructional groupings are static, rather than fluid, as needed in effective intervention programs. Secondary interventions are probably needed for a much greater portion of low-socioeconomic urban learners than may be indicated with initial assessments. Constant monitoring and corresponding actions are strongly indicated.

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MOTIVATION STRATEGIES TO INCREASE EXPRESSIVE AND SOCIAL LANGUAGE

Laura Wood Alexander

Motivation, giving a reason or incentive to do something, is a natural part of teaching to encourage learning. Motivation theory states that people respond according to inputs which either satisfies or dissatisfies (Herzberg, 1959 as cited in Sergiovanni, 1980). For example, a teacher being friendly may not motivate a student for high performance, but an unfriendly teacher can be a dissatisfying factor in a student wanting to do his/her best. Motivation plays an important role for students to have the ability to be “self-disciplined, develop perseverance, become independent thinkers, develop judgment and evaluation skills, have a willingness to take risks, become self-starters, develop curiosity, have positive attitudes about learning, and gain a positive self-image” (Higgins, 1977).

Students with special needs respond well to a motivation “push” and love to show great satisfaction with their learning. However, when students have an expressive language delay they perform with a decreased ability to show and express satisfaction due to lack of word knowledge and language structure. Often these students will also exhibit a social language delay, which decreases their ability to understand social cues and express social language.

Language activities to motivate students with language delays should have concrete goals that set a direction and maintain progress toward the goal. Attention should focus on one stimulus at a time. Using pictures with language activities encourages students to create their own mental pictures as well as to concentrate on answering objective questions. Pictures for social language scenarios enhance the story meaning and help to highlight relevant information (Henley & Arnold, 2005).

Communication boards are a unique type of goal specific motivation strategy to increase expressive and social language. The picture scenes on magnetic boards can be used to give students practice in understanding word meanings, developing sentence structure, and in forming sentences with increasing length.

Communication boards for social language have picture scenes that target key expressions and social settings. Students are encouraged to suggest words that might be said in the scenes to achieve good communication results. The picture scenes also help students develop more precise language skills for increased social language competence.

Effective motivation strategies require consistent assessment with informative feedback (McMillan, 1997). Using communication boards along with the scoring rubric sheets creates an intrinsic motivator for learning. Students can track their progress as they continue to develop language skills that will help them remember language structure as well as to develop constructive speech for enhanced social language refinement.

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THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

Andrea R. Hathcote

The effects of a traumatic brain injury (TBI) on a student can vary greatly and affect many areas of functioning. Issues related to student behavior after a traumatic brain injury and strategies for managing this behavior will be identified.

Discussion

A TBI occurs when a head trauma changes the level of consciousness and/or anatomical abnormality of the brain (Michaud, Duhaimé, & Lazar, 1997). Common causes of TBI include falls from heights, sports and recreation-related incidents, vehicle accidents, or intentional injury. The severity of the functional and/or behavioral impairment depends upon the severity of the injury as well as when and what type of treatment is received (1997). In addition, a child suffering a TBI may experience levels of functional impairment in many areas, sometimes in combination: (a) motor skills, (b) feeding disorders, (c) sensory impairments, (d) communication impairments, (e) cognitive impairments, (f) academic impairments, (g) psychobehavioral impairments;, and (h) social and family difficulties.

Issues related to behavior for an individual with TBI can take many forms. Personality and behavior changes may include increase anxiety, depression, irritability, frustration, impulsivity, disinhibition, and sudden mood changes (Bullock, Couvillon, Gable & Stavinoha, 2006;

Doelling, & Bryde, 1995). Social functioning can be affected as well, manifesting as difficulty with conversation, decreases in goal-oriented behavior, and a lack of follow-through (Bullock, et al., 2006). Other changes often noted in children with TBI are cognitive in nature. Cognitive deficits such as lack of initiative, decreases in goal-oriented behavior, and a lack of follow-through may have indirect effects on social relationships. In addition, increased anxiety and social isolation may result causing even more challenges for the child with TBI. These changes not only affect social relationships, but academic progress as well.

Specific strategies to manage the behavior of an individual with TBI need to be personalized for that individual's needs. Bullock, Gable & Mohr (2005) list 16 requirements to ensure quality services for individuals with TBI including knowledge of the psychosocial implications of TBI as well as the implications for academic and behavioral performance. Mayfield and Homack (2005) suggest several interventions to assist with managing the behavior of an individual with TBI. They recommend focusing heavily on the antecedent in behavior modification programs, providing short, concise rules, using tangible prompts to help students manage their own behavior, provide close monitoring, avoiding overstimulation, and assisting with communication to avoid negative behavior outbursts.

Teachers of students with TBI should also be aware of other factors within the physical environment (Bowen, 2005). The classroom should be kept quiet and simplified. Noise and activity levels should be controlled, and teachers should attempt to avoid unnecessary distracters and sensory stimulation, like superfluous noise, light, and movement. In addition, timing throughout the day will be important. The teacher should also be aware of and make adjustments to the type and frequency of prompting needed for the student to acquire and generalize skills in the classroom (Doelling & Bryde, 1995). When selecting which learning strategies to use, the teacher should focus on those that are most appropriate for the student's current level of functioning, and those which will easily transfer to other tasks and environments. Direct instruction and modeling of learning strategies will be an essential part of teaching a student with TBI (e.g., Bowen, 2005; Doelling & Bryde, 1995). The teacher will also need to encourage and teach self-monitoring skills that promote independence. Problem behaviors are perhaps the most challenging aspect of teaching students with TBI, and several practical interventions can help prevent or eliminate problem behavior. Teachers should first consider conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment to determine the function of the behavior and decide upon an appropriate intervention (Bowen, 2005). There are some strategies that should be in place before the student with TBI arrives in the classroom. The daily routine and individual learning tasks will need to be well organized and structured to help prevent behavior problems from occurring (Doelling & Bryde, 1995). Other useful tools for teachers include the use of precision commands and behavior momentum (Bowen, 2005).

Tyler and Mira (1999) report that approximately 1 in 500 children are hospitalized annually with TBI, and 15% of those will have long-term effects from the injury. With these statistics, it is important that educators understand TBI and know how to help manage some of the problem behaviors that might occur. Ultimately, knowledge of the individual's injury and its specific effects will be the most important piece of information a teacher can have. Armed with this knowledge and successful strategies for managing behavior, a teacher can look forward to a positive outcome for a student with TBI.

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DEVELOPING VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT RETENTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS

Elisabeth Hargrave
Gail Slye

The shortage of qualified special education teachers has been an American national policy issue for more than a decade (Brownell et al., 2005). Compounding the adverse effect of this shortage on the quality of education for students with exceptionalities is the tendency for special educators to leave their classrooms at higher rates than general education teachers (Carlson, Brauen, Klein, Schroll, & Willig, 2002). These continuing trends punctuate the need for faculty of teacher preparation programs to plan deliberate, focused actions to reverse attrition rates. Moreover, to encourage newly trained special educators to persist in their teaching assignments, those who supervise their programs of study are advised to develop frameworks to support enduring professional networks for candidates as they enter classrooms.

Analysis of data collected during the *Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education* (SPeNSE) indicated 6% of special educators intended to leave their teaching assignments as soon as possible (Carlson et al., 2002). Another survey reported a significant percentage of special educators (more than 30%) intended to leave teaching within five years (WEA, 2002). In a study of alienation of special educators, Soho, Katims, and Meza (1998) found “significantly higher levels of isolation, normlessness, and powerlessness” (p. 20) among special educators as compared to the same feelings in general education teachers. This isolation limits opportunities for special education teachers to form the collaborative networks that are shown to contribute to the sense of job satisfaction reported by general educators (Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999).

To address the critical shortage of special educators most states in the United States have developed programs for alternative teacher licensure. The United States Department of Education endorses alternative training programs that allow persons with degrees in related areas to complete licensure requirements for education through an accelerated process (Feistritzer, Haar, Hobar, & Losselyong, 2004). A reported concern of candidates who complete these alternative certification programs is the lack of support and continued training provided to them after they enter classrooms (Olson, 2000). Comparisons of attrition rates for graduates of traditional and alternative preparation programs indicate the length of the training program impacts teachers’ longevity in their assignments. The need to provide extended support, training, and collegial networks for graduates after they complete these alternative preparation programs is a logical inference from this comparison.

Another suggestion for curbing the attrition trend and, simultaneously, preparing competent, confident educators who will persist in their teaching assignments is the infusion of technology in teacher preparation programs. To prepare students for successful participation in this century’s Information Age, teachers must have immediate, continuous access to resources and information. Because special educators are responsible for developing special education services according to federal regulations, they must be able to maintain current knowledge of effective instructional practices as well as mandatory legislative standards for effective and compliant practice. Special education teachers who have no network for keeping abreast of the ever-

changing world of special education may be at greater risk for responding to stress, uncertainty and isolation by leaving their classrooms.

Responding to the Needs

Can teacher preparation programs design effective responses to these multi-faceted contributors to attrition among special educators? The trend of “current research suggests that providing intensive, content-rich and collegial opportunities for teachers can improve both teaching and student learning” (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009, p. 52). The future educational paradigm for all children, including those with exceptionalities, may be envisioned as a hybrid model where groups of students in local classrooms use online technology for interactions with other students in classrooms spanning the globe (Sloan, 2009). The aim of the teacher preparation model described in this paper is to provide the connectivity needed to encourage special education teachers to continue their careers in education.

The Teacher Training Model

The teacher preparation model is designed to address factors that contribute to the attrition rate for special education teachers: a chronic shortage of qualified special educators, perceptions of isolation from colleagues, lack of a collegial network, and lack of access to continued professional development. In a focused attempt to instill pre-service special education teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy as they assume their initial teaching assignments and to provide ongoing support to sustain their commitment to educating students with exceptionalities, the model incorporates these fundamentals: (a) to reduce candidates’ perceptions of isolation and disassociation from their professional peers; and (b) to provide a lasting professional network.

The alternative certification program combines instruction in seated classes with e-learning through WebCT. Candidates are assigned to a continuous cohort group to complete the two-year program of study. Use of the hybrid model allows access to the most current, compliant educational practices, preserves opportunities for candidates’ personal interaction during the course of study, and creates an ongoing network for sustaining the collaborative attitude following graduation.

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USING TECHNOLOGY IN INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY CLASSROOMS DURING TEACHER DIRECTED ACTIVITIES

Sylvia L. Dietrich
Vicki Stayton

The use of technology and young children has been discussed extensively over the past several years in the early childhood community (Bewick & Kostelnick, 2004; Clements & Sarama, 2003). The National Association for the Education of Young Children's position statement on technology and young children (NAEYC, 1996) stresses the importance of using technology with young children in developmentally appropriate ways, integrating the technology throughout the learning environment, and as a supplement to quality. The Division for Early Childhood, DEC, of the Council for Exceptional Children provides guidance throughout their personnel standards and practices on the appropriate use of technology in early childhood settings (DEC, 2005). Recommended practices call for the development of stimulus rich environments that employ materials, media, and technology, including adaptive and assistive technology; employing technology for planning and managing the teaching and learning environment; and

for personnel training programs to infuse technology at the pre-service level to increase competencies of service providers, families, and administrators in assistive, instructional and informational technologies.

In recent years, researchers have focused on technology within the context of child initiated activities throughout early childhood classrooms, leaving the appropriate use of technology in teacher directed activities unaddressed (Murphy, DePasquale, & McNamara, 2003; Robinson, 2003). As pre-service early childhood educators enter the field, they are often times evaluated on their ability to integrate technology throughout their instruction with few opportunities to practice such skills throughout their preparation.

Technology Integration and Demonstration Project

University faculty and early childhood practitioners collaboratively engaged in a project to ascertain: (a) what technologies are available throughout local early childhood classrooms; (b) how to use technologies in appropriate ways throughout direct instruction to help children meet learning goals; and (c) to develop a DVD that could be utilized throughout university classes to demonstrate appropriate use of various technologies.

Field based participants included five early childhood educators serving children preschool through the second grade children, with and without disabilities. four of the teachers chose a book, *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats, utilized the document camera and power point to make a projectable image of the book. Each teacher utilized this electronic copy of the book throughout instruction as well as other individually chosen technologies appropriate to the setting and developmental age of the children to meet individual and group instructional goals and child outcomes. One teacher utilized the active board and various software programs to engage children in numerous transitions throughout the day.

Benefits

Benefits can be addressed for the young children in the various early childhood settings, the practitioners, pre-service teachers and university personnel. For the young children in the settings, there were several benefits received from the appropriate integration of technology throughout instruction including: increased time on task, increased attention and overall engagement. The technologies utilized also provided a different media in which children could engage with literacy and language. Practitioners were able to demonstrate appropriate use of technology in various early childhood settings and have the opportunity to individualize instruction for their group of learners as well as subgroups (e.g., children who are English language learners, children with identified disabilities, and children at risk for developing delays or a disability). Pre-service teachers have the opportunity to see appropriate implementation of technology and engage with the planning process. The University faculty had the opportunity to engage in some new technologies and expand their repertoire of skills as well.

Conclusions

The integration of technology throughout instruction in early childhood settings was substantiated throughout the early childhood literature and personnel preparation standards at both the national and state levels. Utilizing various technologies in developmentally appropriate ways provides practitioners with the opportunity to meet child outcomes and facilitate overall growth and development. Throughout the project, various types of technology were utilized from fairly common resources (e.g., power point) to a bit more advanced technologies, such as the active board. The team has successfully compiled a video of teaching snippets from early childhood classrooms to begin using in methods classes with pre-service teachers.

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL

Antonia Cascales
M^a Isabel Laguna Segovia

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) get to people's education not only as a way of accessing the educational resources but also in learning processes. That is to say so much in the way of teaching as in the way of learning. Our classrooms these days receive diverse students, leaving behind the old fashioned idea of exclusion for students with Special Education Needs. In this paper, we will show you different experiences that have been developed in ordinary classrooms by teachers of Early Years. The use of ICT in education involves a double approach: The use of technologies and the Curriculum itself.

The reality of special needs in Spain is that inclusive instructional programs for students with special needs are regulated with legislation (e.g., LOGSE, 1990; Real Decreto, 1995; Orden, 16 julio 2001 and 14 marzo 2007). The current regulation (i.e., LOE, 2006) expresses in the same terms. We have inclusive mainstreamed programs, resource room approach and specific schools.

We think as teachers that using ICT in a curricular context involves:

- Evaluation of the didactic possibilities of all the curricular items such as: educational purposes, aims, basic skills, contents, methodology and evaluation. We have to admit that sometimes the use of ICT does not fulfil the planned curricular objectives. It is true, however, that including ICT in the curriculum actively contributes to the teaching and learning process.
- Our classrooms have diverse students, a fact that leaves behind the archaic idea of exclusion for students with Special Education Needs (SEN). Thanks to principles such as diversity, equality, rights and inclusion, we can attend SEN students in the ordinary classroom; they learn, share and play, and their Special Needs are not an issue for an ordinary scolarization. There are questions, however, that need to be asked: (a) Is it scheduled in the planned learning outcomes? and (b) What kind of resources are used by the teacher?

What Kind of Resources are Used by the Teacher?

Our local education authority developed a technology department promoting the use of ICT in state schools in our country. In one hand they had sent one interactive white board to all the schools and in another hand they had designed an educational web page where teachers can be trained online and the teachers can show to the other teachers their educational program.

We teach at a pre-primary level and with the above mentioned resources we decided to work with the children in our classroom using the interactive white board. We schedule in our planned learning outcomes to work with technologies, taking into account the diversity of students and

their needs. In our classroom, we have twenty-three 4-year olds, one of whom is a female a motor disability.

Storytelling is a useful resource in pre-primary education. We wrote a story using the interactive white board where the main character was Sarah, our student with especial needs. With that story in one hand we wanted to show our students concepts like respect, collaboration, architectural barriers, etc. In another hand we prepared several activities with the interactive white board working attention, maths concepts, creativity, imagination, language and literacy.

Conclusion

As teachers we believe ICT are a great resource in order to provide students with access to a better education. What seems clear is that teachers can plan modification and adaptation using interactive white board like a useful tool and can respect diversity of learning styles.

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: WHY IS IT SO HARD?

Stephen K. Pavlovic
Claudia L. Aman

In the United States, inclusionary practice has become the law of the land thanks to the most recent revision of IDEA. Students with special needs have a right of access to the same settings

and curriculum as their typical peers, and in, the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is assumed that the general education classroom is the least restrictive environment. Yet, challenges to the successful inclusion of students are still common.

Teachers in the United States have long viewed their typical students as homogeneous in make up. Many teacher education textbooks (and many teacher educators themselves) will tell students that general education is monolithic while special education is individualized (Henly et al., 2006); teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers search for the one method that will work for all students (Bartolome, 1994). However, general education classroom students are in reality highly diverse. These students include gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual students, students from non-traditional homes, students from an array of racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, students with visual and tactile learning styles (while instruction continues to be primarily auditory), and students with every conceivable combination of temperamental characteristics (Bartolome, 1994; Books, 2003). Unfortunately, the diversity of these students is all but invisible to public school teachers. When student needs become apparent, they are often viewed as problems which impede the instruction of other students (Bartolome, 1994; Books, 2003). Their diversity is rarely seen as an asset or an opportunity to enrich the curriculum (Hamovitch, 2003). It is not surprising that sometimes students with special needs are greeted in the general education classroom with resentment.

Teachers in the general education classroom often view failure as an indication of lack of effort rather than an indicator of student need or the failure of the teaching strategies employed (Dudley-Marling, 2001). These teachers approach their work uncritically. Teachers teach and learners learn or fail to learn; the responsibility is entirely on the student (Bartolome, 1994; Dudley-Marling, 2001). In this climate, students with special needs make failure even more salient and challenge the classroom teacher's belief in their method. These students are met with anger because their presence makes it almost impossible for the general education teacher to ignore the diversity of the classroom and the need for differentiated, individualized instruction. We feel there are three primary reasons for this: (a) Teacher educators themselves often use the old lecture test methodology of teaching, and ignore the background, experience, and characteristics of teacher candidates even when differentiation is taught in the teacher education program; differentiation and critical thinking are often absent in teacher education classrooms themselves. Even at this level, candidates are often viewed as empty vessels into which information is uncritically poured (Bartolome, 1994; Books, 2003; Noddings, 1994). Thus, teacher candidates are not encouraged to bring their own experience and prior knowledge to their learning and are not taught to question their own experience, let alone acknowledge the experience of their future students. Teacher candidates then go out and teach as they themselves were taught, regardless of what methods they have learned in their methods courses. Further, they are unable to critically examine the context of learning in whatever school in which they are employed. They are then unprepared for the diversity they find in the classroom. (b) Those students who do critique their own learning and dare to implement new methods in their classroom are met with derision from their colleagues. New ideas about teaching and learning are viewed with skepticism. (c) Collaborative teaching, when it does occur, is often a haphazard process which receives no planning or training prior to implementation. Older teachers frequently have difficulty allowing the special educator to be more than an aide and don't allow

them to contribute real teaching along side them. The curriculum in these settings is often “boring and atomized” (Hamovitch, 2003).

Special education teacher candidates are, for the most part, learning what they need to learn to ensure successful inclusion (Gartin et al., 2002). What needs to change is the way in which general educators are taught, and what they are taught, so that they are prepared to work collaboratively and to accept the diversity of their “typical” students and then be open to the needs of students with individualized education plans. The re-thinking and re-visioning of special education must start with teacher educators and form an integral component of teacher education programs. Yet, we as educators of special education teachers have very few opportunities to influence what happens in the education of general education teacher candidates.

What can we do to prepare special educators to meet the challenges of inclusion? Freire’s concept of “the oppressed” can be usefully applied to teachers themselves when planning for improving inclusionary practice (Freire, 1993; Freire & Macedo, 1987). First we can teach our students to critically analyze their experience in the schools rather than simply accepting their marginalization as inevitable. A useful place to start this process might be Paulo Freire’s concept of the oppressed and the analysis of beliefs which institutionalize the marginalization of everyone in the school. Children are oppressed by everyone above them because they are expected to behave in stereotyped manners reflecting the maintenance of social order rather than being respected as individuals. Teachers are oppressed because they are viewed as expendable employees whose job is the maintenance of social order and the implementation of legislative mandates. Administrators are oppressed because of the constant stream of mandates from above. Schools overall are oppressed because they are not viewed as sources of social change; rather they are too often viewed as the means to solidify the status quo, and the source of job training.

The Council for Exceptional Children’s require special educators to advocate for the needs of their students. In keeping with this, special education teacher candidates need to understand that this includes educating the teachers and administrators with whom they work. This is important for special education students as well as special education teachers themselves. The burn-out rate is high in special education and is rising due in part to the challenges of inclusion and working with regular education teachers who are not prepared to meet the challenges of an increasingly diverse world. Special education teachers have a role to play in the reform of schools so that general education teachers come to understand their role as partners in the education of all students.

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**ONLINE GRADUATE PROGRAMS TO PREPARE SPECIAL EDUCATORS:
INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH AT WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY**

Barbara L. Ludlow
Michael Duff

The demand for special educators to serve children and youth with exceptionalities is a worldwide phenomenon. Critical shortages of appropriately trained personnel have been well documented in the United States for many years (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). At the same time, developed and developing countries alike are experiencing a shortage of qualified teachers, including those trained to work with students with special needs (UNESCO, 2006). To address these shortages, institutions of higher education and state education agencies have developed alternative certification programs to increase the number of personnel available to fill

positions, especially in urban and rural schools (Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar, & Misra, (2007). Distance education programs have become increasingly common in personnel preparation in special education as colleges and universities work to make training more accessible to non-traditional learners and individuals living and working in more remote areas (Ludlow, 2006).

Online Program Overview

West Virginia University (WVU) offers online graduate programs in six areas of specialization: Autism Spectrum Disorders; Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education; Gifted Education; Low Vision/Blindness; Multicategorical Special Education; Severe/Multiple Disabilities. Three program options are available in each area of specialization: teaching certification only in special education; teaching certification plus a Masters degree in special education; Masters degree only in special education. WVU has been offering graduate programs in special education for nearly years. These programs have been awarded professional recognition by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and are accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Although this program was designed to address critical shortages in West Virginia, it has also attracted enrollment from many other states and international areas, including Saipan, Iceland, Japan, Guam and Costa Rica, to date.

Program Requirements

Each program includes a combination of required and elective courses for a minimum of 36-42 credits, depending on the specialization area and program option. All courses are offered in a 1-year cycle (high incidence programs) or 2-year cycle (low incidence programs) at the rate of two with courses available each semester, culminating practicum only during the academic year, and culminating project only in summer. ALL courses (except the culminating practicum or project) are designed to require NO prerequisites so students may enroll at any point in the cycle. Students pay off-campus tuition and fees at the resident rate in all program courses and practica through a special agreement with the Southern Regional Education Board's Electronic Campus.

Field experiences and associated performance assessments are required in ALL program courses; in each course, students complete at least one assignment applying theory to practice with an individual with exceptionalities, a family, or an elementary or secondary school program. Students who cannot complete assignments in their job setting must locate individuals/families and schools/agencies in their community to complete all required activities.

Culminating practicum experiences are the capstone experience for certification programs with or without the degree. They are available through two placement options: on-the-job supervision by a qualified colleague and full-time placement in a qualified local public school program. Students who are currently employed as teachers or interventionists engaged in direct instruction of students may meet some or all practicum requirements in their own work settings. Those who are not employed must attend a model school program with a master teacher. Students are responsible for verifying that they are eligible for practicum, securing an appropriate practicum site and supervisor in their area, state, or country, and obtaining permission for the placement

from all parties. The cooperating professional provides on-site supervision, while the university supervisor provides online oversight.

Culminating projects are the capstone experience for the degree only program. Each student individually designs a project with faculty guidance by reviewing the professional literature on evidence-based practice and conducting a curriculum design or action research project related to his/her area of specialization that applies knowledge and skills in a real world setting.

Online Delivery System

All courses are offered online in Blackboard Vista, a learning management system with an array of technology formats for content presentations, learner interactions, and learning assessments. Live class sessions are offered on alternate weeks using Horizon Wimba Classroom, a desktop conferencing program that permits real-time interactions between instructor and students using presentation slides, Web sites, and desktop applications in real time and to poll the participants using yes/so, and multiple choice and short answer responses. The system enables interactions via voice or text chat; students can also engage in small group discussions or collaborative activities using break-out rooms. Instructor and students use an inexpensive microphone or headset connected to the computer for adequate sound quality, but no other special equipment is necessary. Live sessions are held on alternating weeks from 5-7 pm ET; an archive is made of each session and is available throughout the course. Students who live in areas more than 3 time zones away are not required to attend live sessions but are expected to view the archives. All conferences and web activities are conducted in English.

Practicum experiences are offered in collaboration with local public schools that agree to provide master teachers (full time practica) or peer mentors (on the job practica) to oversee practicum experiences that comply with program policies and procedures in cooperation with university personnel who provide supervision online. All practica are offered in Blackboard Vista to facilitate asynchronous interactions among practicum teams (student, practitioner, faculty) and to structure activities for individualized planning, personal reflective journaling, group seminar discussions, progress reporting, electronic portfolio preparation/review, performance assessment, and practicum evaluation. In addition, live conferences are conducted using Wimba Classroom to facilitate real time interactions by each team at least three times to review performance and progress and troubleshoot any problems that arise. At the end of the practicum, each student submits a professional portfolio of evidence and reflections on his/her proficiency in using iWebfolio, an electronic portfolio program that allows students to design a web site and upload media in a variety of formats.

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More Information about Technology Resources:

Blackboard's Vista products are available at <http://www.blackboard.com>
Horizon's Wimba Classroom products are available at <http://horizonwimba.com>
Nuventive's iWebfolio products are available at <http://www.iwebfolio.com>

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INTEGRATING TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS USING ACTION RESEARCH

Stephen D. Kroeger
Chester Laine

In spite of historical barriers that existed, University of Cincinnati School of Education personnel worked toward fuller integration of University program structures. Our goal was to develop teaching and instructional pedagogy that increased the local educational system's capacity to address greater student diversity in knowledge and skill sets across middle and secondary grade levels. Teacher education and teacher leadership program faculty developed an action research project that supported a collaborative process that involved assessment, curriculum development, and program planning. Due to historical organization design as silo programs, our teacher preparation programs required significant restructuring to increase the effectiveness of beginning teachers. Action research provided a model for collaboration in which the knowledge and experiences of all participants was valued. Everyone contributed to the development of

innovative strategies aimed at integrating teacher preparation programs leading to richer learning opportunities for ourselves and our beginning teacher candidates.

New teachers increasingly serve children with disabilities in general education classrooms and practitioners lack clear definitions of the role of teachers in collaborative contexts that seek to educate every child (Arthaud, Aram, Breck, Doeling, & Bushrow, 2007). Furthermore, due to the discrete nature of our teacher training programs, we provided minimal collaboration in course work or field placements (Blanton & Pugach, 2007). Collaborative teaching refers to general and special educators jointly teaching heterogeneous groups of students in educationally integrated settings. Both teachers are simultaneously present and maintain joint responsibility (Boudah, Schumacher, & Deshler, 1997).

Because a primary aim of legislation in the United States (IDEA, 2004; NCLB, 2002) is to educate as many children as possible in the general education classroom, teacher preparation programs must train all beginning teachers to use evidence based practices to support the learning of all children (Arthaud et al., 2007). Yet inconsistent practices and ill-defined expectations suggest that implementers need a wide array of supports to enact effective collaboration, including common planning time, administrative support, and professional development (Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007). To accomplish increased support, teacher preparation personnel must develop professional relationships, observe how collaboration is being implemented, encourage teachers to experiment with different groupings or teaching strategies, and problem solve as issues emerge (Friend, Cook, Hamby, & Hurley-Chamberlain, 2008).

In addition to the conceptual and professional development concerns, there are considerations of the enormous logistics involved in integrating discrete teacher preparation programs. The scheduling of several hundred field practicum experiences per year requires a common vision. Service delivery models differ in each school. General educators tend to work in one room, while special educators might work with multiple content area general educators or with a particular content area across grade levels. Field placements are developed discretely for each program without mutual collaboration. Timing of placements, paperwork, and common district contact people must be fostered through partnerships and training. In a sense, we did not see each other. Underlying these logistical arrangements were strong values, deeply held beliefs, and, of course, the inertia of tradition.

The team chose an educational action research methodology (Noffke & Stevenson, 1995) to guide us through the labyrinth of collaboration and program integration. The process involved assessment and exploration. We began by telling our stories and assessing what we do. Story telling was followed by exploration of ways to replace current understandings and move toward program restructuring. Many of the techniques of action research, such as research circles and reflective practice, promoted successful collaborative learning (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003).

Research circles were first developed as a mechanism for bringing together university-based scholars and trade union representatives in collaborative research projects in Sweden (Härnsten, 1994). This process focuses on addressing a problem or issue as defined by the members of the

group recognizing that the most important knowledge and expertise comes from the participants themselves. The use of reflective practice (CRCP, 1998) helped us ask fundamental questions, such as If we are in a social, political and economic era in which information and knowledge are substantive forms of capital, what are the tools, processes, and strategies that can support poor and underserved communities in cultivating this form of capital for their own development?

This action research effort provided a unique opportunity for an iterative and reflective process that resulted in increased university program integration experiences, blended pedagogical content knowledge, construction of a Reflection-Plan-Action cycle, and continuous improvement tools. This project has broad implications for faculty seeking to integrate aspects of teacher preparation programs and, more generally, for the incorporation of the theory and methods of action research into educational practice.

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**INCLUSION CHALLENGES IN THE UNITED STATES: A COLLABORATIVE
GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION MODEL**

Kathleen Rutowski
Iris Drower

Teacher education programs in the United States (US) are challenged to prepare general education teacher candidates to create inclusive classrooms. The concept of inclusive educational practice in the United States emerged during the 1990s as classrooms across the U.S. were becoming more diverse. Inclusive practice is a supports-based approach to education that assumes that schools are obliged to construct educational environments with the support systems necessary for all children to participate in natural school settings in their communities (Hutchinson & Martin, 1999; Lipsky & Gartner, 1998). In schools general and special educators worked together to develop educational practices supporting the needs of all students in general education classrooms (Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education, 2000). These efforts resulted in a restructuring of educational processes to include collaboration, integration of services, and community connections with schools. The roles of all teachers evolved to include increased collaboration between general and special educators as the number of inclusive schools in the US continues to increase (Stainback & Smith, 2005).

Teacher preparation programs have been challenged to prepare both general and special education teacher candidates to develop collaborative, inclusive practices. This has given rise to a range of preparation options from the addition of a single course to general educator programs to dual preparation programs in which teacher candidates become certified to teach both special and general education students (Pugach, 2005). The outcomes of these approaches require documentation. Pugach (2005) states that “mining the current practice of teacher education to document its effectiveness is one of the most important tasks at hand.” (p. 578)

This paper describes a program-specific model of special education course development and delivery for general education teacher candidates. The model was designed to prepare general educators to collaborate with colleagues and to accommodate, modify, and evaluate the impact of instruction to provide meaningful and authentic learning experiences for all children. It

specifically addresses the evolving relationship between the historically different pedagogical approaches taken by special and general educators in the US.

Program-Responsive General Education Teacher Preparation Model

Students enter the elementary teacher education program the first semester of the third year of their four -year undergraduate degree program. They take three semesters of course work followed by a semester of student teaching. Methods classes are often field-based and taught at partner schools in the community surrounding the university. Faculty developed a program-responsive approach to preparing general education teacher candidates to develop inclusive educational practices. The resulting model has three specific components: (a) collaboration among university special and elementary education faculty; (b) deliberate positioning of special education pedagogical content knowledge within the general education course, content, and pedagogical framework; and (c) a course delivery system requiring teacher candidates to continually examine and engage in effective collaborative practices.

Evidence of the Model's Impact

A survey was conducted with a cohort of 17 general education teacher candidates the beginning of their first semester in the preparation program and with a cohort of 27 general education teacher candidates after they had completed three semesters of special education course work aligned with their general education program requirements (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.8679). The surveys revealed significant increases in teacher candidates' perceptions of: (a) their understanding of the roles of general and special educators; and (b) their confidence in developing instructional and behavioral accommodations/modifications. Teacher candidates who had completed the program were significantly more confident that they understood the roles and responsibilities of general and special educators and their collaborative responsibilities. They also were significantly more confident of their understandings how to include children with special needs in regular classrooms, how to adapt lesson plans and activities, and how to document behavioral and instructional interventions. Both groups were equally confident they would be able to initiate collaborative relationships with special educators and parents.

A response-to-scenario study (Mehta, 2006) of general education teacher candidates in the program revealed their overall expectations for the success of an at-risk-student increased as they progressed through the three-semester program. In addition, the percentage indicating it was the teacher's responsibility to address academic and social challenges increased from the first to the third semester in the program.

Discussion

There are several limitations of the evaluation of the model's impact. First, a larger sample size may yield different results. Second, the researchers have not yet collected evidence that program graduates actually develop more inclusive educational practices when they begin their teaching careers.

The program-responsive approach to preparing general education teachers for inclusion exposed them to techniques and strategies that complemented their general education course work and that could be invoked in their internship classrooms. These experiences had a positive impact on teacher candidates' feelings of efficacy in collaborating with colleagues and parents to accommodate, modify, and evaluate meaningful, authentic learning experiences for all children. There is the potential they will develop the teaching practices and collaborative style of interaction necessary to lay the foundation for fully inclusive educational practices at the schools in which they teach.

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A COMPARISON OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM

Yen Thi Hoang Nguyen
Robert A. Gable
Lyndal M. Bullock

By all accounts, the American System of Higher Education has become the worldwide “gold standard,” respected around the world for its empirical research and professional scholarship and for providing large numbers of students access to a quality education. Each year, delegations from many countries tour American campuses seeking to glean useful insights from the programs they observe. Entire academic systems are reengineered to reflect such U.S. practices, such as: the course credit system; the coexistence of public and private universities and colleges; diversity in institutional missions and goals; systems of administration and accountability.

For these reasons, the first author spent five months traveling throughout the United States, visiting special education teacher training programs and establishing a professional network. A large part of the time was spent at NYC. With the guidance and assistance of Lyndal Bullock, she was able to visit Old Dominion University (Norfolk, VA); US Department of Education (Washington DC); Council for Exceptional Children (Arlington, VA); National Association of State Directors of Special Education (Washington DC); and, the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (Washington DC); as well as public schools in various metropolitan areas. Additional sites included: University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN); Bethel University (Minneapolis, MN);

Each of the teacher training programs met teacher preparation standards established by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Beyond satisfying these accreditation standards, the quality of the teacher training programs and the dedication of both administrators and faculty members to promote both teacher pedagogical skill and subject matter expertise, along with a thorough understanding of teaching/learning in the context of schools was impressive. Among the numerous components that characterized the programs was the systematic attempt to assist newly prepared teachers to make the difficult transition from student to teacher and to otherwise prepare teachers to be capable of addressing the needs of an increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse student population,

Perhaps the single most noteworthy discovery was the fact that, relatively speaking, half a world apart, we face some remarkably similar challenges to better serving children at risk and with disabilities. For example, teacher educators in both the United States and Vietnam bemoan the fact that there are too few resources to meet the growing demands for highly qualified special education teachers. Compounding an already difficult situation, in both the United States and in Vietnam there is a severe shortage of qualified faculty to prepare special education teachers. While the majority of faculty members in the United States possess a doctorate in special education or a related field, there are very few persons with doctorates in special education in Vietnam. Absent doctoral level faculty, universities are unable to offer graduate preparation in special education. In a bold and far-reaching edict, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has determined that by 2015 all faculty of higher education and all of the professional personnel attached to the resource centers located throughout Vietnam must possess at least a

masters degree and that there be an additional 20,000 more individuals with a doctorate in various disciplines, 2,500 of whom must be trained in the United States.

While special education has been in existence for over two hundred years in the United States, it is a relatively new field in Vietnam, as evidenced by the fact that it was 1999 when the first 4-year undergraduate program received government approval. Even so, programmatically speaking there are some remarkable similarities. In both the United States and Vietnam there is increasingly more importance being placed on early intervention. Recent legislation in the United States has included funds dedicated to serving young children and their families. In both the United States and in Vietnam there is a concerted effort among professionals representing various disciplines to build the capacity of the parents of young children with disabilities to be partners in the teaching/learning process. In both countries, attention also focuses on providing an inclusive education—teaching children with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers. Indeed, a recent the Ministry of Education and Training recently released a plan to “build a learning community” that includes all students and that prepares children to compete in the global scientific-technological revolution. Finally, in that there is a burgeoning number of children being diagnosed with autism in both countries, special consideration is being given to this population of students. For example, the first school dedicated to serving young children with autism and developmental delays was established in 2004 in Hanoi, Vietnam. Today that program serves over 100 youngsters from throughout Vietnam.

Another similarity relates to shortage of qualified classroom personnel. Schools throughout the United States struggle to find teachers who are “highly qualified” to teacher children with disabilities. Mirroring the challenges schools face in the United States regarding severe teacher shortages, another 200,000 teachers are needed to work with children with special needs and disabilities, largely in more rural areas of Vietnam. The Vietnamese government has sought to provide incentives to teachers-in-training to accept teaching positions in more remote areas of the country, such as: tuition forgiveness and increased salary.

Among the most significant differences between special education teacher preparation in the United States and Vietnam is the level of technology that is being infused into teacher education. For example, at the Hanoi National University of Education, there are over 30,000-40,000 students enrolled in distance education programs. Instruction is delivered on a face-to-face basis at continuing education and distance learning centers throughout Vietnam. While Vietnamese universities reach a relatively large numbers of students, the present delivery system is less efficient than the technology that exists at most colleges and universities in the United States. Given that most of Vietnam is rural, geographic barriers exist that prevent many potential students from attending a college or university teacher training program. In contrast, over one-third of the colleges and universities in the United States provide “high tech” distance learning opportunities to students. For instance, Old Dominion University, Norfolk VA, offers the largest distance learning program in the United States. Students from across the country and around the world enroll in courses transmitted via satellite and receive instruction at either downlink sites (e.g., community colleges) or via video streaming through their home computer. Lastly, most courses are available in both a synchronous (live) and asynchronous (archived) formats.

Another difference relates to the governance of higher education in the United States and Vietnam. In the United States, universities operate autonomously. Most colleges of education meet the accreditations standards established by various major professional organizations, including NCATE and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). In contrast, Vietnamese universities operate from a centralized administrative and organizational system and are responsible to the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). In that colleges and universities reflect the political, social, economic, and historical context within which they operate, there probably are advantages and disadvantages to both of these governance systems.

Conclusion

Today, teacher preparation in special education has no geographic boundaries. As we have discussed, there are many common challenges facing institutions of higher education in countries throughout the world. Resources are limited, use of technology varies significantly, and there are too few university faculty to prepare the burgeoning number of special education teachers needed to fill classroom positions. Fortunately, there are a growing number of partnerships among colleges of education around the world that share the same commitment, namely, to prepare knowledgeable and skilled classroom teachers to better serve children and adolescents at risk or with disabilities.

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FEMALES WITH EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS AND DELINQUENCY

Mickie Wong-Lo

Empirical finding indicates that female adolescents with emotional disturbance exceeded peers without disabilities on exhibiting characteristics of conduct disorders, such as: (a) aggression, (b) defiance, and (c) destructiveness (Cullinan, Schultz, Epstein, & Luebke, 1984; Epstein, Cullinan, & Rosemier, 1983). In addition, findings have examined emotional and behavior problems among adolescents with and without emotional disturbance found that, regardless of gender, individuals with emotional disturbance indicated a higher chance of exhibiting inappropriate behavior such as: (a) disruptiveness, (b) fighting, (c) disobedience, and (d) destructiveness than peers without emotional disturbance (Cullinan et al., 1984).

Discussion

Cullinan, Osborne, and Epstein (2004) examined the characteristics of emotional disturbance among females. A total of 689 females participated in their study and 218 of them were identified as meeting the federal criteria of emotional disturbance (Cullinan et al., 2004). Cullinan and colleagues addressed five components of the federal definition of emotional disturbance and included a sixth subscale, (social maladjustment) in their study. In addition, a seventh subscale (overall competence), which assess competencies, supportive assets, and other strengths related to the concepts of risk and resilience (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998), was included (Cullinan et al., 2004). Further, it was found that (a) females with emotional disturbance displayed more maladaptive symptoms than females without emotional disturbance and (b) females with emotional disturbance exhibited more difficulties on socially maladjusted and overall competence than peers without emotional disturbance (Cullinan et al., 2004).

Similar to the difficulties in determining the prevalence of emotional and behavioral disorders (Kauffman & Landrum, 2009), the prevalence of female delinquent behavior can also be a challenge. Current social and political attitudes combined with gender bias in the juvenile justice system (Hartwig & Meyer, 2003) have created the illusion that adolescent females are at lower risk than males for delinquency (Pepi, 1997). Moreover, Lerner (1998) emphasized that adolescent development is not merely a function of the addition of biological, psychological, and sociological makeup, but rather an integration of multiple levels of characteristics and interactions with dynamic relations between the adolescent and these environmental influences.

Furthermore, researchers have examined the emergence of antisocial behaviors for females. Traditionally, females were considered to rarely participate in aggressive, delinquent, and antisocial acts that studies of their antisocial behavior were appeared unnecessary (Kavanaugh & Hops, 1994; McGee & Feehan, 1991; Tremblay, 1991). Although females constitute a minority of detained and adjudicated juvenile delinquents (Snyder & Sickmund, 1999), rates of delinquency among females are increasing significantly (Loper & Cornell, 1996; Mann, 1996; Molido, 1996; Siegel & Senna, 2000).

Specifically, statistics from the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ), found that juvenile offenses by females increased during the decades of the 1990s at least four times than those of

male juvenile offenders (NCJJ, 2007). Also, the overall female delinquency caseload grew at an average rate of at least four percent per year between 1985 and 2006, compared to males (Puzzanchera, Stahl, Finnegan, Tierney, & Snyder, 2004). While the arrest rates for juvenile crime diminished between 1994 and 1999, arrest rates for females emerged in all major offense categories (Department of Juvenile Justice, 2007; Puzzanchera et al., 2004).

Mullis, Cornille, Mullis, and Hber (2004) observed female delinquency a generation ago found prominence among runaways and sexual misconduct. Siegel and Senna (2000) noted a continual increase of females are involved in activities such as: (a) armed robbery, (b) gang activity, (c) drug trafficking, (d) burglary, (e) weapons possession, (f) aggravated assault, and (g) prostitution. In comparison to male offenders, the types of crimes most associated with females continue to be considered less violent and less serious (Acoca, 1999). In addition, Acoca (1999) described that once female delinquents are placed on probation for minor offenses, subsequent charges in violation of probation increase the chances that these girls will become more involved in the juvenile justice system.

In conclusion, research has shown that female juvenile with emotional and behavioral disorders report symptoms of co-occurring disorders such as (a) conduct disorders, (b) depression, and (c) learning disabilities (e.g., Benner, Nelson, & Epstein, 2002; Bussing, Zima, Belin, & Forness, 1998; Forness, Kavale, & Lopez, 1993). Further, cases of suicidal attempts or ideations and depression were reported to be higher than female juvenile without emotional disturbance (e.g., Dembo, Williams, & Schmeidler, 1993; Siegel & Senna, 2000). As scholars pursuits for understanding the characteristics or pattern of female juvenile with emotional and behavioral disorders, the complexities of this disorder must be considered as well as the other elements this literature review has discussed.

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HOW FULL-INCLUSION CHANGED OUR EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Jean Anthony
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In 1975, the Education for the Handicapped Act (EHA) or PL 94-142, was enacted with the following four main purposes: “to assure that all children with disabilities have available to them...a free and appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs” in the least restrictive environment; “to assure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents...are protected” as well as ” to assist States and localities to provide for the education of all children with disabilities” and “to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate all children with disabilities.” [*Source: the Education for All Handicapped Children’s Act of 1975*] Prior to this, there was no standard set by the Federal government as to how States and localities were to educate children with disabilities. Consequently, significant numbers of children were either denied access to an education or were educated in isolation from typically developing peers.

EHA was amended in 1983 to include services from birth to 21 and in 1997 to include services to support transition from high school to adult living. In 1990, the EHA was renamed the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). With the introduction of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001, national attention became focused on accountability, closing the achievement gap, scientifically researched based instruction and more choices for parents, thus furthering the agendas of IDEA. [*Source: the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*]

IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 and included provisions for Response to Intervention (RtI). This gave states and localities permission to preemptively identify and serve students without having to wait for them to fail.

Beliefs

Change has come to schools in America where “We Are One” in the belief that all students can learn! Teachers’ and educators’ have shifted their beliefs to the concept of teaching to ensure that all students learn. Special education is viewed as the way to provide services to individual students to allow full access to core curriculum material and not a place where services are

provided. Teachers are equipped with the tools (i.e. cooperative learning groups, differentiated instructions and peer tutoring) to ensure that all students are capable of learning in a healthy and enriched learning environment without grouping by labels.

With the implementation of No Child Left Behind and IDEA 2004, students are assigned the least restrictive classroom to learn and be educated. Antioch Middle, in Antioch Unified School District, and Adams Middle, in Brentwood Union School district, are like many of the schools in America that have redesigned classrooms and reduced the barriers to include all students with and without disabilities in the same learning environment.

At Antioch Middle School students who were once separated in self-contained special education classrooms, are now confident and compete in school and city-wide academic competition. Collected data from Antioch Middle show an increase from .84 (Far Below Basic) to 2.26 (Basic) in overall grade point average in academic achievement for students. Adams Middle School students, who started in an inclusive learning environment, experienced a 62 percent increase in English Language Arts and 53 percent increase in Mathematics over a two year period. The data indicates when provided rich and rigorous instructions using a “Co-Teaching model,” students are able to access the curriculum and excel academically.

As America’s classrooms become integrated with a cadre of diverse learners, research and studies such as Dr. Kathleen Whitbread, “What Does the Research Say About Inclusive Education?” provide awareness to teachers on the necessity of innovative methods such as Friend’s Co-Teaching Models (One-Teach/One Assist, Station Teaching, Parallel Teaching, Alternative Teaching, and Team Teaching) to present multiple ways on how to cultivate learning for all students in the classroom.

Implementation

In order for a full inclusion model to be successful, there needs to be ongoing communication between the general education teachers and the special education teachers. If allotted time is not provided, teachers need to find the time, make the time or create the time.

Also, students with disabilities often require accommodations in order to be successful in the general education classroom. Some examples of common accommodations are shortening the length of assignment, time needed to complete assignments, chunking of assignments, adapting the problem type, shortening assessments, and small group testing. It is very important that students, who are pulled into a small group for assessment, are not given answers to test questions so that general education teachers can assess true knowledge.

Along with communication and accommodations, special education teachers need to reach out and support general education teachers. Often, general education teachers who trust special education teachers allow more co-teaching to occur and more meaningful conversations to happen. Finally, the more enthusiastic and passionate a teacher is to full inclusion, the more successful the program will be. It only takes one to start the fire burning.

Discussion

“We Are One” in the belief that all students can learn! The fundamental principle of inclusive education is the valuing of diversity within the human community.... When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become "normal" in order to contribute to the world.... We begin to look beyond typical ways of becoming valued members of the community, and in doing so, begin to realize the achievable goal of providing all children with an authentic sense of belonging.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GENERATION OF OTHER FORMS OF ACCOMMODATION FOR INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED PEOPLE

Ana Castro Zubizarreta.

In recent decades there has been a change in the way of understanding disability, allowing the improvement of living conditions in institutions and the gradual onset of the

deinstitutionalization of residents into community environments. The development of this work shows the transition from a system of residential care for people with intellectual disabilities, based on the assistance to this community and considering their members as passive individuals, to a new model based on people and their rights, which is the core of the system to be established.

Our aim was to create homes of cohabitation that are set up not only as a social resource of accommodation and meals but also to support the intellectually disabled people. The goal was to give a greater autonomy to its members, to reduce behaviour problems and to expand and / or enhance the set of adaptive skills, which was ignored under the previous scheme adopted by the Foundation we collaborated with. This approach facilitates the development of people and enhances their quality of life.

Method

Thanks to experience, 63 people with intellectual disabilities have benefited from the project. The population consisted on persons with intellectual disabilities between 18 and 64 years of age. Three groups were created according to the variable ages of (a) 18-35; (b) 36-45, and (c) older than 45. This group received an intervention based on the improvement of environmental conditions, the implementation of the programs developed for housing, and the development and implementation of an individual programme. All research participants were subjected to an assessment before intervention (2004), before the moving to the new housing, and a post-intervention assessment (2007), with the selected instruments (ICAP and CALS). All participants of the sample were evaluated every three months with instruments of assessments created by us. This assessment helped us to have goals in a short – term, helping with the caretakers' motivation and gave us a feedback about the evolution of the participants in the Project

Results

The implementation of the methodology proposed in the new form of accommodation (unification of criteria, the implementation of the programs developed for housing, and the development and implementation of an individual programme, using the paradigm of support) has produced a statistically significant improvement of the adaptive skills of individuals of the sample, favouring a substantial decrease in the intensity and kind of support provided, and increasing their autonomy.

The adaptive skills evaluated with the selected instrument CALS, have changed differently in the two periods defined (2004 – 2007). Related to the group of adaptive skills, the skills of individual lives have experienced the largest improvement, followed by life skills at home. The skills of life in community have experienced significant progress compared to the first evaluation, but this skills are less developed abilities by the people in the sample. We think that this is the effect of a system of “residential care for intellectual disabled people development” established before the current project. This fact, makes us see clearly how this model restricts the community contact.intellectually disabled people do not usually use the services that the society provides to its citizens. The rise in the level of skills living in the community of the participants in the sample during the following years, will confirm that the system of attention has been consolidated.

The new form of accommodation, has produced a rise in adaptive skills in all age groups of the sample (group 1 .- 18 to 35 years, group 2 .- 36 to 45 years and group 3. -> 45 years). We can say they can get a new set of adaptive skills with independence of the age of the group analyzed.

The youngest group compared with the other groups, is the one with a smaller variation. Descriptive analysis of levels of behaviour problems in 2004 indicated that people who had greater behaviour problems were among the youngest, in fact the first group mentioned in the sample. The existence of behaviour problems interferes with the acquisition of adaptive skills regardless of the subject's age.

Discussion

The experience of creating shared housing for people with intellectual disabilities who need continued support from other people, offers significant results, confirming an increment in adaptive skills of the subjects present in the sample regardless of age. It also improved the behaviour problems that aroused under the previous model. This report shows that it is possible to work in another way, namely by supporting the disabled people instead of acting as experts directing their lives. In conclusion, it is necessary to respect the most basic rights of the people we work for.

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THE EFFECTS OF USING A SIMULATED CLASSROOM TO INFLUENCE SPECIAL EDUCATION PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

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The critical shortage of special education teachers continues to present a significant challenge to universities as they strive to fill the need for quality teachers. The projected need for special education teachers in the United States is 648,000 (National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education, 1998). Options such as providing additional pre-teaching experience through simulation could assist with providing trained teachers in a more rapid manner. The purpose of this study was to evaluate changes in pre-service special education students' perceptions of inclusion and their teaching skills as they work within a web-based, simulated classroom environment called simSchool.

SimSchool was designed to provide pre-service teachers with a safe environment for experimenting and practicing new techniques, especially methods of addressing different learning styles, and wide variations in academic and behavioral performance of students. One of the first revelations of a participant in the simulator is that K-12 students do not always react the way the teacher thinks they should. Most recent simSchool findings report that pre-service teachers exposed to simTraining experienced a growth in their instructional self-efficacy (Knezek, Christensen, Wickstrom, & Hettler, 2008).

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of simSchool in improving student scores in teacher preparation and attitudes toward inclusion. As a secondary focus, the methods of delivery of the simSchool programs were compared to determine if there were differences between face-to-face and online participants. Undergraduate results were compared with graduates to see if one group made more gains than the other. Finally, participants were asked whether they value simulations and computer games for K-12 education to determine whether simSchool has a positive impact on this dimension.

Method

This project took place during the fall 2008 semester. It utilized current student participants (n=151) in three online courses in special education. Four of the six sections of undergraduate courses were randomly assigned the simSchool learning activities. The method of instructional delivery was divided within these treatment sections: two received face-to-face training (n=33) and two received online video tutorials (n=33). The remaining two undergraduate sections served as contrast groups (n=25). Graduate student participants (n=60) received the face-to-face simSchool training session.

Participants in the face-to-face training group had the option of attending one of any three simSchool two hour training sessions. Participants were introduced to simSchool, created a simStudent with a disability, and performed multiple simulation sessions aimed at improving the simStudent's learning graph. SimSchool's "Create a Student" feature was used by participants to input physical and personality attributes into the system to "build" a student with a disability modeled after a student found in their textbook readings or a real-life pupil in their classroom. Participants ran multiple simulation sessions with the virtual student, making changes along the way, based on prompt system feedback presented in a graph form (Knezek et al. 2008).

Participants in the video tutorial simSchool training group were emailed two Word documents. The first document supplied instructions for accessing the video tutorials on the simSchool website (<http://simschool.net/help/video/simVideo.htm>) and the second document explained how to submit their created simStudent simulation graph to their instructor. The video tutorials were screen capture videos created by the same simTrainer who led the face-to-face trainings. After participants watched two videos, a general introduction to simSchool and how to create a student, they practiced the tasks demonstrated within the videos and turned in their graphs. Both face-to-face groups and video tutorial groups completed the same learning activities in simSchool.

Results

SimSchool participants made significant gains ($p < .001$) in Instructional Self-Efficacy and Teaching Skills subscale ($p < .001$), where the control group made no gains. Neither simSchool participants nor the control group made significant gains in attitudes toward inclusion. There were no significant differences between instructional delivery methods (face-to-face vs. online videos) for undergraduates on the Teacher Preparation Survey or the Effective Inclusion Instrument. Participants who start with the lowest perceptions of their teaching abilities make more gains after working in simSchool. SimSchool participants value simulations and computer games for K-12 teaching more after the intervention.

Discussion

Overall, this study has shown that simSchool users show gains in teaching skills and instructional self-efficacy. It is interesting that no significant differences were found between the experimental and control groups, whether negative or positive, on attitudes toward inclusion. There is certainly potential for simSchool to help teachers train for inclusion classrooms, with its capacity to depict a wide range of student characteristics within one classroom. There may be something about the simSchool activities used in this study that did not get pre-service teachers thinking about inclusion as much as the researchers anticipated. There were also no significant differences on attitudes toward inclusion between students who worked in simSchool during a face to face training session and those who watched simSchool videos online. However, students who watched videos scored significantly lower on the Teaching Skills subscale of the teacher preparation survey when compared to the face-to-face group. That the experimental group did not differ from the control group on inclusion might explain why the video group did not differ from the face to face group on inclusion; there were simply no effects on inclusion all around. Because the video and face-to-face groups both made significant pre/post gains on Teaching

Skills, it is unclear why the video group scored significantly lower than the face-to-face group. It is possible that the groups were different from the beginning by chance. Future research is needed to provide more insight.

Finally, it is worth noting that graduate students might already have teaching experience. These data were not gathered as part of the current study and would be worth considering in future research. Past teaching experience might explain why undergraduates with no teaching experience gained more from the simulation activities than graduate students.

The findings from this study imply that continued research about the effectiveness of teaching simulations and modes of instructional delivery have merit. Teaching simulations provide current and future educators with access to a safe place to practice teaching, multiple repetitions in accelerated time, rapid feedback, and exposure to the potential of games and simulations in learning.

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REACHING AND TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING AND BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

Kathleen Hogan

The educational outcomes for students with disabilities are alarming. Research shows that students with disabilities are two times more likely to drop out of school than their nondisabled peers. Of all school dropouts, 36% are identified with a learning disability (LD) and 59% have an emotional or behavioral disorder (EBD; Thurlow, Sinclair, & Johnson, 2002). These high statistics may be due to students with disabilities becoming disengaged from the educational system because of emotional issues, learning disabilities, and school failure (Zabel & Nigro, 2007).

Research shows a strong relationship LD and EBD. This comorbidity emphasizes the need for appropriate instructional strategies and background knowledge regarding the causal factors and characteristics of these disabilities. The literature states decreasing problem behaviors can be achieved by providing appropriate academic instruction. Providing educators with appropriate academic and behavior information will assist in the effective education of these students. Information for this session was obtained while conducting a literature review regarding the most effective strategies to use when educating students with learning and behavior problems. Information provided during the session includes (a) causal factors, (b) characteristics, and (c) effective strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems.

Discussion

There is no single definition that is universally accepted regarding LD or EBD. The definitions and criteria vary depending where an individual lives. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Ed. (DSM-IV, 2000) describes a child as having a learning disorder when they achieve significantly lower scores than their peers on standardized tests in reading, mathematics, or written expression. An estimated 50% of special education students have been identified with a specific learning disability (Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 2006). In order for students to be classified as emotionally disturbed there must be a marked or persistent difficulty

with any of the following: (a) school learning problems, (b) unsatisfactory interpersonal relationships, (c) inappropriate behavior or feelings under normal circumstances, (d) a pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and (e) physical symptoms or fears associated with school or personal issues (Kauffman, 2005). An estimated 20% of the students with disabilities are identified as having an emotional disturbance (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 2006). These two labels are often found to coincide with each other for many of our students.

The causal factors related to learning disabilities and emotional disturbances differ in that learning disabilities are more focused on neurological deficits (Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 2006), whereas behavior problems stem from (a) biological factor, (b) family issues, (c) school issues, and (d) cultural factors (Kauffman, 2005). These causal factors can be seen in many facets of learning and behavioral characteristics in these students. Characteristics of both learning disabilities and behavior problems include: (a) poor academic performance, (b) attention problems, (c) hyperactivity, (d) memory problems, (e) poor language abilities, and (f) aggressive, withdrawn, and bizarre behaviors (Bos & Vaughn, 1998). Providing teachers with background knowledge regarding these disabilities will enable them to reach and teach their students more effectively.

There are many research-based strategies that can be used to help teachers effectively educate students with learning and behavior problems. Behaviorally, one such strategy is to manipulate the antecedents by changing the instructional content, classroom schedule, classroom rules, room arrangement, and/or peer interactions (Bos & Vaughn, 1998). Additionally, teachers need to utilize the unique learning styles and multiple intelligences of their students. Peer-assisted learning (Locke & Fuchs, 1995) and direct instruction (Gagnon, Wehby, Strong, & Falk, 2006) have also been proven as effective strategies when working with students with learning and behavior problems. With these strategies, among many others, teachers can effectively reach and teach their students who demonstrate learning and behavioral problems.

The issues surrounding the education of students with learning and behavior problems are immense. It is imperative that educators begin focusing on research-based strategies to efficiently and effectively reach and teach their students. When educators are armed with the correct information and training, they will be better able to provide the proper education for students with learning and behavior problems.

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**THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES**

Marta Aquino De Lima

Faced with the constant demands social work, disabled people are still dependent on a system of social policies. Education and employment make up shades rehabilitation for persons with disabilities and not a universal right. People with disabilities go to a Special Employment Centre (better known as sheltered employment) due to little or no competition in the format required regular employment. The authors Garden, Chapman, Donaldson and Jacobson (1988), as well as Kaiser and McWhorter (1990) discussed the importance of coordination in the provision of services in the Special Employment Centres.

Method

The research sought to identify more effective strategies to use in vocational training, adaptation of job analysis profiles, and quality of life. The research methodology is distinguished by a participatory action research. We used a questionnaire of satisfaction following the Likert Scale. The sample was stratified in proportion of 40 workers (20 women and 20 men), being 27.5% with mental disabilities, intellectual disabilities with 40% and 32.5% with physical / sensory problems.

Results

This research has been that expectations and skills of workers with disabilities will depend essentially on the type of disability. The person with physical disabilities have more opportunities for advancement and that a person with mental illness, for example. A turning point of the research has been mainly as the disabled person is in society. Ninety per cent of people with disabilities surveyed say that their first job was in agreement with the Special Employment Centres.

Discussion

Training pathways to employment for people with disabilities, as noted in this sample, should be thought in terms of intervention (O'Reilly, 2003). The Special Employment Centres albeit an intermediary adjustment between training and regular employment, remains the only alternative to an employment of people with disabilities.

A consequence of this characteristic, the social inclusion of disabled people and have a job with studied suffer because job opportunities are present in the Special Employment Centres. These variables present in the Special Employment Centres create the most imbalances of procedures and intervention strategies, because the chances of promotion or increased responsibilities are limited.

Research confirms that people with disabilities, in their view of society, should be able to choose and be responsible for their personal and professional development. In reality, there is a difficulty for people working in its inclusion, as their productive capacity and training are far more for their "limitations" physical or psychological. Innovating strategies relevant to the training of persons with disabilities is a key point that must be taken into consideration.

To effect the need to design and implement development plans customized (Fernández-Ríos, Rico Munoz, & Gómez-Jarabo, 1998). Personalized development plans essentially allow the development of attitudes, knowledge, skills positioning people with disabilities successfully in the regular labour market.

Ultimately, the study of the formation for use as empirical research provided an opportunity to learn new strategies of intervention. Besides being sensitive to the important mechanisms for social inclusion and enforce expectations of working people with disabilities.

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The job placement and vocational training of people with disabilities

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WHAT WORKS IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INTERACTIONS FOR PRESCHOOLERS WITH DISABILITIES IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS

Chien-Hui Yang

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (1997, 2004) mandated that children with disabilities are entitled to receive free and appropriate public education in the Least Restrictive Environment. However, children with disabilities remained isolated from the peer culture (McLeskey, Henry, & Hodges, 1999; Wolfberg et al., 1999) and had significantly fewer friends than their peers in the same settings (Buysse, Goldman, & Skinner, 2002). Research has shown that peer-mediated strategies have the greatest and most sustained effect in promoting

social interactions for preschool children with disabilities compared to other child-specific or environmental arrangement models (Odom et al., 1999). Based on the strategies documented in the literature and observed in classroom practices (Schepis, Reid, Ownbey, & Clary, 2003; Thompson et al., 1993; Yang, 2000), 13 naturalistic peer-mediated strategies for facilitating peer social interactions were identified and validated.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this survey study was to investigate (a) to what extent do practitioners (including early childhood special educators, general educators, pre-service teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher educators) value 13 peer-mediated naturalistic strategies in serving children with moderate to severe disabilities, and (b) to what extent were these strategies used in classrooms as measured by participants' observations of teaching practices.

Methods

Surveys were sent to 50 early childhood professionals in a Midwest community at the United States, and 26 professionals responded the survey. Thirteen peer-mediated strategies were grouped into two clusters on a survey instrument. Strategies in Cluster One required educators to encourage or respond to peers' actions in order to enhance the quality and frequency of the social interactions. Strategies in Cluster Two are employed to set the stage for naturally occurring interactions and enhance the participation of children with severe disabilities.

A 4-point rating scale was employed. Scale A was designed to determine the perceived usefulness of the strategies in promoting peer social interactions. Scale B was designed to determine the usage of these strategies by participants' observations of teaching practices. Scale C was used to determine the 3 most important strategies among 13 peer-mediated strategies.

Results

In Scale A, the two most useful strategies belong to Cluster Two (*Environmental Arrangement* and *Fade from Interactions*). The strategies that received third and fourth rank belong to Cluster One (*Make Interpretation* and *Prompt for Direct Communication*). The fifth rank belongs to Cluster Two again (*Inform of Physical Assistance*). In Scale B, the strategies that were used most frequently are *Prompt for Direct Communication* and *Invite Participation* (Cluster One), and *Environmental Arrangement* and *Inform of Physical Assistance* (Cluster Two). The strategies that were used least often are *Prompt for Identifying Peers/Activities*, *Help with Movement*, and *Add Information to the Conversation*.

When compared to one another, the strategies that were perceived as the most useful in order of the usefulness include *Make Interpretation*, *Prompt for Direct Communication*, and *Invite Participation*, which belong to Cluster One. The fourth and fifth ranks are *Environmental Arrangement* and *Inform of Physical Assistance*, which belong to Cluster Two.

Discussion

Results from Scale A suggested that all strategies but one (*Add Information into the Conversation*) are rated as useful to very useful, with an above 3.0 average. Results from Scale B suggested that the majority of the listed strategies (8 out of 13) were not observed frequently in the classrooms. The strategies that were used infrequently in the classroom include (in rank order): *Prompt for Identifying Peers/Activities*, *Add Information into the Conversation*, *Help with Movement*, *Provide Acknowledgement*, *Follow Through*, *Provide Sensory Input*, *Make Interpretation*, and *Answer Peers' Questions*. These strategies should be addressed more in the teacher preparation programs in preparing teachers who work with children with moderate to severe disabilities. While respondents were asked to rank the top 3 most useful strategies among 13, the top strategies that received the highest rankings include (in rank order): *Make Interpretation*, *Prompt for Direct Communication*, and *Invite Participation*.

Conclusion

This study has shown that while educators value the usefulness of 12 naturalistic peer-mediated strategies among a list of 13, yet a majority (8 out of 13) of strategies were not used frequently in the classrooms based on the practitioners' observations. Training on the implementation of these peer-mediated strategies across curriculum areas and in various program contexts has deemed to be important.

Limitation of the study included the small sample size (N=26) in one community. Future research may examine this topic in broader geographic and program contexts. Future research may also examine how and to what extent the strategies enhance the frequency and quality of interactions and participations for children with moderate to severe disabilities in inclusive settings.

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**THE MODEL DPM-PEI FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE ACCESS, PROGRESS
AND PARTICIPATION OF THE PUPILS IN THE GENERAL CURRICULUM**

Olga Pedragosa Xuclà
Robert Ruiz i Bel

We present a model (procedure and format) to design individualized plans for students with special educational needs and class schedules. In this case, the DPM-PEI was applied to a sample of three subjects. In the paper, we analyze some of the results obtained from analysis of access, participation and progress to the general curriculum of these students with an observational study.

Method

The research was conducted with a sample of three subjects identified with special educational needs in the area of mathematics. The three students were in second year of primary education and full-time in the regular classroom. The study was conducted from a multiple baseline design. The data collection instruments for each of the dependent variables were the observations in the classroom in the case of access and participation of students in class, analysis of teaching materials and tests for pupils in the progress and finally the interviews and questionnaires conducted with different members participating in the investigation.

The intervention consisted in the application of the model DPM-PEI (Ruiz, 2008) for the design of classroom planning and individualized plans. The model is based on the principles of universal design of learning and multilevel instruction.

Results

The results indicate that (a) subjects 1 and 2 experienced an improvement in access, participation and progress in relation to the general curriculum after the completion of their individual plans from the model DPM-PEI; (b) to improve the educational needs of pupils with special educational needs it is necessary to design plan actions in relation to the general curriculum; (c) the DPM-PEI has been valued as a useful, practical and effective for the development of individualized plans involves changes in the role of special education teachers at school and the responsibility of the teachers, and (d) the development of individualized plans by DPM-PEI is an improvement of education for all students in the classroom.

Discussion

The care of pupils with special educational needs in the regular classroom requires that teachers and professionals have the tools for making decisions. However, these processes must be accompanied by changes in classroom organization and methodologies used in the process of teaching and learning. In this sense, our study shows that an individualized plan linked to general curriculum planning is often a first step towards inclusive care for these pupils.

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFICACY OF THE TEXT TALK STRATEGY
ON PRE-SCHOOL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY ACQUISITION**

Heather Batchelder

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and The Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood (DEC), communication is a necessary skill to acquire as social and academic performance depends largely on one's ability to converse (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Sandall, McLean, & Smith, 2000). Teaching young children to communicate is an integral part of preschool curriculum. As children interact socially and learn to control their behavior, acquiring language and communication skills provides the tools necessary for socialization and self-behavioral regulation. Intervening early utilizing high quality strategies and essentially immersing children in an environment in which language acquisition, communication and literacy become a way of life, plays a major role in the optimal language and literacy development of all children (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Sandall et al., 2000).

The National Early Literacy Panel Report (2002) maintains that oral linguistic skills and vocabulary relate to reading at all levels of literacy development. Vocabulary is linked to phonological sensitivity, literacy domain connections, reading comprehension, and the achievement gap between socioeconomic sectors of society (Hart & Risley, 2003; Moats, 2001; Whitehurst, & Lonigan, 2001). The National Early Literacy Panel Report (2004) states that in order to be effective, direct instruction of vocabulary should entail: (a) utilizing a contextual base, (b) repetitive and multiple exposure to new words, (c) utilizing multiple contexts for direct instruction of new words, (d) actively engaging children in the learning process, and (e) utilizing more than one type of instruction. Beck and McKeown (2001) combined the most important aspects of the aforementioned effective vocabulary enhancing methods in the Text Talk strategy. studies regarding the efficacy of Text Talk have been conducted in primary and secondary

grades; however, there have been no studies on the effectiveness of the strategy in an inclusive pre-kindergarten setting. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of the Text Talk strategy as in the pre-kindergarten setting with young children with and without exceptionalities.

Method

An AB Case Study across Dyads research methodology was chosen in order to focus on the individual student and provide a practical method for examining the effects of an intervention applied in an educational setting. Unique components of a case study design include the ability to conduct research with a small sample (Kazdin, 1982).

All participants attended pre-kindergarten in not for profit charter schools serving children inclusively using the model of reverse mainstreaming. The classrooms consist of approximately fifteen students, two paraprofessionals, and a teacher. A purposeful sample was used to choose six student participants. Student participant 1 was a six-year-old African American male diagnosed with Prader Willi Syndrome. Participant 2 was an Hispanic male. He was four years old and was being served under the category of Developmentally Delayed. Participant 3 was a five-year-old Caucasian female diagnosed with Spina Bifida. Participant 4 was an Hispanic female with typical development. Participant 5 was a five-year-old Caucasian male diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. Participant 6 was a four-year-old typically developing Caucasian female. Three classroom teachers participated in the study by conducting a read-aloud utilizing eight trade books for a period of eight weeks. The teacher participants read the story and followed a vocabulary scenario model verbatim during the intervention. A word chart maintenance activity was conducted. The student participants engaged in choral repetitions of the new vocabulary words and answered open-ended questions regarding the new words. Twenty-four words were targeted. Teachers modeled new words and provided activities for student practice of the targeted words. Prior to the intervention, in order to establish a baseline, the trade books were read and the children listened passively. A pre and post curriculum based assessment was given to the student participants.

Results

Teacher participants A (97%), B (57%), and C (57%), implemented the strategy with varying levels of fidelity; however, student participants from each classroom demonstrated a 58% to 87% growth in vocabulary acquisition. The use of the vocabulary model that provided opportunities for students to interact with the new vocabulary and create phonological representations of targeted words repeatedly may have compensated for the varying levels of fidelity obtained by the teachers.

Discussion

Conducting research in an educational environment, although crucial to increasing student outcomes, presents many challenges. Control over all activities within the classroom throughout the school day is not possible. Replications are necessary to counter threats to external validity. The results obtained by the researcher regarding the acquisition of new vocabulary by pre-school students with varying abilities in an inclusive classroom warrants future research such as a

longitudinal study or small group intervention. A strategy such as Text Talk, which combines an interactive read-aloud with the direct instruction of vocabulary, can be used within the normal context of story time to enhance vocabulary acquisition. This may lead to stronger oral and reading comprehension skills throughout middle and high school (Snow & Dickenson, 1991).

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THE EFFECT OF CONCEPTUAL MODEL-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING ON MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES OR DIFFICULTIES

Yan Ping Xin

Recently released, The Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel (2008) indicates that “American students have not been succeeding in the mathematical part of their education at anything like a level expected of an international leader” (p.xii). Although American students “encounter difficulties with many aspects of mathematics, many observers of educational policy see Algebra as a central concern” (p. xiii).

Algebra readiness has been characterized as serving a gate-keeping function for secondary and postsecondary education. In fact, The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) has endorsed “algebra as a K-12 enterprise” (Moses, 1997, p. 264) and set up the goal that *all students*, including students with special needs, learn algebra or succeed in high level mathematics (NCTM, 2000). The purpose of this line of research is to integrate algebra concept in elementary mathematics learning to facilitate a smoother transition from elementary to more advanced mathematics learning. Three studies have been conducted to explore the effect of a conceptual model-based problem solving approach (COMPS) that facilitate algebra readiness in elementary students with learning disabilities/difficulties (LD).

Method

The first study (Xin, Wiles, & Lin, 2008) examined the effect of teaching *word problem* (WP) *story grammar* that facilitates algebraic expression of mathematical relations in conceptual models on arithmetic word problem solving. Although story grammar has been substantially researched in reading comprehension (Boulineau et al., 2004), *WP story grammar* has NOT been explored in mathematics word problem understanding and solving. Rather than focusing on textual analysis of story content as emphasized in the *story grammar* in reading comprehension, the *WP story grammar* (Xin et al., 2008) emphasizes analysis of deep problem structure and a mapping of key elements of problem schemata in conceptual models. The author created *WP story grammar* questions for four problem types (*part-part whole*, *additive compare*, *equal groups*, and *multiplicative compare*) that involve addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division; students learned to use the *WP story grammar* questions to guide their representation of the problems in conceptual models to facilitate accurate problem solving. An adapted multiple probe design (Horner & Baer, 1978) across participants was employed to examine the functional relationship between the intervention and students’ word problem-solving performance. Participants were five 4th and 5th grade students with LD. The results indicated that conceptual model-based *WP story grammar* improved students’ performance on arithmetic word problem solving and their pre-algebra concept and knowledge.

The second study (Xin & Zhang, in press) examined the effect of systematic programming for transfer using the *conceptual model-based problem solving* (COMPS) instruction on students’ ability to solve problems with various contexts. The COMPS is distinguished from existing intervention strategies in teaching students with LD, such as “key word” strategy, which focus on

decoding key words into mathematics operations for solution. The COMPS emphasizes *expressions of mathematical relations in the model* (i.e., factor x factor = product) in which one of the quantities are unknown. A student will develop a solution plan that begins with identifying the multiplicative relationship involved and translate it into a model of “factor x factor = product.” The conceptual model expression (i.e., factor x factor = product) will then *drive* the selection of the proper operation rather than randomly gambling on it (Greer, 1992; Sowder, 1988). Students do not have to remember numerous rules for different problems or rely on a bank of “key words” for operation selection. This approach may particularly benefit students with LD because of their cognitive disadvantage in attention, organization, and working memory. An adapted multiple probe design (Horner & Baer, 1978) across participants was employed to examine the functional relationship between the intervention and students’ word problem-solving performance. Participants were three 4th- or 5th-grade students with LD. The results indicated that the intervention improved students’ performance on researcher-designed criterion tests and a norm-referenced standardized test.

The third study (Xin et al, 2008) compared the effects of the COMPS and a general heuristic instructional approach (GHI) employed by participating teachers on students’ word problem solving performance. The distinction between the two conditions was that COMPS provide students with a well-defined model (e. g., unit rate x # of units = total/product for the Equal Group problem type), where algebraic expression of mathematical relation is emphasized. Further, the model expression served to *drive* the selection of the operation to solve for the unknown. In contrast, the GHI condition had the flexibility of using multiple strategies, such as “draw a picture” to represent the problem or write a math sentence. The study employed a random-assignment group comparison design involving 29 students with LD. Results indicated that the COMPS strategy instruction resulted in larger pretest-posttest performance gain when compared to the general heuristic instructional approach.

Discussion

The results of above series of studies suggest that elementary students with LD can be expected to move beyond concrete operations and to represent algebraically mathematical relations in conceptual models, which may facilitate a smoother transition from elementary to higher-level mathematics learning. The COMPS that promotes algebraic expression of mathematical relations in arithmetic word problem-solving may represent an innovative bridging between arithmetic and algebra learning.

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HEAR OUR VOICES: ITALIAN PARENTS SPEAK OUT ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Dona C. Bauman
Marzia M. Caporale

In order for professionals in the field of disability services and education to be able to do their jobs they must understand the culture of the person with disabilities as well as the culture of the family of the child with disabilities. Without knowing the culture of the family and person with disability, the professional will be solely limited in his/her ability to guide the person with disability in education, vocation and daily living choices. There is a large body of literature about people with disabilities and their families in the United States, but few studies pertaining to families with children with disabilities from other countries. This qualitative study examines the perceptions about the experience of having a child with disabilities in Italy.

The history of research on the impact of disability on the family in the United States has recently changed direction (Risdal & Singer, 2004). In the 1980's family research literature put a great deal of emphasis on the tragedy of having a child with disabilities. Predictions of divorce, stress,

and isolation of the family permeated research (Risdal & Singer, 2004). Since the 1990's there has been a growing body of evidence that indicates the importance of treating families as individual entities. Many families who have children with disabilities report a very positive experience for their families in having a child with disabilities (Risdal & Singer, 2004). Bauman interviewed five families in Mexico about their experiences of having children with disabilities (in press). Although the families indicated they initially were sad they had a child with disabilities they also indicated how much the child was loved and cared for by the family. They reported the family member with disabilities was an integral member of their families (in press).

The purpose of this study was to increase the knowledge of how families from different cultures perceive the meaning of having a child with disabilities. Although several books are available in the United States on topics relating to children with disabilities, other countries do not have access to the same information. In 2005, a group of Italian families who have children with Down syndrome published a book called *Come Pinguini nei Deserto* (Like Penguins in the Desert). The book was written for new parents of children with Down syndrome to help them find the information and resources they need. The same parents formed an online forum and discussion group that can be found on the website <www.pianetadown.org>.

One of the authors had been instrumental in forming this Italian support group and posted a notice on the web site inviting parents to answer a survey. The families that responded to the invitation were sent a survey by e-mail as well as a permission form to participate in the study. The research literature provided the basis for the development of the questionnaire and the questions were adapted for the Italian culture. Twenty middle-class families responded to the questionnaire. Seventeen had children with Down syndrome and three had children with other developmental disabilities. The majority of the families were from northern Italy. The responses were translated into English by one of the authors and each author examined the responses for themes. A third evaluator also examined the responses for themes.

Six themes were identified:

1. Positive and negative attitudes of medical personnel in informing parents of the diagnosis of disability. Many families reported that medical personnel shared the information with fathers at the time of birth of the child. Fathers were encouraged to share the information with the mothers. One mother commented she felt the doctor was fearful she would become upset or hysterical if the information was shared with her. Several parents reported the information was shared with them in a very cold professional manner. One mother reported she received the information after an amniocentesis in a rather blunt manner but then was supported throughout her pregnancy by medical professionals and family members. Another mother reported a wonderful 88-year-old woman pediatrician who was still her pediatrician supported her.

- (2) Family and society support or lack of support of the family with a child with a disability. Some families indicated that they had great support from families and friends while others did not have support. Some families indicated that society supported them and others indicated that society did not support their family.

(3) Changes in family dynamics. Many mothers indicated they had to give up their full-time jobs to care for their child with Down syndrome. Most mothers were able to keep their original job on a part-time basis while a few chose to stay home with the child.

(4) Government support for families or no perceived support. Most families indicated that the Italian government provided financial support as well as services for the child with Down syndrome. This is part of the law 104 that outlines in detail the rights of people with disabilities and of their families. Others especially those living in areas that are more rural indicated they were not able to access adequate services for their child and had to resort to paying for therapies and services from private practices and providers.

(5) Sibling relationships. Most sibling relationships were typical sibling relationships. Most children identified were young and therefore relationships were very ordinary.

(6) Future dreams and desires of families for child with disabilities. All families desired independence and serenity for their children. Several families commented they hoped their child with Down syndrome would find a significant other person to share his or her life with. The families of children with Down syndrome were more optimistic about their child's future than the families who had children with other developmental disabilities. This may be due to the fact that those families had children whose disabilities were more severe.

Several limitations must be considered with regard to this study. First the sample size was small. Most of the families were from the northern part of Italy and services may be more available in the north. Since the invitation and questionnaire were available via the internet and e-mail, families without this access were not able to participate in this study. This suggests the families who participated were middle-income or above. Families from lower income levels may have responded to the questions differently. Responses to the survey were very similar to the responses of Mexican parents as reported by Bauman (in press). The Mexican families that were interviewed were also middle-income and also had advantages families living in poverty would not have. This study may show that middle-income families from different cultures who have children with disabilities may have similar experiences and dreams for their children.

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**EFFECTIVE INCLUSION FOR GRADE 4-8 STUDENTS WITH LEARNING
DISABILITIES AND MILD INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES**

Vera Woloshyn
Tony Di Petta
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In December 1980, the Legislature of the Province of Ontario, Canada passed an amendment to the *Education Act* commonly known as “Bill 82” requiring boards of education in the Province to educate all students between the ages of 6-16 years regardless of their educational exceptionalities. The Bill divided exceptionalities into five categories: behavioural, intellectual, communication, physical and multiple. The Act also required that each board establish an Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) to determine which students would be declared “exceptional.” Once this designation is made, each student with an exceptionality is placed in an educational setting (e.g., regular class, regular class with withdrawal, special class, special school) for the majority of their instructional day. Over time, with the prevalence of research supporting regular class placement as the preferred placement for most students, the Ontario government has required boards of education to consider regular class placements as the preferred option and boards of education have responded accordingly. This study describes how one board of education developed an approach for closing special classrooms for students with either Mild Intellectual Disabilities or Learning Disabilities and placing these students in regular classrooms with Resource Teacher (referred to as the Intensive Support Program [ISP] Teacher) and/or Educational Assistant support. The program was a three-year project that started in one region of the board and then eventually extended board wide.

The Intensive Support Program (ISP)

The Intensive Support Program (ISP) presented in this study was initiated between 2003 and 2006 as a pilot project funded through a provincial Council of Directors of Education (CODE)

program grant. The grant provided for three schools in isolated rural settings to collapse together their three Learning Disabilities (LD) and Mild Intellectual Disabilities (known as GLD in this board) classes. In 2006-07 the ISP was expanded to 9 schools in urban settings and then to another 15 schools within the board. In 2007-08, the program began expansion to the remaining schools (approximately 25 schools) within the board and consequently all remaining LD and MID classes were collapsed.

The ISP was designed to provide regular classroom teachers with differentiated professional development training in the principles of Universal Instructional Design (Pisha, & Coyne, 2001)). The goal of the program was to keep students with exceptionalities in congregated classrooms in their home schools and for them to receive intensive English and mathematics support from the Resource Teacher. Data were collected from four primary stakeholder groups: principals, teachers, parents, and students.

Method

Data were collected from seven school principals through taperecorded interviews held in the Fall of 2006 and Spring of 2007 (beginning and end of the ISP implementation year). In one school, the vice principal also joined the interview upon the invitation of the principal. Principals were asked to reflect on the nature of ISP in their schools (e.g., “What are some of the key components of ISP in your school?” “Describe your role here.”), the sufficiency of the board-wide professional development program (e.g., “Do you believe that you were provided with the necessary background information to provide full inclusion and differentiated instruction to the ISP students in your school?”) and benefits and challenges associated with the program (e.g., “Speculate on benefits associated with ISP.” “Describe any unanticipated challenges with ISP.”). Interviews ranged between 60-90 minutes and were audio taped and transcribed for subsequent analysis. Participants were provided with the opportunity to edit and elaborate on their comments.

Survey data were collected in 2006 from 85 teachers within this school board. Participants represented seven different schools from across three regions within the board. On average, they possessed 14 years of teaching experience (range 2-37 years). Approximately one-third of these teachers had completed at least one in-service course in special education with another third having completed advanced in-service courses in this area. Thirty-five of this original group completed the same survey one year following ISP implementation. ISP teachers were interviewed at the outset of the program in the spring of 2006 and then again in the spring of 2007.

Prior to ISP implementation, surveys were disseminated to 99 families who had students that were identified as potential ISP participants, with 52 of these families completing the survey and providing consent for their children to participate in this research study. The majority of the respondents were mothers (88.1%) who indicated that English was the language used in their homes (2.4% indicated the use of a secondary language). Twenty-one of these individuals completed the survey one year later. Fifty-one students (average age 11.7 years; 59% male, 41% female) were given questionnaires and a self-esteem inventory at the outset of the program and again in the spring of 2007.

Findings

Overall, responses from the principals indicated strong support for this program and no hesitation with it continuing. Analyses of the interview responses found the following positive findings: (a) increased student self-esteem, (b) students' improved academic gains, (c) positive parental responses to ISP program, and (d) enhanced understanding and teacher competency working with students with learning disabilities and mild intellectual disabilities

There were, however, several concerns raised by principals that need to be taken into consideration for future implementation of this type of program. These concerns included: (a) principals' difficulty coordinating regular meetings of classroom teachers, ISP, EAs and LRTs; (b) good communication among the professional participants was essential for this program to be effective; (c) principals found that coordinating teachers' and educational assistants'(EA) timetables was highly problematic; (d) with the focus on literacy and numeracy, principals had to ensure that scheduling of these subjects was done in manner which allowed for maximum student support; and (e) principals reported concerns over establishing EA roles (instructional vs supportive) and finding the best fit. The ISP relied heavily on EA support and there were differences among educational assistants with respect to the degree of support that they could or would provide in different schools.

Similarly, classroom teachers found this program to be successful both concerning improved student achievement. Additionally, classroom teachers perceived that collaboration with ISP teachers contributed to success of the program, As the program progressed, teachers became less concern that ISP students would be disruptive to other students in the class and they had a positive attitude towards having students with special needs in their classrooms. In fact, these teachers became more confident in their ability to identify strategies of differentiated instruction and they understood the effective use of data walls (posted visual representation of individual and grade achievement levels) when planning instruction.

Parents' reactions to the effect of the ISP on their children were positive. At the end-of-the-first year of the ISP program, parents articulated that they believed that their children's academic needs were met in the classroom, they expressed significantly greater confidence that educators possessed the appropriate knowledge and skills required for the effective instruction and they maintained a positive orientation that school administrators understood the needs of their children. In addition, parents of ISP students demonstrated a slight increase in their agreement that their children's social needs were being met adequately in the classroom.. Further, parents had greater agreement that their children's participation increased in the class. Parents reported significant agreement that their children's behavioural needs were being met adequately, and that their children behaved appropriately in the classroom. Parents consistently reported a belief that their children demonstrated positive self-esteem toward the end of the ISP program implementation. Most importantly, parents indicated that their children's classroom experiences were positive.

Overall, students reported positive orientations towards their classroom learning environments. Specifically, these positive perceptions included: (a) effective learning; (b) effective peer-assisted learning; and (c) ability to make mistakes without negative connotations. Students maintained their same perceptions with respect to how difficult they perceived their school work

to be and how much they learned from their peers. A descriptively greater number of students indicated that they liked their classrooms. When asked whether they were accepted by their classmates, students responded significantly more positively at the end of the ISP year than one year prior. Students' second year-end responses on the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 2002)) indicated that their global self-esteem measure increased significantly throughout the school year, with more students expressing average self-esteem values.

Document analyses of report cards for the ISP students demonstrated significant academic improvement in the following subject areas throughout the ISP school year: language arts (i.e., reading , writing and oral communication); mathematics (i.e., number sense and numeration); health and physical education; and visual arts . Growth in the remaining math strands (i.e., geometry, data management, and probability) and geography could not be determined due to insufficient data. Students demonstrated significant improvement in the following reported learning skills over the 8-month interval: conflict resolution; class participation; and problem solving.

Conclusion

Overall, the responses from the four stakeholders were found to be positive. Hence, it appears the ISP initiative has been effective in transitioning students with special educational needs into their regular classrooms. The program required principal and teacher commitment, cooperation among educators and strong senior administrative support. Without these elements, the noted successes may not have occurred.

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INDEPENDENT LEARNING: HANDHELD TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Elissa Wolfe Poel

The concept of PDAs was explored “thousands of years ago in Mesopotamia, doctors used to refer to prescribing and treatment guidelines etched on palm-sized clay tablets” (Lowes, 2005). The use of PDAs continues to be used in the field of medicine to record patient information, research drug interactions, store clinical observations, and ensure patient safety (Franklin, Sexton, Lu, & Ma, 2007; Noble, 2000). In the field of business, PDAs are used to schedule meetings, organize personal/professional contacts, create documents, maintain spreadsheets, and manipulate databases (Franklin et al., 2007).

Today, the use of PDAs has expanded to the field of education. Handheld technology makes technology affordable, accessible, and fun (Yuen & Yuen, 2003). It is small, portable, and practical. Most have beaming capabilities where documents can be sent, via infrared technology directly from one PDA to another eliminating the need to print, download, or email specific information to one another (Yuen & Yuen). PDAs are used to schedule staffings, organize parent contacts, maintain grade books, maintain attendance records, collect data, record assignments, and access the internet. In addition, teachers are accessing e-books on a regular basis and downloading literature to PDAs for their students. During classroom reading activities, teachers often conduct formative assessments and store the information on their PDAs. They then download the documentation to their desktop computers and manipulate the data to create progress reports for parent communication and documentation progress toward IEP goals and objectives (Franklin et al., 2007; Molebash & Fisher, 2003).

Through a grant from the Regional Alliance for Science, Engineering, and Math Squared (RASEM²) which was funded by the National Science Foundation, a study was conducted at a southwestern university exploring the use of handheld technology (PDAs) with students with disabilities in elementary and middle school settings.

Methods

The study took place during one, 16-week academic semester. Teacher candidates enrolled in the special education student teaching program participated in the project. This convenience sample of seven included: six females and one male. Six were undergraduate dual licensure elementary/special education majors and one was a graduate student majoring in special education. Along with their mentor teachers, they selected students from the classrooms assigned for student teaching. A total of four elementary and 17 middle school students were selected. The student participants were identified as having specific learning disabilities, mental retardation, and emotional/behavioral disorders. All university and school district research requirements were addressed. Parental and student permission was secured prior to the implementation of the project.

Results

A summary of the project outcomes included the following: K-12 students reduced the number of questions posed to the teachers, K-12 students worked independently for a longer period of time, on-task behaviors increased with the use of the PDAs, more assignments were submitted, more correct assignments were submitted, students became engaged in their activities, teachers were able to determine student gained knowledge and needs for accommodations, teachers were able to better reflect on lesson delivery and adjust according to individual student needs of their students, and student progress toward skill development was noticed

A summary of the project challenges included: the PDAs did not have enough memory to hold multiple task analyses, the task analysis took a long time to create, the screens were too small for some of the students, the animations were too slow, the sound did not work properly, student teachers did not have a technology background or prior experiences with incorporating technology in the classroom or developing power point presentations, and the student teachers became frustrated with the development of the task analysis.

Discussion

The overall impact of the project with students with disabilities and their teachers was positive. Teacher candidates were able to develop effective instructional methods and techniques for students with disabilities using a task analysis approach and handheld technology. They were able to reflect on their practice and implement change in their delivery as appropriate with the students in their classrooms. Technology applications helped to solve specific problems (e.g., access to the curriculum, mastery of content material) that often limit the success of individuals with disabilities in content curriculum.

Teacher candidates became excited about incorporating technology into the classroom. One teacher candidate translated lessons into Spanish and offered this option to students. The PDA's served as a positive reinforcement encouraging appropriate classroom behaviors. Students demonstrated responsibility by protecting and caring for the equipment. They used the technology to complete in-class assignments successfully and, ultimately, completed and submitted more assignments. Students were more attentive in class and posed fewer questions to

their teachers. They worked independently for longer time periods and remained engaged in the learning process. On-task behaviors increased with the power points presentation and decreased with board work and quizzes.

Teacher candidates were better able to determine student understanding, disconnects, and the need for modifications. They were better able to reflect on their lesson content and delivery and adjust according to student needs. The task analysis and the PDA proved to be a useful tool in the classroom.

Limitations of the study suggest that the results cannot be generalized. The teacher candidates represented only a small number of participants. The length of time the PDAs were used in each classroom varied from seven days to six weeks. The project only lasted one academic semester. Teacher candidates had limited or no prior experience with analyzing student work, implementing pre/post methodology, or working with handheld technology. They were unfamiliar with power point and became quite frustrated with the process of creating a presentation that included the necessary sequential steps that appealed to their students. Overall, the electronic task analysis and handheld technology have the potential for becoming a learning tool to help students with disabilities self advocate, learn independently, and access the general education successfully.

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EXEMPLARY TEACHING PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: UNIVERSALLY DESIGNED LESSON PLANS

Sherry Mee Bell

General and special educators increasingly must address a wide range of student needs related to both disability and diversity (Turnbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2007). All teacher education candidates at the University of Tennessee (UT) participate in three professional preparation courses, one of which is *Special Education and Diverse Learners*. Candidates enroll in these courses during the senior year, prior to a teaching internship experience. Approximately 14 sections of each course per year are offered and enrollment is mixed; that is, candidates from across a range of teacher preparation areas (e.g., elementary education, middle and secondary content areas, music and art education) may be enrolled in a given course of 20-30 students. This heterogeneity allows for a rich exchange of ideas and experiences. The centerpieces of these courses involve student-created artifacts designed to develop expertise in meeting the needs of a diverse range of learners. The artifact in *Special Education and Diverse Learners*, a lesson plan based on principles of universal design for learning (UDL), is the focus of this paper.

Initially conceptualized in architecture (e.g., ramps rather than stairs to allow physical access for more individuals), UDL is now applied in a variety of settings, including education. (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose & Jackson, 2002). With UDL, the focus is *not* on an individual student's needs. Rather, it is on identifying and eliminating barriers to learning. Many students benefit when instructional materials and activities are accessible in multiple formats including textbooks, electronic text, text-to-speech software, and manipulative materials. Students whose first language is different from the primary language used in the classroom, who have intellectual disabilities, with learning disabilities such as dyslexia, and with physical disabilities all potentially benefit from universally designed instruction. The emphasis is on creating accessibility for students anywhere on the learning continuum. Even high achieving students including those identified as intellectually gifted can benefit from UDL. For example, digitized text does not have to be a resource exclusively available to the child who needs an enlarged font size due to poor vision or a student with reading disability. Digitized text might also become a resource for any student who enjoys or who can more readily access information in this format. If students can access reading material via computer, this frees the teacher to address higher order thinking activities. Increased access to learning opportunities for those with disabilities contributes to improved learning opportunities for everyone in the class.

Though UDL is intended to provide maximum accessibility for the largest number of students, teachers must be aware of individual abilities and instructional goals when applying UDL principles in the classroom. For example, both students with weak decoding skills and with limited visual acuity might rely on a text-to-speech reader. In the UDL lesson plan assignment, teacher education candidates develop a lesson plan from their grade level/content area for a specific class constellation that includes students with a range of disabilities (e.g., vision impairment, hearing loss, spina bifida, reading disabilities, autism, emotional disturbance, etc.) and students who are English language learners. Teacher education candidates use an online UDL plan template, created by special education faculty with input from general education faculty, to develop their own unique UDL plan, appropriate for their grade level and content

area. Candidates must develop curriculum objectives (extracted from state curriculum standards), instructional activities, and assessment tools that address the needs of all the students in their specified class constellation. In addition to students with disabilities and English language learners, teacher candidates must address the typically achieving, high achieving, and low achieving students who are commonly found in any general education classroom. Teacher candidates are also asked to construct a layout of the classroom, taking into account seating arrangement, grouping of students to achieve lesson objectives, materials and/or equipment, and specific needs of certain students (e.g., making room for a wheelchair).

The UDL plan and other artifacts, currently in their fourth year of implementation at UT, were developed in accordance with accountability guidelines of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2009). The UDL artifact is linked to the following teacher education standards developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC, 1992): (a) The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students; (b) The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners; (c) The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills; (d) The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals; and (e) The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social and physical development of the learner.

Teacher education candidates post working drafts of the artifacts on an electronic portfolio site; instructors provide feedback via rubrics. The UDL plan is evaluated in the areas of Curricular Objectives, Instructional Strategies, Materials and Resources, Assessment, and overall Organization and Clarity. Teacher candidates must demonstrate that the objectives are appropriate for the students in the class constellation, that the instructional activities provide multiple modes of engagement by the students (e.g., reading material using a computer, cooperative groups, peer tutoring, creating student products such as graphic organizers, and role playing), and that the assessment is both tied directly to the stated objectives and is fair and nondiscriminatory. The assessment must be accessible to all students. For example, students whose reading skills are below expectations may have the assessment read to them via computer, by a teacher, or by a peer. The template and rubrics for the UDL plan were developed initially and have been enhanced over a three year period by a group of special education professors and graduate students. Following each year of implementation, a completed plan is chosen at random and evaluated by five to seven professors to establish reliability of scoring of the rubrics in the categories indicated above.

In conclusion, the UDL plan artifact prepares future teachers in all areas to better meet the needs of student with disabilities and diverse learners. The UDL lesson plan artifact affords teacher education candidates an applied opportunity to integrate their developing pedagogical knowledge and skills to address the needs of a whole range of learners.

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USING A RUBRIC TO ASSESS INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Kathleen G. Winterman
Stephen D. Kroeger
Melissa M. Jones

The plan for providing services to students is referred to as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) (IDEA, 2004). Because the IEP document outlines how to accommodate instruction, it is a vital guide to all educators. General educators in particular play an important role in the development of a child's IEP, even though many general educators feel "in the dark" about the IEP process (Bingham, Dillon, & McCaught, 2009). General educators also report they feel less comfortable saying what they think and knowing what to do (Martin, Huber Marshall, & Sale, 2004). To support development of an IEP, the use of an IEP rubric may provide a level playing field in writing IDEA compliant documents. A rubric may serve as a guide, allowing general educators to contribute as equal team members in the writing process.

Methods

Participants in this study consisted of 33 teachers of students with special needs in an inclusive setting at a suburban high school in a Midwestern state. An IEP Rubric, which was developed by the researchers, was designed to determine if an IEP document complied with current U. S.

federal legislation and the nine key areas mandated by IDEA 2004 was being included. The following points were examined: student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance; measurable annual goals; benchmarks, short term objectives for students who take alternate assessments; periodic reports to parents, special education and related services; least restrictive environment; accommodations for district testing; coordinated transition activities and services beginning at the age of 16; and appropriate technical information. Teachers ranked an IEP using a four-point Likert scale.

Procedures

The researchers modeled the IEP Rubric with a sample IEP. Each general and special educator randomly selected one active IEP from grades 7-12 to evaluate measure compliance with IDEA 2004 with the use of the IEP Rubric. The IEP data were aggregated since the focus of the study was on the use of a rubric to determine IEP compliance.

Results

Are IEP documents in compliance with IDEA 2004? Results of the IEP examination, with the aid of the IEP Rubric, indicated that teacher participants found evidence that seven of the nine key areas were in compliance. The following two key areas were rated as partially meeting compliance requirements as outlined in IDEA 2004: (a) Services to achieve goals; and (b) Accommodations/District Tests.

Each key area included in the rubric listed requirements that are outlined as mandates under IDEA. Results of the IEP examined, with the aid of the IEP Rubric, indicated that nine requirements were not included in at least 50% of the IEPs reviewed. These nine requirements were: (a) Alternate assessments included in the IEP; (b) Objectives clearly connected to the present levels of academic achievement; (c) Special Education and related services and supplementary aids and services are based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable.; (d) Explain/rationale why a child is not participating in general education, curriculum; (e) Accommodations adhere to local and federal guidelines; (f) Statement of quality of life goals (as related to transitions and coordinated activities); (g) Vision (as related to transitions and coordinated activities); (h) Resources and Inter-agency Collaboration (as related to transition and coordinated activities); and (i) Stakeholders (as related to transition and coordinated activities).

The IEP Rubric included an area for comments. Three themes evolved from the comments: (a) general educators perceive the IEP process and document to be the sole responsibility of the special education teacher; (b) general educators need support to understand their role in the IEP process, and (c) general educators and beginning teachers need increased experience and training in writing effective IEPs. Comments indicated little connectedness to the IEP and its development, as well as a lack of knowledge about the role of the general educator.

Discussion

Results of the study support that the use of the IEP Rubric aided teachers in verifying compliance. While the results of the study did indicate that the teacher participants were able to

assess the compliance of IEPs, it revealed that many general educators lacked critical knowledge of their role in the IEP process. General educators need ongoing support to understand their role in the IEP process. Results of this study support the findings of Martin, Huber Marshall & Sale (2004) whose study found that general educators typically felt less competent as team members and contributors to the IEP.

The second question in the study was to determine if the use of the IEP rubric would facilitate teachers in identifying if requirements under each key area as mandated by IDEA 2004 were included. Results of the study support that the IEP Rubric did contribute to teachers' identification of requirements under each key area of the IEP. It also revealed that several major requirements were absent. The absence of basic requirements for key areas of the IEP such as Benchmarks and Short-term Objectives, Transitions, Accommodations, and Services to Achieve Goals may have contributed to the fact that students with special needs at this suburban high school did not meet AYP for three consecutive years. The results of this study further support Carter and Hughes' (2006) findings that general educators' lack of knowledge of students' IEP goals were rated as the most substantial barrier to including students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Therefore, building capacity of educators around the development of IEPs may directly enhance instructional strategies that allow students to be successful within the classroom thus meeting the AYP goals as defined by school districts.

Conclusion

IEP decisions may become unrealistic and unrealizable for students without the expertise of general educators. The call here is not simply to be in compliance with the IEP document, but a call to be knowledgeable about the needs and services required for students with special needs in order to meet the goals in inclusive settings.

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ARE THEY MAKING PROGRESS? USING PORTFOLIOS TO ASSESS SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Marla Lohmann

Recent legislation in the United States requires schools to prove that students are making adequate yearly progress. For about two percent of students, adequate progress cannot be measured by grade-level achievement tests and must instead be measured through alternate assessments (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). In addition to their use for accountability purposes, information from alternate assessments are a valuable tool for teachers and other school professionals; the data from these assessments can be used to guide teacher instruction and provide data related to a student's progress towards his or her learning goals (Elliott & Roach, 2007). The portfolio assessment is one form of alternative assessment that may be used for monitoring student performance levels and student progress. Portfolio assessments may include student work samples, interviews, photographs, audiotapes and videos of the student, as well as teacher documentation of student progress in academics and/or behavior (Elliott & Roach, 2007; Smith, Brewer, & Heffner, 2003). A brief review of the literature is provided

regarding portfolio assessments. In the preparation of the literature review, the terms “alternate assessment and special education” and “portfolio assessment and education” were searched using the following databases via EBSCOhost: (a) Academic Search Complete, (b) Education Research Complete, (c) ERIC, and (d) Professional Development Collection. Articles from 2000 to the present were reviewed.

There are several benefits to using portfolios to assess students in special education. First, teachers who use portfolios regularly review student progress in order to gauge progress towards their educational goals (Flowers, Ahlgrim-Delzell, Browder, & Spooner, 2005). Secondly, the teachers who use portfolios become more focused on student’s strengths, leading to greater recognition of student achievements and a decreased focus on student deficits (Birgin & Baki, 2007; Smith et al., 2003). In addition, the use of portfolio assessments has increased the access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities (Flowers et al., 2005). Parent involvement in student learning has also been noted as a result of using portfolio assessments (Birgin & Baki, 2007). Finally, when students are involved in the portfolio creation process, they learn to reflect on and assess their own achievement and become empowered to be more involved in their own learning (Flowers et al., 2005; Hillmer & Holmes, 2007).

While the use of portfolios to assess student progress has numerous benefits, there is one frequently noted drawback to its use. The creation of portfolios is time-consuming and may take teachers’ time away from instruction (Birgin & Baki, 2007; Browder, Spooner, Algozzine, Ahlgrim-Delzell, Flowers, & Karvonen, 2003; Flowers et al., 2005; Towles-Reeves, Kleinert, & Muhomba, 2009). One study reports that it takes as much as fifty-eight hours to create one portfolio (Flowers et al., 2005). Towles-Reeves, Kleinert, and Muhomba (2009) report, however, that teachers can incorporate portfolio activities into their daily student instruction, thus reducing the amount of outside time necessary for its creation. According to Elliott and Roach (2007). other concerns about portfolio assessments include: (a) the storage of the materials, (b) its poor alignment with state academic standards, (c) difficulties in comparing one student’s progress to that of other students, (d) problems in comparing a student’s work one year to his/her work in a subsequent year, and (e) a lack of connection between the assessment and future IEP goals. Despite the problems that are associated with the use of a portfolio assessment, research has clearly shown that these assessments provide benefits to students with disabilities. These benefits, as well as the increased demand for alternative assessments to ensure adequate progress of students with disabilities, make it clear that portfolio assessments are valuable tools for the assessment of special education students. Therefore, it is imperative that special education professionals learn more about this evaluation instrument so that can continually be improved in preparation for its use in schools around the world.

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UNDERSTANDING COMPONENTS OF A LITERACY BELIEF

Amber M. Friesen
Gretchen Butera

The central role of the teacher is determining how curriculum is implemented in the classroom. The decisions a teacher makes about children's early literacy activities are especially critical (NRP, 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). This includes their understanding of reading components, such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and the alphabetic principle, and how they believe related instruction should be incorporated.

Grisham (2000) provided a framework for understanding how teachers form these beliefs. He suggested that teachers draw from three sources of knowledge: professional (formal education), practical (work experiences), and personal (individual experiences). The purpose of this study is to identify sources of "knowledge" that contributed to the literacy beliefs of three preschool teachers. The research described here emerged from a larger investigation, set in a Midwest state in the United States.

Method

Three preschool teachers, Bree, Ella, and Veronica, were purposefully chosen as teachers who were effective in supporting children's early literacy growth. The teachers fulfilled the following criteria: (a) The three teachers were currently teaching in a rural preschool in which each was responsible for a class of approximately 18, three and four year old students; (b) The students in these classrooms demonstrated significant reading growth according to standardized pre and post test data (e.g., *Woodcock Johnson Academic Achievement Test*) collected in the 2006/07 school year, and (c) The teachers had an average of 21 years of experience in preschool and held strong beliefs about literacy instruction that they were willing to share.

Using an emerging case study design, data were collected over a three-month span during the Spring of 2008. Data was obtained through classroom observations, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. Collected data was analyzed and coded on an ongoing process, utilizing the constant-comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). A case narrative was written for each teacher. Subsequently a cross case analysis was written to identify common themes (Yin, 2004). In order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the data, multiple viewpoints, peer review, member checking, and triangulation of the data was employed (Merriam, 1997; Yin).

Results

The literacy instruction that occurred in the three classrooms was characterized by long periods of student play and exploration that was interspersed by short episodes of direct literacy instruction that focused mostly on letter/sound knowledge and vocabulary development. The weeks were divided into curriculum themes that were loosely integrated into all activities. The teachers shared the belief that this combination resulted in developmentally appropriate instruction for preschool-aged students.

Three, overlapping themes emerged from the data that provide understanding of how this literacy belief was constructed. First, the teachers highly valued the *friendships and community ties* that had contributed to their personal knowledge. The data are filled with cohesive references to "we" in reference to the teachers and the community in which they have spent their lives. The teachers' children had grown up together and they had collectively taught many of their current students' parents which contributed to a tight-knit school climate. Further, the teachers planned together weekly and expressed very similar literacy goals for their students.

Secondly, the teachers readily referenced the *vast classroom experience* they undisputedly had accumulated over their years of teaching preschool as a major contributor to practical knowledge. From this experience, they cited growing pressure to include more instruction that is academic and less play in their classrooms and they were apprehensive about how this would impact the children.

Last of all, the teachers expressed concern over *the perception of others* due to their lack of formal education, or professional knowledge. None of these teachers had substantial formal academic training before they began this job and had only received a scattering of professional

development workshops during their employment. The teachers shared that they had no desire to pursue further education yet wished their experience would be valued.

Discussion

The literacy beliefs of a teacher are a significant factor in the type of literacy instruction that students will receive (Hindman & Wasik, 2008). The three preschool teachers in this case study provide a picture of how teachers may make daily decisions that influence how children acquire early literacy skills. In this case, each of the “knowledges” suggested by Grisham (2000) were found to be relevant contributors. In turn, future efforts to bring about change in how teachers understand and plan for literacy instruction should account for these important components. A noted limitation in this research was the teachers’ past participation in a larger study. The familiarity between the researcher and participants may have impacted the results.

This study prompts further considerations regarding how future research should acknowledge (e.g., personal knowledge), collaborate (e.g., practical knowledge), and work to strengthen (e.g., professional knowledge) aspects of a teacher’s literacy beliefs, both before and after teachers are in the classroom. Further, it is critical to understand how a new literacy curriculum or intervention could fit within a teacher’s literacy beliefs in order to ensure fidelity and sustainability of the program.

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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: REFLECTING ON BEST PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Anne Lessard
Sylvine Schmidt
Christine Lessard

Classroom management represents a challenge for many teachers, particularly in contexts where students with special learning needs are integrated in a regular classroom. In comparing beginning and experienced teachers, Chouinard (1999) found that teachers entering the field considered classroom management amongst the most stressful elements of their daily professional lives. Experienced teachers, confronted with meeting the needs of students with learning disabilities also reported such a situation as a challenge.

The Ministry of Education in Quebec (MEQ) aims to promote success for all students and to place all students, including those with learning disabilities, in regular classrooms. Although teachers are favourable to these changes, they lack support. Furthermore, teachers need to learn more about the conditions associated with the successful integration of students. The aim of this study was to explore how three teachers manage their classroom and to highlight ways in which they meet the diverse learning needs of their students.

This qualitative study focused on three teachers and their students. Calypso had taught for 28 years when she participated to this study. Her classroom included 29 students, 15 deemed to have learning disabilities or behavioural difficulties or both. Cassiopeia had eight years of teaching experience and had 10 students with learning disabilities integrated in her classroom. Finally, in her third year of teaching, Morpheus had 21 students including four with learning disabilities. Data was collected three days/week from November until April, one week spent in each site. Three video cameras were placed in the classroom, (1- teacher; 2- students with LD). The data was transcribed. The analysis process involved going back and forth from literature to data in order to consolidate the emerging analytical framework and gain a full picture of how the three teachers managed their classrooms. Nine initial broad categories emerged.

The core of the emergent classroom management analytical framework rests on values. These values in turn affect the teacher's classroom organization, communication, observations and reflections. These elements have an impact on how teachers manage behaviour, establish relationships with students, offer support for learning and build pedagogical activities. These nine elements are positioned on two axes, the first oscillating between the group and the individual and the second between the cognitive and socio-affective needs of students.

In answering the research question as to how teachers manage their classroom, results indicate

that overall, Calypso and Cassiopeia were effective in promoting learning in all students, including those with learning disabilities, while Morpheus struggled, not always able to meet the needs of her students. Considering the nine categories which formed the emergent analytical framework, it was apparent that Calypso and Cassiopeia were able to establish a balance in their classroom management, using the nine elements outlined previously, while Morpheus seemed to lack the ability to address the socio-affective needs of her students. As behaviour management and establishing harmonious relationships are two elements closely linked with the socio-affective domain, the misuse of these elements contributed to the difficulties experienced by Morpheus.

Before going into the specifics of how the three teachers addressed the needs of students with learning disabilities, it is important to lay out some of the strengths of their overall classroom management because some of the structural elements of classroom management allow the teacher to set the stage for effective learning (Johnson, Rice, Edgington & Williams, 2005). Several elements allowed Calypso and Cassiopeia to organize their classrooms. Their expectations were clearly laid out, transitions between activities were smooth and routines were taught and applied daily. Calypso was well versed in the use of systematic observation to adjust her teaching practices to the needs of the students, as was Cassiopeia. By supervising their groups, walking around and sometimes demanding eye contact with their students, these two teachers were able to keep their fingers on the pulse of the groups. Interviewed, they reported taking the time to reflect on their practice and this practice was evidenced through the encouragement they provided their students to reflect on their learning. They communicated well and promoted collaboration within the learning community.

Another distinction between the teachers was related to the time and effort put into establishing harmonious relationships with students. Calypso and Cassiopeia set their students up for success, congratulated them, helped them consolidate their learning and most of all, showed interest and got to know them well. They adopted and got the students to adopt positive attitudes towards learning and towards each other. The learning climate which ensued was one where students felt comfortable taking risks and viewed error as a learning opportunity. The positive relationships established in the classroom enabled the teachers to bank on those to maintain order in the classroom, engage students through motivating learning activities and to meet the learning needs of students.

Having set the stage for learning, Calypso and Cassiopeia were then able to focus on the cognitive needs of individual students with learning disabilities. One strategy used to promote their learning was to promote their ownership and sense of responsibility towards their learning. More specifically, this was done by stimulating autonomy, encouraging students to make decisions and valuing the effort put into learning. Stimulating ownership and autonomy has been found to be effective in other studies (Klem & Connell, 2004). Another strategy used was to provide students with feedback in order to inform them step by step that they are on the right track and making progress. Other researchers have also found that if the student was not on the right track, this close supervision allowed the teacher to refocus the student's efforts (Beyda, Zentall & Ferko, 2002; Emmer & Stough, 2001). Finally, the teachers stimulated the students' motivation by preparing learning activities that were both challenging yet accessible. These activities also promoted the students' active participation, which again is closely tied to their

ownership of their learning process. Morpheus' strength was her focus on the cognitive domain, in preparing individualized learning activities and providing individualized support to students, while Calypso and Cassiopeia targeted students' autonomy and ownership.

Classroom management is a very complex task. Years of experience and professional development influence a teacher's ability to manage a classroom, as do other contextual variables such as professional support offered to students and teachers, student characteristics, subject matter being taught and so on and so forth. It was found in this study that classroom management was guided by teachers' values. In the best cases, it was structured, constant and coherent. The strategies described provided a general framework within which Calypso and Cassiopeia were able to meet the learning needs of all their students, while Morpheus struggled.

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ENHANCING SUPPORTS FOR PRESERVICE AND NOVICE SPECIAL EDUCATORS THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCING TECHNOLOGY

Earle Knowlton

In the U.S., special educators who are early in their careers leave the field at higher rates than those who have taught longer (Boe & Cook, 2006). Among the many and varied disincentives for newer teachers staying on the job is the lack of relevant (or, in some cases, *any*) connections between the learning content and experiences that characterized their preservice preparation and the realities they face once they are on the job (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007). Yet, Dal Bello, Knowlton, & Chaffin (2007) observed that teachers actually can *build* knowledge regarding learning and behavioral diversity in their classrooms when, for example, preservice instruction features meaningful, repeated exposures to diverse learners and effective teachers that are vivid (especially in regard to visual and auditory stimuli), spontaneous (i.e., neither recorded nor scripted), interactive (conversational in addition to observational), and contextualized (the idiographic: real kids, classrooms, problems, and solutions).

For it to be effective, such an approach presupposes that teacher preparation in special education sets the occasion for students to actively build knowledge for themselves rather than receiving passive exposure to externally-imposed knowledge sources such as professors, journals, books, state/professional standards, etc. Passive absorption from sources wherein the organization and delivery of content are external to the control of the learner tend to have a counterproductive effect on teachers-to-be by shelling them with information that, accurate, timely, and well-intentioned as it may be, rapidly becomes inert in terms of subsequent recall and use (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Some might even argue the possibility that the practicing teacher, given this characterization of her or his preservice preparation, implements as many or more practices s/he observed daily as a K-12 pupil than those to which s/he was exposed in the form of “standards-based knowledge and skills” during teacher preparation (cf. Lortie, 1975; Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006).

Some observers of the teaching profession have pointed to the potential significance of highly contextualized, practitioner-driven “craft knowledge” of learners, learning, and teaching (Hiebert, Gallimore, & Stigler, 2002, p. 3). Practical, idiosyncratic knowledge brings both benefits and concerns with respect to teacher development. In contrast to traditional research-generated knowledge, craft knowledge is context-rich (as opposed to context-free) and concrete (as opposed to generalized) (Hiebert et al., 2002). However, craft knowledge clearly can include inaccuracies and it can suffer from unwarranted fragmentation and an inappropriate basis in superstition (Lienhardt, 1990). Interestingly, the knowledge of teaching has been characterized

as *ill-structured*; i.e. its content consists of simultaneously interacting and often conflicting evidence, concepts, and principles that vary widely and unpredictably across specific cases and, importantly, authentic contexts (Spiro et al., 1992).

Role and Utility of Video Conferencing

These complexities of the knowledge-base render traditional sit-and-soak methods as less than best practices in teacher education. Technologies such as video conferencing (VC) can provide useful contextualization tools. Through its vivid portrayal of teaching knowledge and effective teaching and learning, VC allows preservice and novice teachers not only to *learn about* classroom settings, but to *be teachers within* classroom settings (Dal Bello et al., 2007; Israel, Knowlton, Griswold, & Rowland, in press). In preservice preparation, VC enables us to present course content in a manner that is situated within realistic K-12 contexts; teachers-to-be can understand how to apply the knowledge they build in contests similar to those they will face as practitioners. For professional development, VC enables applications of professional learning communities, intensive mentoring, and remote interactive coaching without regard to barriers of distance.

VC technology enables synchronous, Internet-based interactive video and audio communication, as well as data transmission, allowing two or more groups of people at different locations to see, hear, talk, exchange text, graphics, and other representations of information with one another in real time (Dal Bello et al., 2007). One is able to observe classrooms and other school-based environments unobtrusively; to engage in discussions with school-based professionals, students, and families; and to mentor, coach, and evaluate preservice and novice teachers, all from physically remote sites. Distance becomes irrelevant.

Our current work features two VC applications that support learning and development on the part of preservice and novice special educators. First, we employ VC to link preservice teacher education students with classrooms and other K-12 learning environments. Undergraduate courses which meet during the school day connect live with K-12 classrooms as described in Dal Bello et al. (2007). For evening graduate courses, we digitally record teachers modeling best practices during the school day, then connect live with those teachers and often one or more of their pupils and pupils' parents so that graduate students can interview and debrief them in relation to that day's teaching. Data from students suggest they are able and prefer to build their knowledge from vivid, spontaneously interactive, and authentic learning contexts that are provided for them with the support of VC (Dal Bello et al. 2007).

We also use VC to coach novice special educators. Essentially, this involves one-way video (classroom to coach), and two-way audio (classroom to coach and coach to teacher via Bluetooth technology). Our VC system allows the coach to control on-site camera functions from the remote observation/coaching site. Thus the coach controls camera pan, pitch, and zoom, enabling close-ups of teacher student interactions. We continue to observe positive effects of remote, interactive coaching on both teachers and pupils (Israel et al., in press).

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MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Michele C. Gerent

Chronic shortages of special education teachers as well as a declining teacher workforce has led to a proliferation of alternative paths to obtaining certification as a special education teacher. Ensuring that these preparation programs turn out highly qualified teachers for children with special needs is a difficult if not impossible task. The *No Child Left Behind Act* requires that every child has a highly qualified teacher in the classroom. While there appears to be no national teacher shortage at this time, certain subject areas as well as numerous urban and rural locations are experiencing teacher shortages (U. S. Department of Education, 2005). A reaction to these shortages and a concern about an overall declining teacher workforce has led to a variety of alternative preparation programs especially for teachers in the shortage areas (Rosenberg & Rock, 1994).

An area that has chronically experienced teacher shortages is the field of special education (Brownell, Ross, Colon & McCallum, 2005; Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2001). Whether or not an alternative path to certification can insure a highly qualified teacher for children with special needs is unanswerable at this time (Brownell, Ross, Colon & McCallum, 2005). However there are some indicators that an alternative certification program may produce a “professional” teacher when certain indicators are present (Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2001). These indicators include programs that utilize collaborative planning between institutions of higher education and local education agencies, programs that require an adequate length of enrollment and use a variety of learning activities to deliver critical content, and programs that utilize close mentoring relationships with experienced higher education professors so as to guide “professional” teacher development. (Jorissen, 2003; Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2001).

In an effort to go beyond minimal requirements required by the state of Florida for alternative certification of teachers, St. Petersburg College has established an alternative teacher education preparation program based on research based best practices. Students selected for the program must meet a number of requirements including holding a baccalaureate degree. The students attend classes for an entire year including summer classes. The courses are offered at night or online so that they can continue to work during the day. The program prepares these students to become certified in special education and elementary education. The program is designed to integrate special education, elementary education, and English as a second language (ESL) standards into all of the course work. This approach prepares the special education majors to take the certification subject area exams in both exceptional student education and elementary education as well as preparing them to take a state required exam for English as a second language (ESL) endorsement.

As part of the program, the students complete two 60 hour practicums in a local school district. The students are mentored by a college supervisor as well as by an experienced teacher during the practicum hours. They are required to teach lessons as well as conduct functional assessments and tutor ESL students. At the completion of the program the students document satisfaction of the Florida Accomplished Practices (FEAPS) for preservice teachers by

completing an electronic portfolio.

Graduates are able to obtain jobs in the local school districts. Feedback from these districts indicate satisfaction with the graduates of the program. Student surveys indicate that they feel that the time spent in the field practicing the skills that they learn in class is the most valuable aspect of the program.

Alternative preparation programs are becoming more and more common as our nation is faced with teacher shortages in critical areas like special education. It is crucial to the field that alternative teacher preparation programs provide the kind of experiences and the mentoring necessary for teachers to enter the field as highly qualified professionals prepared to work with diverse student populations.

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TEACHING LINGUISTICALLY, CULTURALLY DIVERSE, MINORITY STUDENTS: UNIVERSAL DESIGN IS NOT ENOUGH

Diane King

In the past, researchers such as Harry (1994) and Hilliard (1992) believed that special education reform could alternate the inadequacy of special education services and the ultimate adverse effects on minority students. Among the reasons given for the lack of students' success were the competency and motive of special education teachers and the availability of culturally relevant curriculum (Ford, 1992). These assertions continue to ring true even after many years of general and special education reforms.

Today, in spite of the alignment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), African American students continue to lag behind their European American counterparts on statewide assessments, regardless of socioeconomic status (Lee, 2006). One current philosophy and increasingly accepted approach, universal design for learning (UDL), offers a hopeful future for diverse learners, including linguistically and culturally diverse students. UDL allows students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum and makes instructional goals more obtainable by a wider range of students (Orkwis & McLane, 1998). Teachers are encouraged to use a variety of instructional materials and activities to present academic content, and allows students to engage in learning using a range of modalities and demonstrate learning in various way; therefore, preventing the inherent barriers built into many of the educational programs used to address the mandates of NCLB. Given the persistent gap between the academic achievement of African American and European American students, UDL is not enough. Additional solutions are needed to address this academic achievement gap: (a) institute pre- and in-service diversity training for all teachers, and (b) infuse the mainstream curriculum with varied cultural contributions and perspectives.

Diversity Training for Pre- and In-Service Teachers

Morrison, Robbins, and Rose (2008) provide support for diversity training of pre- and in-service teachers to address academic challenges faced by American African students. Additionally, Howard (2001) argues that the incongruence between teachers who do not understand the cultural values and experiences of African American students is routinely a contributing factor in the academic underachievement and socially maladaptive behaviors of these students. The intent of diversity training for future and current educators is to prevent and counteract these effects by increasing teachers' expectation levels for all students, encouraging teachers to create positive learning communities in which students intellectually flourish, and supporting the integration of culturally relevant pedagogy within classrooms. These goals become significantly more important with the shrinking number of minority teachers as the number of minority students swell. European American teachers who are not provided with substantive diversity training are not equipped to address the cultural needs of their African American students within UDL lessons. Therefore, future and current teachers need training in order to acquire the knowledge, skills, and disposition to design UDL lessons that use culturally relevant pedagogies that promote academic achievement of African American students. Diversity training for teachers must

include focus on these pedagogies: high expectations, cultural competence, and critical consciousness (Howard, 2001; Morrison et al., 2008).

Culturally Inclusive Curriculum

Without the benefits of a culturally diverse or trained teaching force, the challenge of establishing culturally relevant learning communities in American public schools becomes more daunting. Teachers and students depend on the support provided by a robust culturally inclusive curriculum to create an environment in which all students academically thrive. Banks (1994) and Gay (2003) contend that a culturally inclusive curriculum could contribute to the academic gains of all students as they see their cultural reflection in the materials and all subject content, not just social studies, language arts, and fine arts.

Unfortunately, in the present NCLB mindset, there is little focus on making multicultural education an integral part of any public school curriculum. Often American public schools look to a “one size fits all” approach in an effort to improve students’ performance on high stakes tests. Even using an UDL approach requires that the design of educational materials are flexible to ensure that “the greater number of students are reached through a single curriculum” (Orkwis & McLane, 1998). This does not suggest that the UDL approach endorses or promote the “one size fits all” curriculum. Just the opposite; teachers are encouraged to use curricular materials, activities, and assessments that will reach the greatest number of learners. However, to reach African American students, future and current teachers need access to culturally inclusive curricula with culturally relevant materials, activities, and assessments. Unless the UDL approach truly includes curricula that are culturally relevant to these students, America will continue to see an academic achievement gap between African American and their European American counterparts.

It is apparent that African American students need more than the current universal design for learning approach in order to make significant gains toward academic achievement equal to European American peers. Shifting educational paradigms for closing the gap between these two groups of students must include hiring teachers who are trained use culturally relevant pedagogies to combat the on-going challenges faced by these students armed with the ammunition (i.e., culturally inclusive curricula) to fight the effects of being a minority child in the U.S.A.

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**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CHILDREN WITH
DISABILITIES: DISTRICT LEVEL PERSPECTIVES**

Małgorzata Gil

Violence and aggression is a serious problem in contemporary schools. The bullying phenomenon is a problem of international significance and is documented in the literature internationally. It violates the essential right of every child to live with a sense of security. Violence and aggression at school are an asocial phenomenon, which threaten the normal development of the every student. Many researchers around the world point out that bullying in schools is aimed against “others.” Reports from various countries show that many students, especially those with disabilities, suffer from episodes of severe bullying. The fundamental goal of this research was to develop an understanding of the relationship between anti-bullying policies and perception of these policies from the point of view of the jurisdiction.

Method

To explore the phenomenon of “friendly schools for all” and pro-social behaviour of students towards their classmates with disabilities I decided to conduct a series of case studies in the Alberta context. The present study reports on the initial investigation into school jurisdiction

central office perspectives of anti-bullying policies. Using a case study approach enabled me to draw on a variety of data collection instruments including surveys, multiple histories, and analysis of archival information. To this end I interviewed superintendents' designates, who had the necessary expertise and insight of the district policies in which we were specifically interested. Additionally, I also analyzed documents related to the protection of students with disabilities. The following research question served to focus our study: How does legislation protect against bullying of students with disabilities in mainstream schools? To address this question we selected two separate school districts (referred to here as District 1 and District 2) in Alberta in which children with disabilities are mainstreamed. These school boards were purposely selected because they were conveniently located and they represent different missions and ideas about schooling. Furthermore, one is a large (relative to Alberta school jurisdictions), urban school jurisdiction while the second is a smaller, sub-urban one.

Conclusion

Provincial regulations form the basis for policies which guide school life in both of the participant districts in this study; in fact, the same regulations apply to all publicly funded school jurisdictions in Alberta. The Alberta School Act and the Government Accountability Act determine the main directions for school administrators and leaders in Alberta. Unfortunately, none of the policy documents analyzed provided any evidence of particular regulations or legislation concerning safety of children with disabilities.

Representatives from the districts were aware of some bullying issues in which students with disabilities are involved, but they do not perceive the need to create detailed rules to prevent them. Their argument for this perspective was that the policies that currently exist apply to everyone – everyone is entitled to begin treated with dignity and respect. Integrating all students in classrooms, introducing new programs, and upbringing students in accordance with the Christian values are the main ways, described by the respondents, to achieve the complete harmony between average and disabled peers. As was the case in Shultz and da Costa's (2007), no evidence of evaluation of programs implemented to reduce incidents of bullying in the present study. Anti-bullying programs are typically implemented and assumed to achieve what they purport to achieve with respect to reducing bullying in schools.

In the opinions of district representatives I interviewed, for students who are bullied, if these are students who also have disabilities, total help and support are already guaranteed through the current policies. The main kind of support for them is through interacting school staff (e.g., teachers, principal, counselor). The school boards believe their policies to be sound; however, they believe greater financial resources would help them to provide services that would better prevent bullying issues.

Interestingly, annual survey results gathered from students, parents, and staffs suggest that issues of safety on school grounds and in school buildings may not be as positive as was suggested through the interview data and even some of the statements made in the annual survey results reports themselves. I am alarmed that in one year, approximately 1260 students in only one district reported being involved in harassment or bullying in their schools.

In my research no evidence was found to support belief that students with disabilities have extra or more rights and privileges in schools beyond their non-disabled peers. They also are not protected by specific policies against violence that meet their needs. Not surprisingly, given the view that additional policy protections are not required to protect children with disabilities from bullying, at the jurisdiction level we did not find any evidence programs implement to mitigate against bullying of students with disabilities. The present study only provides me with insights provincial and district policy documents and from the vantage point of leaders in the districts' central offices. It does not give me insights to our questions concerning safety of students with disabilities at the level of the schools. It will be crucial to conduct research at schools to be sure that understandings of anti-bullying policies, particularly as they might apply to students with disabilities, are explored, and understood.

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PROFESSIONALS AND FAMILY EXPECTATIONS OVER THE TRAINING SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT ACCESS OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Marcos Gómez Puerta

The persons with intellectual disability show difficulties for his employment inclusion. These persons live with environmental expectations that can impel or limit his personal and work development, and determine the resources to which they gain access. Today, we tend to think that the disabled person has to participate actively in the working world and to work for anyone is a key element in developing their personal and social life and, for this group, a standardization of key resource and social as well as improving their autonomy. Spain did an important first step in the right to work of this group in the 1978 Constitution that regulates the state of law and amends the previous regime. The enactment of specific legislation came some years later when these proposals were implemented in the General Law 13/1982 of April 7 for the social integration of disabled persons (LISMI) and, later, in the School Integration Program (RD 6 March 1985 Management of Special Education). These new laws took precedence integrating these people in ordinary settings. From the LISMI, three major alternatives for access to employment and occupation of these people were generated: (a) occupation protected at the occupational centers, (b) occupation protected in special employment and (c) work at an ordinary company.

However, in these methods there are a series of difficulties: (a) the occupational centers tend to ask users of the simplest tasks to be undertaken, resulting in a low yield and sometimes frustration of developing the potential of the subject (Felip Agost, 1996), (b) transitions between the center and center occupational employment are particularly important problems (congestion, deterioration of the aging person with intellectual disabilities, availability ...; Pallisera Díaz, 2003), (c) for it is part, the special job centers tend not to promote their employees with disabilities to regular employment because they may pose to the loss of a skilled worker, perhaps after a long period of training and personal and social adjustment, and (d) businesses still reluctant to add to this group (Ibáñez Martínez, 2006).

Method

Using a non-experimental descriptive quantitative approach and by means of a questionnaire with 11-items there were gathered the opinion of 110 families and 48 professionals (both groups

belonging to an Alicante (Spain) association for persons with intellectual disabilities) about the following research questions: (a) What labor expectation do people with intellectual disabilities have, considered by the families and professionals? (b) How do they believe that it turns out to be influenced by the level of mental retardation of the subject? (c) Which mental retardation levels are perceived to achieve employment easily? (d) Which access options to the employment are perceived as more common and more suitable? (e) How much importance do they attribute to different group of skills for the access to the employment? (f) Which familiar, social and legal factors are perceived as favouring in the work inclusion?

Results

1. Professionals and families share the following expectations: (a) only some people with intellectual disabilities can work, (b) mental retardation (MR) influences their chances of employment, (c) the levels of MR that can access to employment are light MR and moderate MR (d) the levels that have no access to employment are severe MR and profound MR; (e) the job profiles for access to employment activities mainly focus on methodical, repetitive, and assistant tasks.

2. Professionals and families disagree about what is the most frequent and better access to employment. Internally, there is also disagreement between parents on the best modality. It seems those mothers' prioritized higher levels of support.

3. There is consensus between families and professionals on the importance of skills training for access to employment by highlighting the personal and working life compared to living in community and home life.

4. There is common vision regarding the social and legal factors involved in the insertion of this group. Factors in families, families and professionals offer complementary visions.

Discussion

The results of this study are conditioned by the sample and the method and instrument used for data collection. The study should be regarded as a description of the perceptions of a significant group of families and professionals of a non-governmental organization for people with intellectual disabilities. Thus, it describes a cross-sectional measure of the views of approximately 50% of professionals and 20% of families served in this NGO.

Those with levels of severe and profound MR co-exist with very low expectations for their potential workforce. Coexistence with minimized expectations by both professionals and families is likely to encourage the accommodation of the potential of people with those levels to such expectations. It requires the identification and development of this potential, without being conditioned by the level of MR of the subject.

The dissonance in the best form of integration can cause friction between families and professionals, but also among parents. It is important to objective both strengths and weaknesses in the working potential of the individual and joint progress in the dialogue on this. Also, it is

essential to define the profiles of insertion through the skills required, in order to compare with the profile formed from the subject.

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PREPARING PRESERVICE TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS: SHIFTING ATTITUDES

Isabel Killoran

While those in the field espouse the benefits and necessity of inclusive programmes, some educators find it extremely difficult to actualize them. There is a direct correlation between attitude and the ability to embrace fully inclusive practices (Stoiber, Gettinger, & Goetz, 1998; Devore & Hanley-Maxwell, 2000 as cited in Killoran, Tymon, Frempong, 2007, p. 83). Jones and Rapport (1997) and Gettinger, Stoiber and Lange (1999) question the ability of teachers to translate the research on inclusion into actual practice. They concur that teachers require “an attitude that reflects [an] acceptance of diversity and [a willingness to] work collaboratively with others on behalf of the children” (Jones & Rapport, 1997, p. 57 as cited in Killoran, Tymon, Frempong, 2007, p. 83).

Offering courses in inclusive education to preservice teachers may be one way to work towards ensuring our teachers have the positive attitude necessary to embrace inclusion. As an instructor of inclusive courses for preservice teachers, I struggle to find a way to get my students to embody the principles of inclusion. For the past several years, I have been collecting data on my preservice teachers’ experiences in these courses to see if they make any difference in the attitudes of our future teachers.

Programme Background

York University, located in Toronto, is the third largest university in Canada with approximately 50,000 students. The Faculty of Education at York is one of the largest in Ontario. The preservice programme has two distinct Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) streams -- consecutive (one-year post Bachelor's) and concurrent (completed at the same time as an additional Bachelor's). Within each of these streams, some students are offered the opportunity to take a 36-hour course on Inclusive Education. In the consecutive stream, the course is offered as an elective to the primary/junior students who are in a section for those who come to the Faculty with an Early Childhood Education (ECE) background. All of the concurrent students have the option of choosing the Inclusive Education course as an elective. The consecutive option is offered in a two-week module format, while the concurrent option is offered over a 12-week term. The concurrent students in the elective are generally in their 2nd or 3rd year of the programme, have completed a variety of practica and may be in any of the divisions (primary through secondary).

Course Background

The Inclusive Education course focuses on the inclusion of children with exceptionalities in the general education classroom. The approach taken is that it is the right of students and parents to elect placement in a general education setting at the neighbourhood school, and it is the obligation of schools, teachers, and administration to provide an effective placement. In the course we examine disability as a social construct, inclusion as a human right, and the collaboration of parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and peers in supporting inclusive practice. The focus is on getting the preservice teachers to grasp these principles and to understand that the issues preventing inclusion do not lie within the child but rather with those around him/her. In my efforts to meet the objectives of the course, I try to demystify inclusion, challenge assumptions, and empower the students to make a difference.

There are five key areas where I focus the course materials, discussions, and experiences: (a) a child has the right to be included; (b) the general education teacher has the responsibility and knowledge to include children with disabilities; (c) behaviour is a form of communication; (d) social and emotional development need to be an important component of inclusion; and (e) collaboration is key for successful inclusion.

Methodology

Using an adapted version of *Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming* (Goodstadt-Killoran, 2000), I surveyed four of the courses that I taught: consecutive November 2002 and 2003 and concurrent Fall 2005 and Winter 2007. In the adapted version the original 30-items of the *ORM* (Larrivee & Cook, 1979) were used; however, the 6-point continuum created for the *Opinions Relative to Integration (ORI)* (Antonak & Larrivee, 1995) was chosen to eliminate midpoint responses. Eighteen items represented negative attitudes towards inclusion and were reverse scored so that higher scores represented more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Possible total scores ranged from 30 to 180. The language of the items was also further updated to include current

terminology (Goodstadt-Killoran, 2000). In each of the courses, the students were given the instrument on the first day of class prior to any discussion about the syllabus or inclusion. On the last day, the students were given the survey again. I analyzed the results based on the programme variable (consecutive or concurrent) as well as looking at each year within the programme variables.

Results

I hypothesized that the consecutive group would have significantly higher pretest scores because of their ECE background. I was surprised to find that there was no significance between the two groups when they started the course ($F(1, 80) = 1.922; p < .169$). Even though there was no significance the consecutive group did start and end higher than the concurrent group. What I really wanted to know was if the course had an impact on the preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and according to the t test all the groups' change in scores reflected a statistical significance. Each of the four subgroups had significance of $p < .000$ (consecutive 2002: $t = 7.043 (df = 20)$; consecutive 2003: $t = 9.597 (df = 20)$; concurrent 2005: $t = 5.988 (df = 16)$; concurrent 2007: $t = 6.639 (df = 21)$).

Although all of the groups had a statistically significant change in the scores there was also a significance in the differences in the changes in scores between the two programme groups, with the consecutive group having the most significant change ($F(1,81) = 6.816; p < .02 (.011)$).

Within the survey there were five key attitude areas (related to the course objectives): (a) general educator's perceived ability to include; (b) behaviour of children with disabilities, (c) attitude towards children with disabilities; (d) social and emotional development of children with disabilities; and (e) overall attitudes about inclusion. Both groups had a shift in their attitudes about the general educators' ability to include and what that would entail but the consecutive group had greater movement. Both groups had a shift in their attitudes about the behaviour of children with disabilities. Both groups had a shift in their attitudes about children with disabilities and the impact of having them in the general education classroom. There was a large shift in both groups' attitudes about the social and emotional impact of inclusion. There was a very large shift in both groups' attitudes about the principle of inclusion as a right and overall benefit.

There were several limitations in this study. The most important one being that I did not have any demographic or practica information on the participants. Consequently, I was not able to determine if there were other factors contributing to the differences and changes in attitude.

In conclusion, it was encouraging to see that a course could result in such significant changes in preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Finding a way to sustain these attitudes and translate them into action is where I would like to focus next. Looking at why the concurrent students had less movement in their attitudes about their ability to include is also worth examining more closely.

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FAMILIES PERCEPTION OF DISCRIMINATION BECAUSE OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Marcos Gómez Puerta
Cristina M. Cardona

This study analyzes the perception that family members of people with intellectual disabilities have about discrimination because of intellectual disability. Traditionally, this group has been observed from the medical paradigm, conceiving them as ill people. Also, over the centuries they have faced marginalization by society, which has since generated attitudes of rejection and fear to the mercy and beneficence. The interaction of disability with an environment that generates a cognitive ability cult and competitiveness has limited their chances of acceptance and so they have become dissonant elements. The confluence of these elements has set up a situation in which prevails the deficiency and not the potential of the person; thus, the gap has become a matter of segregation (Muntaner Guasp, 1995).

In recent years, it seems that society has gradually lost the fear and accepts that these people have the same rights and duties than the rest of the citizens. In the case of education, it seems that parents can show an initial reluctance to include people with intellectual disabilities, but once informed and sensitized often defend this option (Philips, Sapona & Lubic, 1995). On the other hand, sometimes parents relate improvements in personal and social development of their children due to living with students with special educational needs (Logan et al., 1995).

It is important to assess the perception that the families of people with intellectual disabilities show respect to the situation of their sons and daughters. Obviously, these are people living very closely situations of discrimination and in this sense at first hand to observe this reality. Therefore, they are key informants to establish a state of affairs regarding discrimination. In recent years there is a widespread feeling that there has been substantial progress in Spain in the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in different areas.

Method

Through a quantitative non-experimental descriptive approach and by means of a questionnaire with 16 items, it was collected the views of 48 families (belonging to a NGO on Intellectual Disability people from Alicante) on the following research questions: In what contexts and how often discrimination occurs? Does gender, level of mental retardation and the presence of more than one disability have an influence on discrimination? What are the causes of this discrimination? What is the attitude shown by the family against the discrimination of their child?

Some families of a NGO for people with intellectual disabilities were asked for voluntary participation by an anonymous letter that explained the content of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was delivered in hand through their child with disability. This was returned by hand, so, through the students of the center. The sample included mainly parents but also 2 siblings. As being an available sample a non-random sampling procedure was used (Cardona Molto, 2002). The age of participants ranged from 24 to 69 years, with an average of 48 years

(SD = 7.60). Seventy percent of people with disabilities who responded were male and 30% women. Their ages ranged from 16 and 26 years, with an average of 20 years (SD = 2.82). Their intellectual levels ranged from severe (5%), moderate (25%), light (23%), borderline (45%). 2% did not answer this question. Also, 12 people (25%) indicated that their children have other disabilities in addition to the intellectual. Of these, 37% is physical, 27% visual, 18% listening and 18% had mental illness.

Results

1. Discrimination is still present in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in all areas: family, school, work and society. The results suggest that discrimination is less in the first years of life but increases gradually as it progresses toward adulthood.
2. People with intellectual disabilities are at times difficult to participate in settings accessed. However, discrimination is very low in settings of public transport, insurance, partnerships and public health.
3. The discrimination is embodied in verbal and physical abuse, overprotection, infantilization, lack of personal and institutional support, ignorance, indifference, denial, not to support their socialization, lack of understanding of its possibilities and limitations. In general, one could say that behind all these behaviours is the implied lack of acceptance of difference.
4. Families show, in general, a passive attitude toward discrimination against their children. They also perceive that there are no adequate legal mechanisms to fight against discrimination.
5. They point as priority actions those to be done in social and working environments.

Discussion

Several limitations must be considered concerning this study. First, the sample and the instrument used for data collection. Second, the participants, except two, have never had a job and have recently accessed a job-training center. Also, few participants are likely to have contracted private insurance for their children. All this may explain the low response rate in the sections corresponding to these questions in the questionnaire.

First, the State and the Autonomous Communities in Spain should continue to promote awareness-raising and fighting discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities more effective, especially in social and work environments. It also should maintain and expand positive action plans. Second, family counselling and support in different life stages of a child with disabilities is a very high priority. In this process, specific associations can develop a key role by encouraging the early years of the family life of individuals and preventing discrimination. Third, it should be promoted quality education for all that truly respond to the diversity of the students. Fourth, training and access to employment remains a challenge that must be evaluated and developed by state and local government and they should not only legislate but do law enforcement. The involvement of employers and business federations is

crucial from a corporate social responsibility view. Finally, there should be better advertising of legal mechanisms to fight against discrimination.

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MEETING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF STUDENTS THROUGH COLLABORATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Rachael Gonzales
Daniel McCarthy

Students enrolled in the public school system in the United States who exhibit emotional and behavioral challenges are entitled to a free and appropriate public education and related services under the auspices of special education through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Many of these students are served under the disability categories of Emotional Disturbance, Specific Learning Disability, Speech and Language Impairment, Autism and Other Health Impaired. In 2007-08, the California Department of Education indicated there were 677,875 students enrolled in special education in grades K-12. Approximately 88% of those students

(594,816) were identified within these categories- Emotional Disturbance (27,199), Speech or Language Impairment (176,256), Other Health Impaired (47,232), Specific Learning Disability (297,933) and Autism (46,196). In order for many of these students to benefit from their educational plan (IEP), they may require one or more support services that can include individual and/or group counseling, behavioral support plan services or clinical case management provided by district school staff. In California, many students also receive these services from both public sector and private practice mental health professionals.

This importance of collaboration between education and mental health is growing in scope given the needs of students with emotional and behavioral challenges. For example, in California, the state government has enacted a law (AB 3632) which requires public mental health agencies to provide direct clinical services to students and their families when required by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). This has brought about a tremendous opportunity for the two systems of care to work collectively to better the educational and personal lives of students.

Many teachers and mental health professionals who have been participants in this collaborative effort have experienced successful student outcomes, but many also report personal and professional frustrations that inhibit positive outcomes and continued collaboration. There are many factors that act as challenges/barriers for collaboration. There is often confusion when teachers and mental health professionals try to clarify and understand each other's professional roles. There is a crucial need to identify strategies to help teachers and mental health clinicians provide cross agency services to students and their families.

The challenges that educators and mental health professions face when they provide services in a collaborative way often derive from the language and system context that each other uses. There are differences in the sense of professional identity, training and role expectations. In addition there are often issues with power and authority when working as a guest in a school. Often, school staff perceives mental health professionals as intrusive and feel frustrated with a mental health professional's definition and exercise of confidentiality. Mental health professionals often perceive school staff as lacking understanding of behaviors and emotional factors that impact learning.

In addition, there are differences in the vocabulary, legal mandates, client and budget priorities, focus of staff and reporting responsibilities for each system. Teachers often find the clinical language and therapeutic concepts used by mental health professionals as difficult to understand or implement. There is also the difference in attitude towards change: incremental versus immediate.

Often, the biggest difficulty is the poor knowledge of each other's programs and services and the fact that work schedules and contractual requirements are often different.

In order to overcome these barriers to collaborative work, both school staff and mental health professionals need to change their attitudes and expectations. In order to develop more successful and positive relationships a shared experience must be developed. We need to promote time for "learning conversations" which will assist in promoting openness and allow for the recognition and respect of each other's skills and strengths. We need to visit each other's work socials and celebrations and develop joint case management plans. Each needs to provide

training opportunities to demystify the language and culture of school based mental health. For example, teacher-training programs could include the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM 1V) in their coursework. Conversely, mental health staff could benefit from a review and understanding of A Composite of Laws: California Special Education Programs 2009. In closing, knowing the beliefs and roles different professionals play, helps in reducing misperception, personalizing, blaming and other behaviors than can drift the focus from helping the student which is the most important task.

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AN INCLUSIVE MODEL FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: THE CONTENT MASTERY CENTER

Amelia Jenkins
Pat Edelen-Smith

The content mastery center (CMC) is a resource/consulting teacher model that provides (a) direct service to students with mild disabilities, and (b) indirect services through consultation with the general educator. This paper will describe the goals, program structure and organization, and data from two schools implementing CMCs.

Goals, Program Structure and Organization

The goals of the content mastery center model are to: (a) create conditions that encourage students' mastery of the general education curriculum, (b) assist students in identifying their strengths and weaknesses, (c) assist students in becoming independent learners, and (d) unite the expertise of general and special educators to promote student success (Jenkins, in press).

Most CMCs serve students who are eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA, 2004). The general education teacher provides the initial instruction in all content areas. Students are given assignments from the general educator and a "pass" to attend the CMC only when assistance is needed, rather than students attending the CMC for a scheduled daily period. The CMC teachers provide the curricular accommodations, adaptations, and supports appropriate for each student.

In order to meet the goals of the CMC, students must access the CMC as often as assistance is needed. Therefore, it is important to keep accurate records of how many students come to the CMC, how often, and for what subjects. On a regular basis, student access of the CMC per subject can be reviewed and compared to academic performance.

A Study of Content Mastery Centers in Two Schools

This case study included 14 students with mild disabilities and five general educators in an elementary school, and 28 students with mild disabilities and 7 general educators in a middle school. The study gathered data on (a) instructional services provided in the CMC, (b) student academic performance, and (c) satisfaction of students and teachers toward the CMC (Dimino et al., 2008).

Instructional Services Provided to Students

The Student Sign-In Sheet documented student attendance in the CMC. In the elementary school, students attended most often for assistance in reading and mathematics. In the middle school, students attended more often for assistance in science and social studies than in basic skills reading and math.

A Modification Check-Sheet was used to document the instructional services provided in the CMCs. Elementary school data revealed that teacher-directed instruction was used with students an average of 48% of the time. Other instructional strategies, materials, and accommodations were used approximately 52% of time, most frequently the use of dry erase boards, study sheets, adjusted time, and the reading of directions. Middle school data found direct instruction was used an average of 15% of the time, and other strategies and techniques 85% of the time. Specific strategies, materials, and accommodations used most often were the reading of directions, the use of a study sheet, the use of highlighted texts, and the use of computers (Dimino et al., 2008).

Student Academic Performance

General education grades were gathered for five of 14 elementary students with disabilities receiving services in the CMC. Of those general education grades, 12.5% were Meets with Excellence (ME), 75% were Meets Proficiency (MP), and 12.5% were Approaches Proficiency (N), indicating overall satisfactory performance. No students received grades of Well Below Proficiency (U) in any subject. In the middle school, grades were gathered for 20 of 28 students with disabilities receiving support services in the CMC. Grades of A, B, and C, deemed to be satisfactory, accounted for 62% of student grades (Dimino et al., 2008).

Attitudes

Results of surveys of teachers and students found that the CMC was beneficial to teachers and students. The interviews with students and teachers supported the survey results. The interviews also revealed, however, that even though teachers were satisfied with the CMC model, they had insufficient time to collaborate appropriately ((Dimino et al., 2008).

Discussion

The investigation of instructional services revealed an array of instructional supports in use; however, the literature reveals an arsenal of instructional strategies which were not in use. Examples include the use of assistive technology and visual aids (Edyburn, 2005) and use of mnemonics (Brigham & Brigham, 2001; Fulk, Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1992). Efforts are needed to identify and use additional teacher-centered and student-centered strategies.

The students' grades indicated that over half the students sampled who were receiving support services from the CMCs were able to earn low average to above average grades. Attendance data revealed that students who attended the CMC continually and regularly were able to receive average to above average grades.

The data from both schools indicated that teachers and students felt the CMC was beneficial to and contributed to student success in the general education classroom. The results of the surveys found the majority of students in both schools were satisfied with the program.

Conclusion

This case study of CMCs in two schools gathered data through multiple sources. The information provided is a part of the larger study conducted in the two schools. The results are limited in generalizability as information is unique to those cases. However, these two schools determined that the content mastery center model is one viable option for providing students with the special services they need without depriving them of the general education experience.

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PROMOTING SELF-AWARENESS AND GOAL-SETTING SKILLS IN STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

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Chris Schnieders
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Given the increasing number of students with learning problems, it is not surprising that researchers and educators focus on finding effective ways to help students become successful, not only in academic and social domains, but at the same time, equip them with helpful and useful tools to succeed outside the school and later in life.

The present study is based on a 20-year longitudinal research conducted at the Frostig Center that investigated the differences between a group of successful and unsuccessful individuals with learning disabilities (Goldberg et al., 2003; Raskind et al., 1999). The researchers identified six attributes to account for and predict adult success of former Frostig students. These six Success Attributes were comprised of self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, goal-setting, support systems, and emotional coping strategies.

The study is built within the Success Attribute (SA) framework. The purpose of the study was to further investigate the extent to which the success attributes of self-awareness and goal-setting skills could be improved and taught to students with learning disabilities. It was hypothesized that systematically and explicitly teaching students with LD planning strategies would result in enhancing these skills and would promote solving real life problems more efficiently, as well as increase their self-awareness skills. The study also tested the development of a Success Attributes curriculum.

Method

Seventy-three students from elementary, middle and high school level participated in the study. All students came from a non-profit school in Southern California, a K-12 private school that serves students with learning disabilities. Out of 10 intact classes, five classes (39 participating students) were randomly assigned to a treatment group and 5 classes (34 participating students) were included in the control group. There were slightly more boys than girls in the study (29 girls and 44 boys). Both groups were not significantly different in terms of their chronological age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. 42% of the students were privately enrolled and 58% were publicly-funded.

The treatment classes received an intense 10-week intervention to reinforce their self-awareness and goal setting skills. Each Success Attribute was broken down into smaller aspects and each facet was directly explained, with the examples provided and then discussed. The students in the control group received a more traditional social skills training. The amount of time devoted to social skills training for the control group was equal to that of experimental group. The same person provided the social skills training for both groups.

The training took place four times a week for about 20 to 30 minutes each session. The students were engaged in classroom discussions and completed lessons with activities centered on self-awareness, planning, and problem solving. To ensure consistency in treatment implementation, a treatment integrity checklist evaluating the efficiency of the lesson was employed. Treatment fidelity was 78% and it was calculated by correlating teachers' scores from two independent observers. All students were pre and post-tested on measures of self-awareness and problem solving.

Results

The results from the posttest revealed no statistically significant differences between the two groups on any measures related to self-awareness. However, the groups differed on tasks requiring problem-solving ability. The difference between the groups on goal setting was examined in more detail by fitting the data into a multilevel model. The data were analyzed at two levels, level 1, within-group differences, represented students nested within classes, and level 2, between-group differences, included classes (or teachers). The results of HLM analyses revealed that the significant effect emerged for the treatment in favor of the experimental group and remained significant even after controlling for the pretest, age, and teacher variables.

Qualitative analysis of the study, based on classroom observations, analysis of students' work and their answers during discussions, as well as teachers' commentaries support this finding. Although students' academic achievement was not a focus of the present study, nonetheless, it was interesting to examine the relation between the pre-posttest scores on goal setting and students' academic achievement. Weak but significant correlations between post-test on goal-setting and achievement scores emerged for the treatment group. It is suggested that goal-setting skills might be predictive of students' academic achievement, which, in turn, implies clear benefits of teaching, planning, and problem-solving skills to positively influence students' academic progress.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether students with LD would advance their goal-setting skills and become more self-aware in constructing realistic evaluations of their own abilities and potential. The results support positive effect of the intervention, as they suggest that interventions on improving planning, goal-setting, and problem-solving skills in students with LD can be highly effective. In a relatively brief period of time, the students were able to increase their ability to set goals and plan. It is important that these skills can be strengthened through structured explicit instruction in the classroom, and it has a direct implication for the educational practice, as well as to parenting. At the same time, the results show that for students experiencing learning difficulties, training programs at a slower rate but for a longer intervention period may be more effective.

This study was an initial attempt to develop and implement an empirically-validated training program to teach self-awareness and general goal-setting to students with learning problems. We believe that to influence and impact LD children's perceptions of themselves would require a

longer period of intervention designed to help experience connectedness between overall realistic self-awareness, decision making, and future success in life.

The results from the study are important for both theoretical and practical considerations. They can help in devising more effective intervention programs, as they teach students with academic problems to use their strengths and build their confidence in succeeding in the areas of their interests. The study also offers helpful research-based lesson plans and activities.

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ACTION RESEARCH IN CLASSROOMS SERVING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Wilfred D. Wienke
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Action research projects are required of all graduate students seeking endorsement and a master's degree at the University of Central Florida. The action research is conducted in classrooms serving students with autism spectrum disorders. Most frequently, the classroom is the one where the student is employed. The action research project has been very useful in getting beginning special educators to take data on the implementation of instruction in a very targeted fashion. It is a model of professional development where teachers investigate student learning related to the instruction that they are implementing. Action research is compared to looking into a mirror at one's self-taking action (Schmuck, 1997). It is a planned, deliberate inquiry for truth or knowledge, which Jeffrey Glanz (2003) describes as disciplined inquiry. Within the program students are instructed in the techniques of conducting action research and are hopefully socialized into practicing it as a continuous reflective process to guide and inform their instructional decision-making. The hope is that implementation of the process will assist in bringing about optimal integrity and accountability to the instructional or behavioral service being implemented by the special educator. It should also increase the efficiency of the problem solving process (Little & Rawlinson, 2002).

Abbreviated data are presented as gleaned from sample research action projects. Of interest is the variety of targets of the investigations as well as the approaches to the inquiry. Teachers' reflections on the value of the research data and its catalyst in guiding the direction, character and modification of their continued instructional programs with students diagnosed with ASD. Data reflecting the impact of the systemized inquiry with regard to student academic achievement or behavior change are described. Analysis of all project data are shared briefly using a problem followed by result of the intervention format.

Problem and Results

- Problem Case One: Would using Incidental Teaching increase the number of verbalizations and total time engaged in verbal communication of a 4 year old male with ASD?
Result: After 10 sessions, Subject Increased verbalizations 100% and increased time engaged by 33%.
- Problem Case Two: Would the use of fidgets decrease off-task behavior of 8 year old female and 7 year old male students with ASD during group activities?
Result: Off-task behavior of students decreased from an average of 6.6 intervals to 2.2 intervals and 2.2 intervals to .5 intervals, respectively.
- Problem Case Three: Would the use of video-modeling decrease the incidences of inappropriate utterances of a 20 year old male with ASD?

Result: Inappropriate utterances decreased from 19 to 0 in a 30 minute interval.

- Problem Case Four: Would the use of a social story combined with tangible reinforcers decrease group disruptive behavior in Kindergarteners?
Result: Incidences decreased with use of intervention; verbal outbursts 13.25 to 1.65; running 5.75 to 1.75; inappropriate touching 10.50 to 1.00; out of seat/line 19.75 to 2.63.
- Problem Case Five: Would the use of a structured routine decrease the tantrum behavior of a 10-year-old male with ASD when being dropped off for school in the morning?
Result: Tantrum time fell from an average of 8 minutes per day to 1 minute per day with the implementation of a morning routine.

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STUDENTS “ACTING OUT”: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHERS

Carolyn E. Stephens

In an educational setting, “acting out” behavior occurs when a student attempts to accomplish goals using inappropriate behaviors, rather than appropriate means of communicating (Durand & Carr, 1991). Acting out occurs when a student tears a test page in half instead of telling the teacher he is not able to pass the test. Acting out occurs when a student ignores the teacher’s demands to attend to instruction because his peers expect him to disrupt the class and challenge the teacher’s authority. Acting out behavior occurs when a student waits for the teacher to tell her each step of a routine assignment that the student actually can accomplish without assistance. Teachers describe such student behaviors as evidence of students’ refusal to work, defiance of authority, or learned helplessness. Teachers are frustrated by such student behaviors that can disrupt academic engagement of all members of a classroom. Diverse student populations increase the risk for acting out behaviors in classrooms when students from cultures other than the dominant school culture or students with disabilities are unable to recognize or communicate their needs in appropriate and productive ways. When other means of classroom and school-wide prevention strategies fail, teachers must individualize assessment of the environmental factors that immediately precede and follow a student’s repetitive problem behaviors ((Lane et al., 2007; Newcomer & Lewis, 2004).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) requires teachers in the United States to complete functional behavior assessments (FBA) in order to develop behavior intervention plans (BIP) for students with chronic problem behaviors. Teachers sometimes develop elaborate intervention systems of rewards and punishment, but fail to address the cause of the acting out behavior. Research evidence shows that functional approaches to intervention are effective when teachers discard their preconceived ideas about the function of a student’s behavior, accurately identify the student’s response to the antecedent stimuli, recognize the reinforcing consequences that maintain the problem behavior, and implement proactive strategies involving modification of instruction and reinforcement (Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005). The process begins by teachers recording the observed stimuli that occur immediately preceding the student’s acting out behavior (A-Antecedents), the student’s response behavior (B-Behaviors), and the environmental changes that immediately follow the student’s acting out behavior (C-Consequences). When teachers accurately interpret the communication described in such antecedent, behavior, and consequent (ABC) observation data, they can meet the student’s needs and give them alternative, appropriate means for communicating their needs in the future.

A six-step process describes an effective and efficient way for teachers to analyze the communicative function of a student’s repetitive problem behaviors and to address the problems they reveal, not just the symptoms they produce:

1. Gather information using ABC observation recording.

Directly observe and objectively record the antecedent stimuli (A), response behaviors (B), and consequent stimuli (C) that occur in sequences of acting out events. Collect this information repeatedly and without immediate interpretation of cause and effect relationships among the 3-

term (ABC) contingency sequences. Collect other sources of information such as interviews, checklists, and teacher reports related to observed behaviors.

2. Understand the principles of behavior change.

Student behaviors are learned. Behaviors that are reinforced continue to occur and/or are more intense in the future. Behaviors that are not reinforced occur less frequently and/or are less intense in the future.

3. Interpret the function of a student's behavior.

A student perceives antecedent stimuli as an opportunity or a risk, depending on his/her history and abilities. The student responds to antecedent stimuli with inappropriate behaviors based on the value he/she places on the specific antecedent and the student's expectation of reinforcement or punishment based on previous experiences when responding to the antecedent. Compare conclusions with other sources of information available.

4. Arrange the environment to provide the student with positive behavior supports.

Teachers brainstorm and prioritize implementation of research-based strategies that are likely to alter a student's attitudes and responses to antecedent stimuli. Reinforcement is increased following appropriate student behaviors and previously reinforcing consequences for inappropriate behavior responses are extinguished.

5. Teach the student efficient and effective ways to access reinforcement in the student's natural environment.

Teachers eliminate the need for the student to act out communication of needs by providing the student with appropriate means for accomplishing his/her goals that are within the student's functional ability. Repeated success across environments builds the student's expectations for success when similar antecedent stimuli occur in the future.

6. Respond consistently to minor behavior problems based on community (classroom) rules and begin the evaluation process with Step 1 if repetitive acting out behaviors occur.

Teachers implement research-based instructional and intervention strategies, apply modifications before students fail repeatedly, design community rules with input from all class members, apply community rules consistently, and address repetitive acting out behaviors before the student relies on them as routines for communication.

This six-step process provides an efficient and relatively uncomplicated way to establish and maintain effective teaching environments (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). Through use of observation recordings and application of behavioral principles related to antecedent and consequent events, teachers can identify the function of repetitive acting out behavior, alter the

environment to meet student needs, and return the students' and the teacher's attention to accomplishing educational goals.

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PREPARING DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR THE PROFESSORATE IN A TIME OF URGENCY

Wendy Wall-Marencik
Ben Edmonds
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Greater demands in the field of special education and increasing shortages of qualified doctoral personnel has elevated pressure to consider *quality* as a critical aspect within training programs (Smith, Pion, Tyler, & Gilmore, 2003). Responding to a shortage of qualified special education doctoral personnel, this manuscript describes a four year investigation exploring the progression

of experiences from novice graduate students to professionals in higher education. Participants in the study received graduate preparation from a large American university employing a social-cultural theoretical framework. This study serves to *identify* characteristics and productive participation experiences of students in this program to inform and encourage *quality* training practices for doctoral programs in special education.

Method

This investigation collected qualitative and quantitative data and analyzed documents, using triangulation to ensure reliability. Data were collected in three phases over a four year period. In the first and second phases, primary data were gathered via semi-structured interviews from participants (N=20), with four of the participants interviewed as pre- and post-graduates. Researchers used qualitative software (QSR N6, 2002) to evaluate verbatim transcriptions of sessions they facilitated. Documents were initially coded into themes that aligned with Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning framework. During the coding three additional themes emerged. In the third phase of the study, quantitative data were compared to demographic information of the doctoral students in this program and graduates of other special education programs that advanced to the tenure-line track (Pion, Smith & Tyler, 2002). In addition, a comparison of PhD completion and attrition rates from a national database (King, 2008) was also undertaken. In the final phase, secondary data sources, such as portfolio descriptions, curricula, and the doctoral program handbook were reviewed to examine student competencies in higher education activities as well as evidence of socio-theoretical practices.

Results

The results of this study present a cross-validation among data sources, data collection strategies, time periods, and socio-cultural schemes in the examination of students' personal perspectives of their experiences and competencies while in the program. Findings suggest gradual and progressive development of characteristics and skills from a peripheral to more central position in preparation for the professorate with a high percentage of students from the program entering the professorate in special education. Students identified specific participatory activities that helped them progress through the program. Emerging themes identify specific motivations for obtaining a doctorate in special education and the significance of socialization with peers and mentors. Several weaknesses with orientation into this program emerged. Secondary data sources provided further evidence of a progressive structure supporting the evolution of student characteristics and skills aligning with professorate expectations.

Discussion

As populations of students with disabilities increase and funding supports decrease, there is a need for higher education to rethink approaches to recruitment, quality of training, and retention (Hardman & West, 2003). While these approaches appear important for increasing candidates in the field, a focus on *quality* of training remains crucial in producing a highly qualified workforce committed to staying in the field, employing research effectively, and reform initiatives that ensure quality education for children and youth with disabilities.

The reflections of the doctoral students in our study elucidate support for the use of a socio-cultural framework offering specific participatory experiences to promote quality achievement into professorate positions. Future research should be longitudinal and assess factors involved with sustainability in higher education, along with demographic factors of candidates, recruitment practices, social support and motivations in seeking a Ph.D.

Limitations of this study include threats to internal validity given the researchers' role as doctoral students in the program. However, dutiful efforts by the researchers to member check, employ external audits and debrief peers have minimized these threats. This study offers a model for other doctoral training programs and reinforces an urgent need to examine current training practices in higher education, not only to address critical shortages but to support quality professors for the enterprise of special education.

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HOW WRITING GUARANTEES THAT COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES ACHIEVE HIGHER LEVEL REASONING

Dorothy A. Stracher

Although current emphasis suggests that college students with learning disabilities can achieve to higher level reasoning through their writings, little concrete information has been disseminated as to the “how to.”

Dowling College and its Program for Potentially Gifted College Students (limited to youngsters who have been classified as having learning disabilities), in existence for over twenty years, emphasizes the use of writing to expand cognitive functioning (Stracher, 2005). It achieves this goal by assessing and evaluating each undergraduate’s progress on a formative and summative basis each semester; trained graduate Education students act as individual literacy tutors. In this manner, the Program develops a series of criteria; in a four to six year undergraduate experience, these coeds become competent, adult writers; their abstract reasoning powers translate mundane expository writing into lucid, precise, organized non-fiction jottings.

Method

First, researchers need to cull the information that defines those aspects that constitute competent adult writers. The one overriding achievement of a successful writer is that s/he is a successful reader. However, research studies identify the inability of most students with learning disabilities to master the phoneme-grapheme of English; better than 85% of students with learning disabilities have language deficits. Because they are not fluent with words, most of their teachers offer them texts commensurate with their decoding proficiency. Simple language and simple words breed low vocabulary scores which produce low IQ scores.

If we choose to understand what attributes encourage impressive vocabulary scores, we learn that s/he who reads “well,” both in quality and depth of story, manifests vocabulary ability years above his/her chronological age. Thus, our students with learning disabilities who are, by definition, as potentially bright or brighter than the so-called average youngster represent the “bottom of the barrel” in terms of their vocabulary knowledge. Because their decoding scores are poor, they are placed in “Mickey Mouse” books with minimal vocabulary that translate into simple semantics and syntax load. A goodly minority of students with learning disabilities also present with expressive language deficits. One of the undergraduates, upon entering the Program, scored a 70 on the Wechsler Individual Scaled Score and a low of 5 on the Vocabulary sub-test. However, when the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, that eliminates expressive language load, was administered, the same coed scored the equivalent of a 140 IQ. Thus, for this student, the academic strategy to be highlighted was that of paraphrasing. In other words, this student “knew” the information, she just couldn’t pull it out of short term memory; when she

had to “overlearn” (Gardner, 1973) all these ideas and to rephrase them she greatly enlarged her vocabulary.

Further, research informs us that vocabulary in all its denotative and connotative stages is best learned through deep, significant readings – and among our learning disabled college population are many students who are hampered by their less than automatic reading fluency. In the present society, technological aids can more than compensate for the decoding deficits; neither decoding proficiency nor spelling ability is an example of cognitive abilities. Books on tape are critical for this population. Almost all the students have their texts taped by the Guild for the Blind and Dyslexic.; they “read” their books while they listen and, in time, they identify the words as a whole, rather like reading Chinese. All unknown words are written on cards and are used to memorize so that their extensive vocabularies are evident within two years of becoming members of the Program. Some computers can “read” for the students so that the college coed may hear and see the words at the same time. In this manner, the students now have precise language to express their thoughts and paraphrasing to determine that they have “overlearned” their materials.

Perhaps the most critical of all the writing aspects linked to reasoning is syntax. The Piagetian stages of cognitive development (1966) are well within our levels of ability. We can achieve the highest reasoning stage if we can view the different in the similar (analysis) and the same in the different (synthesis) (Henry, 1974) even though Kohlberg notes (1978) that only approximately thirty percent of our population ever reach the highest Piagetian stages of cognitive development – primarily because of “dyspedagogia”.

The Program provides academic strategies to compensate for the deficits that occur in the learning of phoneme-grapheme and semantics. If we have compensated for two of the three cue systems, is that adequate? No; we must also address syntax. Once, we looked at sentences as if they were simply grammatical games; if the student could remember the accurate forms then s/he had achieved what we expected. But as O’Hare (1975) stressed, studying the developmental aspects of writing from kindergarten through to professional careers delineate the syntactic levels that we have “overlearned.” From the simple sentences to the “embedding” of complex sentences, the student’s reasoning level is being exposed. The most advanced writers are the authors of articles in *The New Yorker* who can use language succinctly and cohesively, with a minimum of words. If you cannot write it, you cannot think it,” said Mitchell (1981) in *Less Than Words Can Say*. Students who read texts that are more difficult and are required to “do” the Henry analysis and synthesis are really performing a kind of “Janusian” thinking (Rothenberg, 1976). They are the ones who can then translate the overlearning of that syntax into their writing

Thus, once the college students with learning disabilities are capable of reading “broader and deeper,” the college helps them to develop writing at the highest level also. At that point, the Writing Process (Graves, 1983) is mandated for all students. Gradually, as they learn to write and rewrite to better codify and clarify their ideas, they begin to recognize that a writer is never really ever “done;” a deadline determines when the work is handed in. And thus, the students identify their own reasoning stages by examining their previous writings over a several year

period. In time, Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* (1979), become the student writers' bible.

Results

The Program in its over two decade history has developed multiple testing processes to determine that it is really producing graduates whose writing prowess is measurable in terms of the highest reasoning level.

Students who enter the Program were usually B- or C students in their high schools. The Program's premise is that they are potentially gifted and, if provided with the appropriate academic strategies, they will achieve to their potential. Our graduates, in the intervening years, have indicated, by their professional choices and acceptances, that they have indeed arrived at the fourth Piagetian stage and are now part of that top thirty percent in the world who are capable of abstract reasoning ability. These are the processes utilized to determine that the goal is achieved; students are tested every year in syntax, spelling, reading and listening comprehension, cloze and word recognition. The testing continues until the youngsters have topped each of the tests. Most of our students "ace" the tests within the first two or three years of college. Further, students' grades are monitored in each of their classes. Almost half of the students in the Program achieve to the honors level by the time of their graduation. Students' writing is assessed and evaluated semester by semester. Copies of their papers are attached to their permanent records. At least, one third of the students in the Program move on to graduate school. We write letters to the various testing agencies to determine that students receive the accommodations to which they are entitled.

Further, one tutoring session per semester is videotaped. Each of the potentially gifted college students has an individual tutor who is, himself or herself, a teacher who has returned to college to achieve a masters degree and who, in working towards this goal, becomes the individual tutor for this one undergraduate college student with learning disabilities. A final report is offered every semester and the videotapes are monitored to observe the cognitive growth of each of our students with learning disabilities each semester.

And, lastly, the program observes the professional positions that the potentially gifted college students achieve. Only one of our over two hundred graduates has seen the need to inform his employer that he required accommodations in the workplace; all the other graduates have over learned academic strategies that allow them to achieve without requiring specific help from their employers. And what are the fields in which our graduate students with learning disabilities are located? One of them completed law school on a scholarship and became an assistant district attorney; another became a bank vice president, another develops prosthesis, several are in sport management, many are in the teaching field, in social work, in business and in accounting, another is a state police officer. From any of the various tests employed, the Program has provided its students with the ability to utilize higher level reasoning and to write at the highest Piagetian stage.

Discussion

Several limitations must be considered about this study. First, use of a larger sample that included students with learning disabilities in college who were not part of a special program should have been included. Did the Dowling students in the Program for Potentially Gifted College Students with Learning Disabilities achieve because of the intercession of the Program or simply because of the years that allowed for maturity. Had there been a control group, this question might have been answered.

Further, the question of the achievements of the students in the program for potentially gifted college students needs another couple of decades to really answer the question. Will these students, once their graduation from college is several decades removed achieve to the highest Piagetian Stage that is really expected of them? Will they become the “movers and shakers” of their generation? Then we can say with conviction that the Program has, indeed, accomplished, that which was expected of it.

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DEVELOPING SCHOOLS THAT ARE BOTH INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE

Nancy L. Waldron
James McLeskey

Over the last 40 years, one of the most controversial issues facing educators in the U.S. has been the extent to which students with disabilities should be mainstreamed or included in general education classrooms (McLeskey, 2007). In spite of this controversy, the mainstreaming and inclusion movements have resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of students with disabilities who have access to an education for all or part of the school day in a general education classroom. For example, while very few students with disabilities were educated in these settings when the mainstreaming movement began in the late 1960s, by the 2007-08 school year, approximately 57% of all students with disabilities spent most of the school day in a general education classroom, while about 80% were educated for at least some of the school day (40% or more) with general education peers (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).

Criticisms of Inclusion

While data reveal that most students with disabilities have gained access to general education, the inclusion movement has been criticized regarding the lack of improved student outcomes, poorly designed programs with little planning or teacher input, and continuing emphasis on where students are educated rather than on student outcomes (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994; McLeskey, 2007). These criticisms have taken on added importance with the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which mandated that all schools be held accountable for improved educational outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities. Prior to the passage of this act, states, districts and local schools routinely excluded students with disabilities from accountability systems, as accountability was determined by the IEP and outcomes were the sole responsibility of the special education teacher. These changes related to accountability and student achievement have dramatically increased the importance of improving outcomes for students with disabilities for both general and special educators, and have served as an added impetus for these educators to collaborate to improve student outcomes.

Finding a Pragmatic Middle Ground

Although the NCLB Act did not directly address inclusion, this law includes accountability mandates for improved student outcomes that have significant implications for educational

practices for students with disabilities. Since the passage of this law, our experiences working with local schools have revealed that many professionals have begun to search in earnest for a pragmatic middle ground (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994) that strikes a balance between inclusion and improved student outcomes. In short, schools must be both effective and inclusive, as school improvement efforts focus on improving core instruction in general education classrooms, including students with disabilities for much of the school day in these settings, and offering highly effective instructional alternatives.

The development of effective, inclusive programs is, of course, no simple matter (Waldron & McLeskey, 1998). These changes cannot consist of special education programs that are added on to general education. Rather, the development of effective, inclusive schools requires that general and special educators work collaboratively on school-wide change efforts that address improving outcomes for all students (McLeskey & Waldron, 2000, 2006). These efforts are long term, taking up to three years to change an elementary school, six years for a secondary school, and eight years or more for a school district.

To achieve these significant changes, whole school improvement efforts are required, as schools are changed to better meet the needs of all students. This results in significant changes in both the core instruction that is provided in general education classes, as well as in specialized instruction that is provided by special educators. These changes are deep and multidimensional, resulting in the use of new or revised materials, different teaching approaches, different roles and responsibilities for teachers, changed organizational structures for delivering instruction, and the alteration of teacher beliefs about their work. (For more detailed information regarding these changes, see Fullan, 2007; McLeskey & Waldron, 2000, 2006).

If these changes are to be successfully addressed, it is critical that educators reach consensus regarding the nature of changes that are needed. For example, some professionals view special education as basically sound, and in need to small, incremental changes in practice addressing areas such as improving measures to monitor student progress or documenting the effectiveness of practices (Andrews, et al., 2000). Others have taken the position that change that is more substantial is needed, suggesting that general, and special education need to be reconceptualized, including the context in which instruction is delivered (Andrews, et al., 2000). Our perspective is that we need to do both of these things if we are to provide effective, inclusive programs for students with disabilities. Indeed, the only alternative for improving practice is documenting effective practices, and engaging in school change efforts to ensure that these practices are used in classrooms.

Conclusion

Criticisms of inclusive programs and mandates related to accountability and improved student outcomes in the NCLB Act have led educators to seek a pragmatic middle ground in developing programs for students with disabilities that are both effective and inclusive. These schools provide both a setting in which students with disabilities are fully participating members of a local school community, as well as places where students are provided the effective instruction they need, irrespective of location, that ensures improved achievement outcomes. Developing

these programs requires whole school reform that significantly changes practices in both general and special education and improves the quality of services for all students.

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THE EFFECTS OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ON THE BEHAVIORS OF THE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Bulbin Sucuoğlu

In Turkey, despite the fact that inclusive settings have been getting more and more attention as the favorable educational placements for the children with disabilities, there have been many problems regarding to the management of heterogeneous classrooms effectively. Many elementary classroom teachers specifically complain about inappropriate behaviors of the students with disabilities and they attribute these behaviors mostly to the children's special needs, characteristics or personalities (Kargin, Acarlar, & Sucuoğlu, 2005). They look as if they are not being able to recognize the relationship between the behaviors of the children and teacher or the organization of the classrooms. However, using effective proactive classroom management strategies reduce the problem behaviors, but they also increase academic involvement of all students (Murdick & Petch-Hogan, 1996; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers & Sugai, 2008; Witt, VanDerHyde & Gilbertson, 2004). For example, determining and posting the rules and procedures and also giving praises for the expected behaviors increase task involvement, decrease problem behaviors (Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Sutherland, Lewis-Palmer, Stichter & Morgan, 2008). In addition to these, instructional procedures such as difficulty of tasks and pace of instruction affect the problem behaviors of the students with disabilities (Kounin, 1971; Munk & Repp, 1994) and restructuring instruction and curriculum can increase academic achievement and decrease problem behaviors (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Alberto & Troutman, 2006). This study was designed to determine whether classroom management of the regular classroom teachers would affect the academic and non-academic behaviors of the students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms.

Method

The data of this study were collected from elementary school classrooms, from grades 1 to 5, in which students with disabilities to have been placed. Classroom management of 44 elementary classroom teachers was assessed by using *Proactive Classroom Management Observation Form* (PCMOF). Teaching experiences of the teachers were varied from 1-30 years and 54.5% of them were the novice teachers with experience less than 5 years whereas 18.2% of the teachers had more than 20 years teaching experiences. The children with special needs whose academic, task management and inappropriate behaviors were assessed were diagnosed as having mild mental retardation, language and speech disorder and mild learning disability. One child with special needs from each classroom was randomly determined as the target child. Mainstreamed children with severe disabilities were not included in the study because very few children with severe disabilities were accepted in the regular classrooms in Turkey.

The classroom management of the teachers were assessed by using *Proactive Classroom Management Observation Form* developed by Sucuoğlu, Ünsal & Özokçu (2008). In terms of classroom rules, procedures and organizations, starting instruction, instructional materials, individualizing the instruction, group alerting, the usage of cues and prompts, the reinforcement of the appropriate behaviors, the provision of learning opportunities to the students with disabilities, transitions and problem behaviors. Three graduate students from Special Education

Department were trained as observers during 20-hours training. Having met the expected criteria for agreement, the observers were requested to watch the videos of the 44 classrooms and collect data of the proactive classroom management of the teachers. The classroom observations were conducted during one academic session such as reading, writing, Turkish, math or life sciences. The maximum score to be gained from the PCMOF is 88 and the increasing of the scores shows that classroom management of the teachers are getting better.

The behaviors of the children with disabilities were assessed by using the Turkish version of Code for Instructional Structure and Student Academic Response-Mainstreaming Version (MS-CISSAR-T) which is a computerized observation tool of eco-behavioral assessment systems (Carta, Greenwood, Schulte, Arreaga-Mayer, & Terry, 1988). This instrument is used for observing children with special needs placed in regular classrooms and student behaviors are recoded, analyzed and also interpreted in the context of teacher's behavior and ecological variables. The percentages of inter-observer agreement for three observers were varied between 75%-90%. All data were collected by using momentary time sampling with specialized computer software through IBM/PC compatible laptop computer for each student with special needs.

Results

The behaviors of the children with special needs: Most exhibited student behaviors are *no academic response* (70.10%), *no task management* (50.88%) and *no problem / inappropriate behaviors* (62.45%). Writing included in the academic behaviors was observed in 11.18% of the intervals whereas using materials and attention included in task behaviors were observed at 10.49% and 30.29% of the intervals respectively. On the other hand, *looking around* included in the competing behaviors was exhibited 20.10% of the intervals and *self-stimulation* was observed at the 10.49% of the intervals during instruction. The most observed inappropriate behavior of the students with disabilities was the *no competing behaviors* (62.45%) during one academic session.

Classroom management of the teachers: Despite the fact that the range of the score to be gained from PCMOF is between 0-88, the results showed that the range of the mean scores of the study groups is 22-61, the mean of the total score of the group is 38.27, and standard deviation is 9.50. In addition, it was found that the classroom management of the teachers was not affected by any of the variables such as educational background, teaching experience and also grades they taught.

Effects of classroom management on the student behaviors: The 44 teachers were arranged into 3 groups based on their PCMOF scores. The first group included the teachers who scored between from 21 to 30 (lowest group), while the range of the second and third group's scores were 31-41 and 43-59 (highest group) respectively. The academic, task and competing behaviors of the students with disabilities put in highest, medium and lowest classroom management group were compared by using Kruskal Wallis Test due to the results of the normality test. The results indicated the fact that there were no significant differences between academic behaviors of the students with disabilities whose teachers' classroom management level was different, whereas task behaviors and the problem behaviors of the groups were found to be significantly different.

The students from the medium-level classroom management group seemed to have exhibited more problem behaviors than the lowest and highest group students while their task behaviors were less than the other two groups.

Discussion

This study showed that the children with disabilities spend most of the learning time exhibiting *no inappropriate behaviors* contrary to the teachers' claims. They sat in the classroom almost without doing anything in terms of *academic and task behavior*. On the other hand, classroom management didn't seem to be an effective variable of the academic behaviors of the students but effective on problem and task behaviors. However, these results should be interpreted with the classroom conditions created by the teachers who had almost no support to deal with the problems in managing heterogeneous classrooms.

This study has had some limitations. Firstly, the data regarding the student behaviors were collected by using the time sampling method; consequently some of the behaviors of the students might have been lost. Secondly, the duration of observation sessions was only 25 minutes because most of the teachers did not want to be observed more than this time limit. Lastly, although it was suggested that the data should be collected live in the classrooms during instruction (Dawson, 2007), in this study, observations were unfortunately done through videos taken by graduate students, and the data might have been affected by this. In spite of the limitations, it is believed that this study gave a lot of information about what was going on inside of the inclusive classrooms and focused on the problems of the teachers in terms of classroom management of heterogeneous classrooms. Future studies should address these limitations by collecting more data for both the teacher behaviors and the student behaviors in classrooms.

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CAN TEACHERS IMPROVE STUDENT'S EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Sonia López Díaz-Villabella

While emotional intelligence concept is every time more important in a present society, a little information exists regarding programs results about this subject in elementary school. This proposal examines if employing a specific program, elementary school teachers can improve the development of students' emotional intelligence.

This study sought to know the students' levels of emotional competence at elementary school with the aim of designing a program to answer to the emotional education needs of the group. Subsequently, we analysed and assessed the impact of the program in the students' initial level of competence and the degree of satisfaction of participants with the same.

Method

The centre where this program was conducted is situated in an urban environment in a central area neighbourhood of the city of Alicante. There is in this centre a working group called "Education emotional-social and values for the coexistence 'E.E.S.V.C.'". Teachers taking part in this study were selected on the basis of their voluntariness. The experimental group that implemented the programme was formed with the faculty's voluntary group "E.E.S.V.C." A same number of teachers not belonging to the working group was randomly selected from among the rest of the staff, ensuring the representation of each stage at the elementary level. These formed the control group. The participant students were children enrolled in the courses conducted by the selected teachers,. There were 135 students.

The participant teachers completed the students' emotional competence scale (Higtower, 1986), which consists of the following areas: Shyness-Anxiety, Tolerance to Frustration, Sociability, Motivation Academic, Monitoring of Standards, Behaviour Disturbing. An adaptation of the scale was completed by the students, as well as a partner.

Information about the students' competitive level emotional was obtained from this assessment that led to the design of the program taking on the basis of shortcomings. Through a playful active and participatory methodology the group's teacher was responsible for providing weekly meetings of the program within its timetable to mentoring activities. The program lasted approximately 20 weeks.

Once the program was implemented, there was a final assessment to check if there had been modifications in the students' emotional competence through the instruments initially used for that purpose. It also assessed the degree of satisfaction of participants through a series of questions proposed to both teachers and student, so the methodological approach used was of a quantitative and qualitative nature.

Results

In relation to the goal of "Knowing the program's impact on the level of students' emotional competence", within the three assessment approaches made (teacher, student and partner), the most important statistically significant differences were found in the evaluation performed on the student himself. However, significant differences were found in the following items: (a) Evaluation by the teacher: Item 34 "Negative in contrast", $p < .03$, item 28 "Difficulties still to be sat", $p < .04$, and item 27 "Disruption in the classroom", $p < .05$.; (b) Evaluation by the student: Item 25 "Effective adaptation to school rules", $p < .001$, item 29 "Disturb the others while they're working", $p < .001$, and item 32 "Defiant attitude", $p < .001$; (c) Evaluation by a partner: Item 25 "Adapting to effective school rules", $p < .001$, item 32 "Defiant attitude", $p < .001$ and item 29 "Disturb the others while they're working", $p < .001$. In relation to the goal of "Assesing the degree of participant satisfaction with the program" the scale results administered to the staff were the item that had a higher score was item 8 "Meeting that the program we had developed contributes to the formation of students as individual" (100% answered Many). By

contrast, the item that received the lowest score was item 4 “The other teachers were also involved to a significant degree” (66% replied In part).

These teachers also were given a questionnaire with open questions about their satisfaction with the program. Among the responses received include: “All the participant teachers indicated that they would recommend this program to other schools.” “Students’ emotional competence has mainly been increased in the following ways: Reflection on oneself, communication, expression of feelings and empathy. The aspects of the program that teachers liked best related to the development of the emotional skills. Moreover, “What teachers liked best was related to the lack of time to develop materials and work with some of them”.

The results of the questionnaire with open questions provided to students showed major answers in: (a) 80% of students would recommend this program to the other partners who have not done it.; (b) 60% think that the relationship with partners has improved after the program; and (c) 58% state that they know how to recognize and express their emotions better than before doing the program.

Discussion

Most of the statistically significant differences were found clustered within the scale factor called "disruptive behavior". It is worth noting that in the assessment done by the student about himself and in that made by the partner are found significant differences in the same items, however, his does not happen in the teacher’s evaluation.

The fact that we did not find great significant differences after the program in favour of experimental group, it may be related to the high initial levels of emotional competence that has been shown by the students of this center. It would therefore be advisable to repeat this study with representative samples from a wider geographical area. It would also be interesting, to extend the program throughout the whole school year.

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ANGER DISGUISED: UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH THE PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE STUDENT

Thomas G. Valore

Although we frequently are faced with passive-aggressive behavior with anxious parents, troubled and troubling youth, conflicted professionals, hostile bosses, and resistant coworkers, little is known and less is written on the subject. Education and psychology journals are filled with articles on overt aggression, but are significantly lacking in the area of passive aggression. The topic may have eluded professional scrutiny by the covert nature of the behavior itself. The effects of passive aggression are not immediately recognized or experienced, as compared to the fear produced by physical aggression, the debilitating blow of depression, or the internal shuddering of hyperactivity. When professionals and laypeople alike, reach frustration and legitimate psychological discomfort from this behavior, help is sought.

Presentation Focus

This paper focuses on passive aggression within the school setting. It will address (a) the definition of passive aggression, (b) the development of passive-aggressive behavior, (c) the five distinct levels of passive-aggressive behavior, (d) the paradigm of the Passive-Aggressive Conflict Cycle, and (e) an effective treatment approach to working with the passive-aggressive student.

Presentation Content Overview

- Definition of passive aggression. Several terms have been associated with passive-aggressive behavior. This presentation will define passive aggression drawing on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fourth Edition-Text Revision (2000). Specific behaviors will be discussed to operationalize the definition.
- The development of passive-aggressive behavior. Four developmental pathways to passive-aggressive behavior will be discussed. These include: (a) a reaction to prolonged and excessive physical and psychological abuse; (b) a reaction to prolonged and excessive parental standards of goodness, social approval, and guilt; (c) a reaction to dysfunctional and triangular family dynamics; and (d) a reaction to disabling conditions and failed expectations.
- The five distinct levels of passive-aggressive behavior. The passive-aggressive student expresses hostility and anger towards their target masked behind civility and compliance. Participants will become familiar with these pathological passive-aggressive behaviors that include: (a) temporary compliance, (b) intentional inefficiency, (c) letting a problem escalate, (d) hidden but conscious revenge, and (e) self-depreciation.

- The paradigm of the Passive-Aggressive Conflict Cycle. Through this paradigm, participants will understand how: (a) well meaning, rational, and assertive adults can unexpectedly and temporarily lose control and take on inappropriate and unprofessional behaviors once trapped in the cycle, and (b) the Passive-Aggressive Conflict Cycle Paradigm helps to modulate emotional responses during a passive-aggressive conflict.
- An effective treatment approach to working with the passive-aggressive student. Participants will examine skills for recognizing the early warning signs of passive-aggressive behavior assisting adults to avoid becoming engaged in the Passive-Aggressive Conflict Cycle Paradigm. Participants will also understand the six steps of Benign Confrontation.

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EXPLORING TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES: QUALMS AND POSSIBILITIES OF INCLUSIVE CLASSES IN PAKISTAN

Muhammad Uzair-ul-Hassan

Inclusion is a developmental process in which all students irrespective of their abilities learn together and enjoy the same rights and facilities within the same class and school. This is contrary to a segregated system of education where students with disabilities learn separately from their counterparts. For many educators/practitioners, inclusion appears to be an ideal to be reached for minimizing discrimination in education. However, there still exists a wide-range debate on it. Barton and Armstrong (2006) explain that the struggle for inclusion involves a critical analysis of discrimination and exclusion, and that this entails a developing appreciation of the multi-layered, contradictory, deeply rooted nature of barriers to inclusion. Ordinary schools themselves are a major factor in the establishment of segregated institutions. Clough, P.

(1998) has pointed out that there were, and are many pressures within the regular system that encourage the use of special educational procedures to exclude troublesome children and special schools were established as a mean of managing those students once excluded. Plaisance, E. (2006) elaborates that inclusion in ordinary settings should not be considered in a sentimental way without giving attention to the possible ways of practicing in the classes otherwise qualms and disillusionment will continue to prevail. European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2005) explored that inclusion in regular classes in Spain, with support adjusted to the students' special needs in the group context, has a positive influence on their learning process, self-esteem and self-concept and, at the same time, improves their relationship with their friends.

UNICEF (2003) pointed out that no serious movement for inclusive education has so far surfaced in Pakistan. Two school systems totally isolated from each other exist, one is segregated and the other of ordinary school. This study identifies teachers' needs in ordinary schools and explores their perceptions about inclusive classes in Pakistan.

Method

To collect data for this study, interviews and questionnaires were used. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers selected through non-random sampling method. For interviews of teachers, same method was preferred. Further from this non-random method, convenience sampling was used because whoever happened to be available at the time was included. Questionnaire was developed and each question had five point scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In pilot testing, reliability of the instrument (questionnaire) was calculated in SPSS and the value of alpha coefficient was 0.865. Data were collected from a total of 54 school teachers of Lahore city and was analysed. Questionnaire was made valid through experts' opinion. In order to gain more insight into and to extend the understanding of the issues being investigated, interviews were conducted from 10 teachers of Lahore city. All open-ended questions were asked from them (e.g. How do you feel if student with disability is present in your class? Is it possible for you to teach such class? etc.). Many opportunities was provided to each teacher to express his views. These interviews were audio recorded with the kind permission of teachers. Later, researcher transcribed and translated this audio recording from Urdu to English. In analysing interviews, teachers' expressions were traced out which reflect their perception about inclusive classes.

Results

Analyzing in-depth interviews of teachers as well as their responses to questionnaires shows that although most of them are willing to teach inclusive classes with adequate training and resources, they paradoxically have qualms and are not sure to what extent their teaching will be effective for all. Almost 63% of the teachers have no objection if included students have minor disabilities. A large number of teachers favour to include students with behavior and emotional problems, students with mild visual and hearing problems, and students with physical disabilities. Some of them consider teaching impossible in inclusive classes in the presence of students with severe and profound disabilities. A great dissatisfaction towards suitability of present curriculum was seen because it does not fulfill teachers' needs for such classes. Nearly

93% demanded special education support teacher who can guide them to teach in inclusive class.

In interviews' analysis, it was found that lack of skills in managing large inclusive classes (40 to 70 students per class) within short duration confine teachers to give individual attention to student with disability. Although they accept disabled students in their ordinary classes but were uncertain about its effectiveness. For example, one of them expresses his fear as "I personally like the idea but I don't know how it will work..., there could be many problems/difficulties..., I am not confident". Resources scarcity, lacking competency to deal with students with special needs in inclusive class, extra stress, inappropriate curriculum, inconvenient behavior of school administrators, non-cooperative attitude of parents without disabilities, unavailability of special education teachers in ordinary schools are the barriers for regular school teachers to teach in inclusive classes. In parallel, they deem inclusive classes can be quite productive for both students with and without disabilities. For example, a private school teacher explains as "... I remember the days when I taught students with learning disability and upon successfully completing every step during her course of study she was more confident and also other students took positive image of her". Peers cooperation, peers tutoring, making groups of students with diverse needs and different rate of learning, giving individual attention, developing curriculum which should be more inclusive and according to diverse needs of students, delivering moral lesson to prevent children with disabilities from stigmas are some of a few techniques that can be exploited in inclusive classes. Teachers should be able to arrange instruction in inclusive classes to enhance the participation of all the pupils in curricular activities at their own level of functioning. Mixing children in early years of their education and making flexible groups is more beneficial. As Ryndak & Alper (1996) have pointed out that peer tutors who do not have disabilities can teach students with disabilities a wide array of functional academic and social interaction skills. Furthermore, it was explored that collaboration should be developed among regular class teachers, administrators of schools, parents of both children with and without disabilities and special education teacher. Schools' administrators must ensure parents-teachers meetings of both children with and without disabilities.

A manual 'index for inclusion' developed by Booth and Ainscow (2002) may guide schools along with other essential measures within country context like inclusive curriculum with examples from their own culture to understand practices within inclusive approach.

Discussion

As in this study perceptions of teachers about inclusive classes reflect the situation prevailing in the country and demand for need to train regular class teachers, therefore, it is suggested that a work on training teachers is direly needed so that qualms could be minimized to make inclusive classes possible from utopia to reality. In this regard, special education teacher can prove to be a useful source to facilitate regular teachers in inclusive classes of ordinary schools. Further, it will be interesting to explore the perception and experiences of teachers about inclusive classes in ordinary schools of villages of Pakistan.

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**FACTORS RELATED TO ATTRITION: A STUDY OF ONE
MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM'S GRADUATES**

Raschelle Theoharis
Michael Fitzpatrick

The shortage of teachers in special education (SPED) continues to be a problem for SPED programs around the world (Billingsley, 2004; Ladd, 2007; Menlove, Garnes, & Salzberg, 2004; Thornton, Peltier, G., & Medina, 2007; Vegas, 2007). Regardless of the differences in history, culture, and economic status countries continue to face the challenge of retaining SPED teachers (Ladd, 2007). Unfortunately, the lack of SPED teachers poses significant problems for administrators, students with disabilities, and their families (Vegas, 2007).

According to Dipaola and Walther-Thomas (2003) the shortage of SPED teachers--within the United States--has various stakeholders concerned about school districts' ability to provide a free and appropriate public education for students with disabilities. Specifically school districts continue to face the enormous challenge of ensuring that both the intent and spirit of the law are met while they are simultaneously struggling to find appropriately trained teachers to fill vacant

positions (Dipaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003). For example, Billingsley (1993) reported that among beginning special education teachers, attrition rates averaged 10% per year for the first six years of teaching students with disabilities and 6% per year for the following six years.

Coined attrition and retention, the supply and demand for special education teachers is influenced by varying and complex variables (Billingsley, 2004). The model suggested by Billingsley (1993) stated that attrition can be best understood by categorizing the variables into three major areas: personal, employment, external factors.

For the purpose of this study, SPED literature was gathered according to the variables, outlined by Billingsley (1993).

The purpose of this study was to acknowledge the shortage of SPED teachers and identify the reasons why SPED graduates pursued higher education or school administrative positions, changed to general education classrooms, stayed in special education, or left education altogether. The researchers surveyed recent graduates to learn about their career paths since graduation.

Methods

The sample for this study was drawn from the 811 department of SPED graduates (1997-to-2007) of a public Tier I research and teaching institution located in the Midwest. All of the graduates for whom e-mail addresses ($n = 353$) were available were asked to participate in the study. One hundred and sixty ($n = 160$) individuals completed the online survey.

Data were gathered and analyzed included demographic variables including (a) gender; (b) European Americans and Non-European Americans; (c) age range; (d) marital status; and (e) breadwinner defined as educational level, certification/endorsement area(s), and years of teaching experience (total and special education only). Scale scores were computed for each individual research based category that included (a) job satisfaction, (b) involvement, (c) administrative support, (d) commitment, (e) stress, (F) role conflict, and (g) ambiguity.

The researchers divided role ambiguity and conflict into two sections (conflict and disambiguity). Intent to stay in the field was measured using four separate questions: (a) Would you become teacher if you had it to do over again?; (b) How long do you plan to teach?; (c) How likely is it that you would be able to find a suitable non-teaching position?; and (d) Are you planning on teaching next year? These questions were used to answer the research question “Are there any specific employment factors that predict attrition and retention of special education teachers?”

Results

This study addressed three research questions related to demographic and personal factors, employment factors, and external factors that affect SPED teacher retention attrition rates. All scale scores from the questionnaire had a high degree of internal reliability except involvement. Administrative support, commitment, satisfaction, and involvement showed significant relationships to the attrition of SPED teachers.

Discussion

This study had several limitations that should temper the discussion of findings and conclusions. First, the sample in this study was drawn from the graduates of a single special education program. There were also limitations with regard to the sample population. Less than 50% of those SPED teachers who were asked to participate in this study responded. In addition, while this study sought to examine differences between males and females as well as between European Americans and Non-European Americans, the size of the sub groups (gender and ethnicity) and the methodology selected made it difficult to draw any conclusions. Further studies should seek to include special education teachers that represent a variety of graduate special education programs from different geographical locations, and should seek to include a much larger number of males and non-European Americans so that comparisons between these subgroups can be made.

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**DEVELOPMENTAL THERAPY – DEVELOPMENTAL TEACHING: A
PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

Marita Bergsson

The education of troubled children and youth with social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties represents a challenge for most educators and teachers, both in general education and in special education. These educators need special understanding and skills in order to respond to the needs of troubled children and youth. They need to understand, that academic and social-emotional development go hand in hand.

The demand for coaching, staff training, consultation, and technical assistance regarding this approach have resulted in the formation of ETEP-Europe (**E**ntwicklungstherapie/**E**ntwicklungspädagogik). This institute, in collaboration with the Developmental Therapy Institute, USA is a resource for European teachers and administrators who are seeking effective ways to meet the educational needs of troubled students. Through ETEP-Europe, assistance is provided in adapting the approach and its practice to local cultures, languages, and educational standards in different countries. It also provides consultation for program design, teacher training, and demonstration of effective practices.

The features of the ETEP-program, which are highly relevant for educators, are the following:

- The program is based upon research and theory on the psychological development of children and youth. It has used adaptations of theories from a variety of psychological backgrounds and has integrated them into a developmental concept.
- Replacing deficit-orientated views by a focus on students' strengths and on incentives for acquiring developmentally relevant social and emotional skills.
- Logical derivations from theory to educational practice that allows for interlinking diagnosis, teaching in the classroom, and evaluation. Explicit methods for in-service training to further increase proficiencies within an educational team.
- The possibility of applying the program in inclusive, as well as, in special school settings.
- An inter-cultural compatibility that offers the opportunity to adjust the program content and organization to local needs and standards.
- Ongoing evaluation components that look critically upon the question whether the program is effective or not.

Educators' training focuses on several specific elements of the program:

- Accurate use of a developmental assessment tool to identify a student's current social-emotional-behavioral status.
- Individualized learning objectives based on each student's developmental assessment.
- Instructional strategies designed for each student's developmental assessment.
- Instructional programs provided in inclusive settings whenever possible and for early childhood, academic-, or vocational programs.
- Knowledge of core theoretical content which provides the foundation for ETEP, including developmental stages of social-emotional-behavioral development, developmental anxieties, the existential crisis, decoding behavior, developmental values, motivations, psychosocial roles, social power, and group dynamics.
- Specific tasks within a team and collaborative skills specified for implementing DT-DT.
- Self-monitoring procedures in order to maintain or enhance practitioners' skills in the specified practices.
- Procedures for monitoring and documenting each student's progress during a school year.

With these standards applied and with appropriate guidance to ensure high professional quality, the programs represent the centre of a growing international network of mutual support for the ETEP approach as it is implemented across national boundaries.

History

1991	Foundation of the Jakob-Muth-School (JMS) in Essen – first DT/DT application site in Germany
1990-93	Translation of the DTORF, the DT-RITS, the Core Content ... into German, and development of training materials in German
1995-99	JMS staff train teachers in DT/DT at individual schools
1997-99	DT/DT training in Russia (3 universities), Norway (Jørpeland-School) and Italy (schools in Sicily and Sardinia); translation of the DTORF into these languages
2000	Foundation of the Institute ETEP Europe/Forming of the DT/DT application network
2000-09 & ongoing	Staff training projects, so far in 12 of the 16 federal states; Forming of the and regional trainers network; annual conferences: national DT/DT conference one year alternating with regional DT/DT conferences the following year
Long-term objectives	A system of Regional Trainers in every federal state, who are responsible for maintaining quality standards and the sustainability of the program; from each state 1 one responsible coordinator, who reports to the ETEP-Institute

Examples of Program Effectiveness Studies

- A study of program effectiveness at the JMS conducted in 1995 showed that during the first 3 years of using the program at the school the behavior problems in 65% of the students were significantly reduced, so that they could be re-integrated into regular school-settings.

- Two recent studies in Hamburg and Berlin, using Developmental Age Score in a Prediction Design show that 89% of the students in the study have made significant progress (i.e., growth of social-emotional competencies).
- In progress: Effectiveness study at 30 middle schools in Berlin where DT/DT is applied.

The German DT/DT Network – Some Figures

- About 1,200 network members, among them about 700 certified practitioners
- About 10,000 teachers and other educators, who have had participated at least in an 8 hours DT/DT information event.
- Recent development: DT/DT at schools for mentally disabled students
- About 60 regional trainers and 10 national trainers working for the ETEP-Institute

Activities at Universities and Conferences; Publications

DT/DT is part of the curriculum in most universities which have a chair for special education, and at several others with a chair for general education. It has a number of publications (books and essays) about DT/DT in German, the most recent one an article in the new *Handbook of Special Education*, Volume 3 and *Social and Emotional Development*, one of the essential textbooks for German special education students.

Structuring a DT/DT Implementation Project

- Pre-stage: Several schools from a region or town enquire about training. - Alternatively, an institution for teacher training or a particular education administration department or a school board applies for training provided to a group of schools.
- A National Instructor from ETEP Europe holds an information session about DT/DT for teachers, principals, members of the school board and administrators from schools interested in DT/DT (4 hours).
- 10 schools take part in the project. Each of these schools send 2 –3 teachers (or 2 teachers and a social worker) to the core training course. These teachers receive training in DT/DT from an ETEP Europe Instructor (at least 40 hours, normally 48 – 56 hours).
- The whole staff of each participating school are provided with a full day information session about the basics of DT/DT (8 hours for each school).
- Every participant of the core training is visited twice in her/his classroom by an ETEP Europe Instructor. Each visit is followed by a session of consultation and advice (2 days for the participants).
- The 20 – 30 participants qualify as certified practitioners (again a visit in their classroom and a colloquium held by an Instructor) (1 day for the participants from each school).
- This process (step 3 – 7) takes approx. 1 ½ years. From the best of the practitioners some are chosen to become future Regional Instructors. They receive a training for Regional Instructors.
- The regional Instructors form a network; they offer consultation and advice, meetings for the DT/DT teachers in regular intervals (at least 4 times a year), smaller training units for other colleagues from the schools etc. (ongoing process).

Berlin: A Best Practice Area (DT/DT in 90 Schools)

Note: All our trainers in Germany work as DT/DT practitioners themselves in their classrooms on a day-to-day basis. About 90% of them do not get paid for their training activities, but their class contact is reduced in order enable them to do these training sessions.

- In Berlin, there are 90 schools working as application sites for DT/DT: (elementary schools, special schools, secondary schools).
- Fourteen regional trainers (each with 6 or 7 hours released time per week) train teachers from new schools, support the DT/DT-practitioners from “old” schools and offer consultation.
- The Institute ETEP Europe works at present with “new“ secondary schools.
- The Berlin Senat's administration has appointed an own DT/DT coordinator.

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A comprehensive list of references related to Developmental Therapy is available from the author.

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PREPARING FUTURE ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS: EMPATHY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Mary Bevel
Ginny Altrogge

One of the greatest fears of parents of children with disabilities is, “What will happen to my child when I die?” This is true for the parents of children with mild or moderate disabilities as well as for those whose children have severe disabilities. Parents depend on schools to help to prepare their children for independent productive lives, but sadly, that does not always happen. Not do schools always provide an appropriate education for each child with disabilities. Children are always happy or accepted in schools. Individuals with disabilities and their families experience life from a very different perspective than that of the school. For families, education is about the child’s quality of life not just what happens that specific school year or course grades or goals and objectives on the IEP. Unfortunately, issues of convenience, staff availability, or finances often cloud the school’s vision of education for children with disabilities. This paper discusses a specific assignment embedded in legal issues in special education course. It is designed to help open the eyes and hearts of teachers and school leaders to the realities of life for families and children with disabilities.

History of Special Education and Administration Education

In the United States, there is a reciprocal yet fragile relationship between each individual and the government. Citizens have access to fundamental rights, specific freedoms, and liberties delineated and/or implied in the Constitution and in the decisions of the Supreme Court. This relationship should flow freely through the ideals of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" which are considered as "unalienable rights" for all despite individual ability or disability. This discourse forms the fabric of American society--its people and their unique history, customs, and beliefs.

During the late 1700s, local school systems evolved because Americans shared Jefferson's belief that education held the key to securing and maintaining freedom by nurturing democratic ideas, spreading culture, and knowledge. It is important to indicate the paucity of references to the notion of free public education for all individuals with disabilities. Ideals of equality, quality, and a free public education appear to have been reserved for only a restricted section of citizens, white non-disabled males. Other children were excluded from regular education classes or sent to separate schools for a particular type of child. Federal legislation passed in the 1860s and 1870s paralleled state movements to provide separate special schools for individuals with disabilities (Rutherford Turnbull, 1993). Children of color, by the nature of their skin, were considered unfit to attend schools with white children and thus were educated in separate schools that were supposed to be 'equal' to schools for white children. The separate but equal history of education for children of color and children with disabilities follows a congruent path to the American public school into the twenty century.

The case of *Roberts v. City of Boston* (1850) was the first case to address the issue of separate-but-equal schools for children of color. Senator Charles Sumner insisted that the policy of separate but equal schools forced all African American children to be "brand ['ed'] as a whole race with the stigma of inferiority and degradation . . . exclusively devoted to one class must differ essentially, in its spirit and character, from that public school known of the law, where all classes meet together in equality" (Rutherford Turnbull, 1993). There were many landmark cases and much case law and legislation in the first half of the twentieth century as civil right lawyers fought to win access for all people. The precepts established in these cases laid the initial foundation for *Brown v Board*. Even though *Brown v. Board of Education* dealt specifically with the issue of discrimination based solely upon race, *Brown* has been applied to issues of discrimination based upon other unalterable characteristics such as gender and disability. In *Brown*, the Court's decision was based on two precepts. The first was the importance of education in a democratic society. The second finding was the influence that a child's education has on his ability to succeed in life. The Supreme Court declared that an educational opportunity is so important that once the state, "has undertaken to provide it, it is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms". The Court found that separating children on the basis of race, or any other unalterable characteristic, caused the children to feel inferior and caused "the tendency to retard educational and development". Separate but equal facilities are inherently unequal and segregation of any type has a great possibility of inflicting irreparable injury to the child's motivation. This is of course applicable to children with disabilities as well as for children of different ethnic, religious or racial heritages. *Brown* set a

precedence extending equal rights to all individuals and established educational issues as civil rights issues, thus giving rise to right-to-educate cases.

Before the 1970s and the passage of PL 94-142, parents did not expect that their child with a disability would ever be accepted by the culture or become an independent productive happy adult. Since then, parents of children with disabilities believed that the school always put the needs of their child first and were grateful for whatever services or programs the public schools offered. The resolution of *Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PARC)* in 1971 caused significant changes in education policy, including stipulate that children with disabilities were to be educated with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible, initiating the application of the "least restrictive environment" principle to education. Soon after *PARC*, *Mills v. D.C. Board of Education* introduced the application of procedural "due process" into education by requiring that, before a child could be excluded from public education, alternative education services suited specifically to the child's needs were to be provided and documented. Educators were mandated to become skilled in providing a free appropriate individualized public education to each and every individual with a disability. But, no matter what the law says, the full implementation of it comes back to the parents. Their understanding of the law and their efforts to convey this knowledge to the school helps determine the child's program.

Letter and Spirit

Laws have at least two components, that is, the spirit and the letter of the law. Unfortunately laws are not always followed in a manner that expresses the intention or spirit of the law, nor are they fully followed to the letter of the law. Congress and legislators enact laws and write their regulations. Boards of Education and superintendents then interpret the law and write policy and procedures to comply with the law. The interpretations may differ, as do the policies and programs provided by individual districts and schools. Some school districts or program directors will follow and interpret the law to their advantage most often grounded in the perceived fiduciary reality of the district. Parents, on the other hand, are expecting the school district to fully comply with the spirit and letter of the law, never even considering the district might not implement the law to its fullest extent. School leaders and teachers are not required by the certifying agencies to be experts in special education, nor are they required to understand the stance of the family or have empathy for the child with disabilities. School leaders are only required to know and follow their school policies, which are supposed to comply with those of the government.

In response to this need, universities and colleges provide courses that are prescribed by the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education in each specific state that will allow for university students to have adequate *knowledge* and *skills* to obtain a state teaching or administration certificate. Webster University's Education Specialist degree program believes it is essential for its students to develop and grasp in the ability to communicate with families, and to fully understand the civil rights and specific needs of each individual with disabilities. In order to answer this call, we have redesigned a course and instituted an additional component within Education Specialist Degree. This innovation is relatively simple but has proven to be very powerful for Ed. S. students. It provides an embedded unique internship in an established

course on LEAD 6007: Legal Issues in Special Education Law and Administration. This specific embedded internship must be time spent with families and individuals with disabilities, not with school personnel. It provides our students with real life situations and helps them to discover room for flexibility, kindness and empathy when communicating with families and students with disabilities. The motivation behind developing the course *is* to prepare our students to be instructional leaders who more fully understand and appreciate the diverse learning needs of all students. In this modern episteme, the role of the principal is complex and complicated by the passage of laws such as No Child Left Behind, 504, OHI, and the revised IDEA. Too often, the new principal is thrust into the position of being ‘the determiner’ for issues surrounding IEPs, 504 plans, and even diagnosis decisions. Principals must be able to be true instructional leaders for each and every teacher in the school building because teachers directly influence the future of the child. It is imperative that there is open collaboration between the principal, teachers, and parents.

The Course

The following discourse focuses on the course and the experiences of the Ed. S. students in the class of summer 2008. Students were to shadow a student with a disability for a period of 15 hours for a B and 20 hours for an A. This stipulation was difficult for some of the students because they did not understand that the school’s concept might be different from that of the parents or an advocate. Some students volunteered in a crisis nursery at a local hospital. Some volunteered at an Equestrian Center where students with disabilities learned how to ride a horse. One volunteered at a homeless shelter and another worked with individuals with emotional disorders. One student volunteered at a local restaurant where people with disabilities could come to obtain assistance with filling out job applications and preparing for job interviews. One student spent 24 hours taking care of her nephew who has Down’s syndrome. Her experience was practically interesting as she is an early childhood /special education teacher who is extremely bright and skilled. She stated that she had no idea what it was like to live with an individual with a disability until this course.

Of the 27 students who were enrolled in the class, twenty were female and seven were male. Eleven of the students were African American and 16 were Caucasian. Most of the students are in their thirties and have approximately five to ten years of teaching experience. Fifteen of the 27 have degrees with an emphasis in special education. Despite that, they still did not fully comprehend the complexity of life with a child with a disability. Some of our students have had experiences in working with students with disabilities. Some exhibit a degree of compassion for those with disabilities; however, being compassionate on a six or eight hour time frame is different than being compassionate with students with disabilities on a 24/7 format. It is the 24 hour format that empowered our students to more fully understand the daily life experiences of families and for many this embedded internship became a life changing experience. Not only did the students develop empathy for individuals with disabilities and their families, but also the students began to understand that school shapes the entire life of an individual with a disability, for it is most often in school where individuals begin to internally establish their possibilities dependent on what they believe about themselves. Servan wrote,

When you have thus formed the chain of ideas in the heads of your citizens, you will then be able to pride yourselves on guiding them and being their masters. The stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains, and but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas: it is at the stable point of reason that he secures the end of the chain: this link is all the stronger in that we do not know of what it is made and we believe it to be our own work: despair and time eat away the bonds of iron and steel, but they are powerless against the habitual union of ideas, they can only be tighten it still more, and on the soft fibers of the brain is founded the unshakable base of the soundest of Empires (Servan, 1767, cited in Foucault, 1979).

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SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADS SECONDARY SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING: ADHERING TO PRACTICES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION HELPS LEAD THE WAY IN RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS

A. Thomas Blings

Major secondary education reform and restructuring initiatives in the United States in the past few years have centered on three major principles: (a) personalization, (b) academic and learning skill success, and (c) collaboration. One can draw from a wealth of the best practices in Special Education to help lead the way for all students in a school.

Special Education

There are many documented, researched and promoted aspects of special education (SPED) that may be examined; however, the following basics from IDEA 2004 and TASH appear to be the most relevant:

First. Individualized education program (IEP): A program devised to satisfy IDEA's requirement that students with disabilities must receive an educational program based on multidisciplinary assessment designed to meet their individual needs. The IEP must include consideration of the student's present level of performance, annual goals, special education and related services, time in general education, timeline for special education services, and an annual evaluation.

Second. Members of the IEP team, as presented by law, include the parent or guardian of the child, one regular educator with responsibility for implementing the plan, a special educator with responsibility for implementing the plan, a principal or administrator who takes responsibility for seeing to it that the plan is implemented, and other personnel whose specialized knowledge can be helpful in constructing a plan.

Third. The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH) takes the position in their policy that a major goal is the social integration of persons with disabilities into adult society and the school environment should foster the development of such skills through personal friendships and relationships among children with disabilities.

At first glance there is nothing new here for the experienced SPED educator as they've seen this all develop and be refined over the past thirty plus years. But in the work of restructuring high schools, why can't every school see the value of applying these ideas to each and every student? Why shouldn't every high school student have a version of an IEP that includes virtually the same purposes, a documented plan, a support and design team and emphasizes socialization, self-esteem development, interaction and democratization? The reason may be one of perception rather than reality. Some only see an IEP as diagnostic and remedial. They see an IEP as something that only addresses weaknesses based on some pathology of what a student is not. SPED educators take into consideration the whole child and are about creating aspirations and fulfilling dreams. They work equally on a student's potential and the ability to lead a productive and contributing life.

Secondary Schools

One of the major reform documents guiding secondary schools is *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform* put forth by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. They have seven cornerstone strategies to improve student performance. Cornerstone number three states that schools should implement a comprehensive advisory program that ensures that each student has frequent and meaningful opportunities to plan and assess his/her academic and social progress with a faculty member.

Personal Learning Plans

The best advisory programs have personal learning plans that generally include most of the following: help students understand their learning styles (strengths and weaknesses). They use different forms of standardized testing results as diagnostics and are involved in helping set personal, social, academic, and career goals. They help students monitor their progress through periodic and timely check-ins and helpful interventions to get back on track or modify the goals,

and they often help students develop a portfolio documenting both progress and best work samples; examine career options and gain real-world experiences.

A personal learning plan for all students at the high school level gives them a voice in their education and gives them ownership. The plans also connects students with teachers as partners in their education; makes a strong personal connection with at least one adult advocate; connects everyone but especially the student with their parents and family; helps the student realize the “Greek Ideal” of healthy mind, body and spirit as central to a healthy and rewarding life. The goal quite simply becomes in a true Maslowian way of creating of a self-actualized adult that is capable of entering full citizenship as a productive, caring, responsible, socially well-adjusted person.

Summary

In conclusion, there is a strong connection with the work of SPED educators with the development of IEP’s with focused purposes overseen by a strong IEP team that connects with parents and the home while developing social skills for personal happiness and a place in society. A key parallel component of a true personal learning plan supported by an adult advocate through advisories is totally related. SPED educators can help with this secondary school reform work and need to help lead the way. Every high school student should have a learning plan based on the best principles of an IEP and support system.

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SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN WITH AUTISM THROUGH POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT WITH FAMILY-SCHOOL COLLABORATION

Kwang-Sun Cho Blair
Su-Je Cho

An increasing body of research in the use of positive behavior support (PBS) has demonstrated that the process of PBS is highly effective for use with the behaviors presented by children with disabilities (Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbull, Sailor et al., 2002; Dunlap, 2006). There is strong support in the professional literature base for the importance of family-school collaboration for children with disabilities who have challenging behavior (Carr et al., 2002; Dunlap & Fox, 1999; Minke & Anderson, 2005). Yet, very little research exists on supporting these children both in the home and at school through family-school collaboration (Harrower, Fox, Dunlap, & Kincaid, 2000). The present study extends the current literature by examining the impact of PBS in supporting young children with autism in the inclusive classroom and home, while utilizing family-school collaboration in the process of PBS. Specific research questions addressed in the study were whether the family-school collaborative PBS: (a) would be effective in improving child appropriate and problem behavior in targeted family and classroom routines; (b) would demonstrate generalization effects by improving child behavior in non-targeted routines; and (c) would be effective in changing mother and teacher positive and negative interaction with the children.

Method

Setting and Participants. This study was conducted in two early childhood classrooms at a special school in South Korea. The early childhood program of the school was implanting a reverse inclusive educational model, serving children with and without disabilities between the ages of 3-5 years in three classrooms. Three children who had a diagnosis of autism and showed at least 12-month delays in all developmental domains, who had difficulty participating in the classroom and family routines, exhibiting challenging behavior more than six months, and whose parents and classroom staff expressed support needs and agreed to participate in the PBS process participated in the study. Mothers of the children and their classroom teachers also participated in the study.

Target Behaviors and Data Collection. Appropriate and problem behavior for children and positive and negative interactions for mothers and teachers were targeted. The child and adult target behaviors were observed using a 10-s partial interval recording procedure. About 30% of the sessions were videotaped to obtain interobserver agreement. Overall, interobserver agreement for each participant, behavior, and condition averaged over 94%. Parent and teacher implementation of PBS plan was monitored weekly to assess the levels of adherence of intervention procedures, using a 3-point scale. The implementation fidelity showed an overall average of 88.3% across mothers and 85.2% across teachers. Social validity of the PBS process

and outcomes were assessed using an 11-item 5-point Likert-type scale with each child's parents, classroom staff, and program director subsequent to the follow-up phase of the intervention.

Design and Procedures. A concurrent multiple baseline design across children was used to evaluate the degree to which the home-school collaborative PBS intervention altered the child's behaviors at school and home and the intervention impact on mother and teacher behaviors. The interventions were implemented during circle time activities by staff at school and indoor play routines by families at home; generalization probes were conducted during non-targeted center activities in the school and outdoor play in the neighborhood community playgrounds. The study involved, for each child, a collaborative team building, person-centered planning, functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and hypothesis development, intervention testing, and positive behavior support plan development and implementation. The routine-based support strategies included: (a) preventing problem behavior or minimizing problem situations, (b) teaching new skills to enhance child's self control over the problematic situations and their behavior, and (c) changing teacher responses to problem and appropriate behaviors. The staff and families participated in training and technical assistance during intervention.

Results

Results of the study showed that the PBS intervention, designed and implemented jointly by the family and classroom staff, was effective in reducing the children's problem behavior and increasing their appropriate behavior in circle time at school and in play with siblings at home. Generalization of the PBS was observed by improving the children's target behaviors in non-targeted classroom center activity time and in play at the community playground. The PBS with family-school collaboration was also found to be effective in increasing positive interaction and reducing negative interaction of the mothers and teachers with the target children. The social validity data showed that the mothers and teachers were satisfied with the collaboration process and the results.

Discussion

Several key findings emerged from this experimental single-case analysis. First, the hypotheses generated by a PBS team from FBA data collection were validated in experimental analyses conducted in natural classroom and family contexts. Second, the multi-component intervention derived from the PBS process was effective in improving both child and adult target behaviors. Third, collateral findings included markedly improved rates of target behaviors by the children during non-targeted school and community routines. This study extends the literature on PBS by providing evidence of outcomes and acceptability of a family-school collaboration approach in supporting young children with disabilities and challenging behavior in the multiple settings. It also adds empirical support for the natural classroom and family routine as a useful context for intervention (Blair, Umbreit, Dunlap, & Jung, 2007; Moes & Frea, 2002). It is noteworthy that the study was conducted in South Korea. Future research should continue to strengthen the validity of family-school collaborative PBS examining the cross-cultural patterns.

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TEACHING CHILDREN OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES TO READ: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Timothy R. Blair

The evolving demographic landscape in classrooms across the globe demands that future special education teachers address providing quality reading instruction to all students. Our schools reflect two continuing and growing realities: the diversity of students and the increasing number of poor children. Teachers face classrooms of diverse learners, some exhibiting social and psychological differences, some with physical and learning differences, some with cognitive and emotional differences and needs. Many learners are of racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. Still other learners are living in poverty. While children from all backgrounds can experience difficulties in learning to read, it is widely documented that low reading achievement is highest among poor children, ethnic minority children, and children who speak languages other than English at home (Donahue et al, 1999). The common characteristic linking all of these groups is poverty.

Children who are unable to read sufficiently are at high risk for dropping out of school. Children who do learn to read well are able to break the cycle of poverty and become productive individuals. In response to these realities, a major goal of the “Saturday Reading Camp” project is to prepare a new generation of special and elementary education teachers who will focus on the literacy needs of diverse student populations. The location of this project is not in the traditional university classroom but in a predominantly African-American inner-city community center in the poorest neighborhood in a large metropolitan city in the southeast United States. Future teachers complete their literacy coursework with a supervised hands-on tutoring experience of elementary grade children. The community center, not the university classroom, serves as a “pedagogical laboratory” where future teachers learn to teach reading by interacting with children, parents, their peers, community center supervisors and counselors, various community agencies, speech and language specialists, health personnel, social workers, various city organizations’ personnel, youth workers, and university personnel.

The special education preservice students are paired with elementary preservice students for the tutoring experience. The children in small groups receive 1 to 1 ½ hours of reading instruction. Following the tutoring session, a debriefing class is held with the university instructor reflecting on and summarizing the day’s activities and discussing new content and teaching strategies for the next week. Each lesson is focused on the child’s specific instructional level, which is obtained through an initial assessment with the administration of an informal reading inventory. At the onset, many children are below grade level; however, by the end of the 11-week Saturday morning Reading Camp, post-assessment scores improve dramatically, with over 33 percent of the children improving their instructional level by at least one level. The successful outcomes occurring, however, do not stop with the children.

For the university students, the Reading Camp has proven an effective tool for their professional development. Before the Camp begins, each teacher-in-training receives instruction on delivering culturally responsive instruction, which is balanced reading instruction with sensitivity to students’ cultures. Cultural differences influence student performance and should influence

classroom instruction (Brooks, 2006). This instruction, combined with one-on-one interactions, imparts to the teacher education students the skills to understand the roles culture and economics play in the students' learning. In addition, the university students learn and model in their tutoring sessions the elements of the teacher effectiveness literature, especially the procedures related to opportunity to learn, explicit/direct instruction, and academic engaged time (Heilman, Blair, & Rupley, 2002).

The Saturday Reading Camp experience is predicated on fostering the following disposition: Teachers who engage in a process of monitoring their own teaching become more confident in their abilities and are able to provide instruction students need. An approach to teaching based on this disposition encourages future teachers to become a self-monitor. Self-monitors reflect about their teaching and ask, "How does it work? Why did it happen this way? How might it work better next time?" By becoming a self-monitor and a keen observer, future teachers are able to recognize student needs and determine the right course of action. B.O. Smith, in the book *A Design for a School of Pedagogy* (1980), accentuates the importance of observation, speaking to domains of training in becoming a teacher, Smith noted: "The first domain, the one that permeates all the others, is observation. The ability to observe a phenomenon objectively is one of the primary marks of a professional in any field...For a teacher who cannot tell what is going on will be unable to respond appropriately and effectively to the events" (p.84).

The Saturday Reading Camp is truly a win-win experience for all concerned: the children tutored in reading, their parents, the community center and its staff, university personnel, and future special and elementary education teachers. Those individuals preparing to teach should learn where to put their time and effort in meeting the literacy needs of today's children. Future teachers also need to be reflective, self-monitoring educators, capable of further growth and development. The Saturday Reading Camp prepares new teachers to teach reading in today's culturally diverse classrooms at an inner-city community center through a practical, culturally sensitive, self-monitoring, and real-life experience.

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**USING TECHNOLOGY TO BROADEN HORIZONS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

Janetta Fleming Bradley

Technology in general and the internet in particular are having an impact to reform teacher preparation. Not only do students have constant access to worldwide information and communication, professors are expanding knowledge and creativity in order to more actively engage students, improve instruction, and vary assessments. While multiple forms of digital media provide convenience and access, teaching through technology also addresses a range of learning and communication styles, leading to greater student experience, understanding, and success. Two popular and innovative instructional techniques, WebQuests and flip cameras are discussed along with information for developing ePortfolios and online course delivery.

Students enrolled in preservice teacher education programs are among the first groups considered to be digital natives. Their history with multiple forms of digital media makes integrating similar media into teacher education programs a logical transition from previously more traditional instruction practice. 'Virtual university education' is a developing concept that manifests in numerous ways (Willoughby, 2004), and distance education is expanding, due in part to convenience, access, and flexibility.

As teacher education programs become standards based, portfolio assessment is becoming the accepted form of assessing preservice teachers' knowledge and performance. Sophisticated and accessible technology has made electronic portfolios (ePortfolios) the natural outgrowth in special education teacher education. Descriptions of current practices for individual methods courses and programs of study can be found in the professional literature on portfolios (e.g., Duarte & Quatroche, 1999; Kenney & LaMontagne, 1999, Verkler, 2000) and numerous benefits, drawbacks, and implications of portfolio use are also identified in the literature (Bloom & Bacon, 1995; Borko, Mayfield, Marion, Flexer, & Cumbo, 1997; McKinney, 1998).

Preservice teachers in the State of Illinois, U.S.A., for several reasons, use the ePortfolio, or electronic portfolio. Students gather digital artifacts in order to demonstrate attainment of six required state standards for teacher certification and to create examples of their multimedia digital teaching philosophies. Digital Portfolio assessment is a vehicle for integrating these many sets of knowledge and performance standards, reflecting individual attitudes, beliefs, and

dispositions toward teaching. Initial efforts guidelines for electronic portfolios that mirrored paper-pencil portfolios were developed. However, the use of technology has resulted in a more integrated and innovative presentation of evidence for meeting standards.

Procedures for ePortfolios and digital philosophies were designed such that students could express their unique interests and strengths digitally; no templates were used. Students are provided guidance for building their ePortfolio and to use their creativity and passion in creating their final product. One administrator used a recent graduate's Eportfolio at a staff meeting because, "It was so nice to see something visual that spoke about my beliefs in education".

WebQuests are inquiry-oriented lessons that use web-based information for either short term or long term projects. Since their inception in 1995 (Dodge, 1995), WebQuest use has been adopted by educators around the world. They work well as both project-based instructional tools and assignments in university course work. Students follow steps provided by various templates to design WebQuests (<http://www.webquest.org/index.php>, retrieved February 26, 2009) around topics of particular interest to their programs of study. In teacher preparation courses, WebQuests could be a means of exploring ways to develop content-based lessons in inclusive settings as well as teaching information about Special Education law (e.g., comparing Section 504 and IDEIA), disabilities (e.g., characteristics), or collaboration and conflict resolution (e.g., using different models; analyzing conflict situations).

While WebQuests may appear to be an easy way to incorporate technology, critical components must be included to make them both engaging and challenging. Information about web-based resources along with clear instruction and navigation strategies must be part of the assignment in order to keep students from wasting time and experiencing frustration. Tasks and problems are formulated with an emphasis on higher level thinking skills, so the revised Bloom's Taxonomy of Critical Thinking Skills makes a perfect ingredient.

Flip video cameras (www.theflip.com) are easy-to-use video cameras operated with the push of one button. The cameras do not require addition video tape and can be charged with simple batteries or by plugging into the computer (with a built-in USB drive). Their ease of use lends to the creations of videos by teachers and students. More and more teachers are finding uses for the Flip Video as well. These cameras make a great addition to any classroom because they are simple to use and relatively inexpensive. Here are a few ideas: (a) narrated field trips with students serving as guides; (b) interviewing other students, staff or community members; (c) digital storytelling projects; (d) capturing science as it happens and demonstrating experiments, and (e) students sharing "their world"

Administrators also are getting in the act. One principal takes the Flip Video camera with her when she does her daily walk through the school to see what good things are happening. When she encounters best practices, great student interaction, or interesting uses of technology, she captures the moment on her camera and later shares it at faculty and staff member meetings. (<http://tnttips.blogspot.com/2008/10/flip-video-cameras-in-classroom.html>, retrieved February 28, 2009).

Online instruction is gaining interest and support at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. At UTC, a complete non-licensure graduate program in elementary education was created and delivered online through Blackboard, with the first cohort set to graduate in summer, 2009.

The whole group Discussion Board and Small Group Chats and Discussion pages have been important components of the online program. For example, during their Collaboration and Consultation Course, students communicated through these features to practice decision making models and skills, create team procedure and conflict management plans (Bradley, 2007), and develop a case study school support plan for a student with a disability and his family based on cases created by Anderson (1997). Students were cautious about an online collaboration version, but soon found that they were participating in discussions similar to those in face-to-face class sessions. It is important to note that distance collaboration requires additional time, structure for posting and response, reminders of netiquette, and instructor restraint to not interfere as the discussion plays out.

Faculty in teacher preparation programs and practicing special educators face daily challenges to use methods that are productive, interesting, and engaging. Technology and the digital world provide options for using innovative and creative teaching and assessment. When students of any age take more responsibility for their learning and performance, programs take on added importance and relevance. The options discussed here, ePortfolios, WebQuests, online course delivery, and flip video cameras are four examples of the technology available for use and enjoyment. With enough information and supportive guidance and assistance, they are options that just about anyone can implement and master.

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**CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM: A STUDY OF INTERCULTURAL
COMPETENCE IN PRIMARY EDUCATION**

José Antonio Hernández Bravo
Juan Rafael Hernández Bravo
Miguel Ángel Milán Arellano

The phenomenon of immigration is an everyday growing reality within developed societies nowadays. Those countries with more stable economies act as magnets for people who live precariously in countries flogged by hunger, disease and poverty. As a consequence of all this, the industrialized countries in Europe, and Spain in particular, have been receiving large numbers of immigrants during the last decades, thus appearing culturally diverse communities. Some members of these immigrant families are children to whom we have to provide with a school education. Schools act as primary agents of socialization and also reflect the new diversity of cultures present in our society. Lovelace (1995) points out that the unstoppable emergency of the concept of diversity is placed within a context of recovery of the individuality and of the differences of humanity. However, the newness of this phenomenon often brings challenges to the educational contexts at the time of the integration of these immigrant students. In a situation like this, the concept of interculturalism arises, which is a relatively new concept in political and pedagogical frameworks, and which tries to offer a response to cultural diversity in the classroom from the perspective of equality and quality in education. The need for multicultural training became a reality in international conferences such as those in Evora (1992), Albuquerque (USA) and the one held by the Italian Society of Comparative Pedagogy. The topic of interculturalism is an important issue in the educational contexts of those countries in the south of Europe. In Spain, numerous studies on interculturalism have been developed since 1992, increasing the concern over this topic by universities and educational bodies. The aims of those studies were to analyze the reality of the classroom according to cultural confrontations, so

as to give guidance and set strategic plans to solve those problems. According to Sánchez (1996), the phenomenon of interculturalism in the school is seen as a new challenge, as a new problem that teachers have to solve by themselves. Besides this, teachers feel the pressure of society for uniting the different cultural realities. Aguilera (1996) states that although the origin of the conflicts of coexistence among cultures are outside the educational background, the negative stereotypes and prejudice which are deep-rooted in certain social and home environments can be treated from the schools. The reason for this statement is that intercultural education must be regarded as a response to the cultural diversity in our classroom nowadays, as it takes into accounts the importance of dialogue processes and the exchange of intercultural values among people from different socio-cultural backgrounds. However, the basic principles of interculturalism have not been fully developed (Bartolomé Pina, 2002). Authentic social cohesion is achieved by means of decreasing social exclusion and developing inclusive practices in the processes of socialization and coexistence within the classroom. Most of the times, legislative approaches in education on cultural diversity do not focus on the main aspects of educative practice (Banks, 1996). For this reason, our diverse society needs not only effective social and political measures to encourage the active participation of all citizens, but also educational actions to promote more tolerance and understanding towards different cultures and ethnic groups. Numerous researchers (Bliss, 1990; Calvo, 1993; Jordán, 1994, 2001) have studied the beliefs and attitudes of teachers towards students of other cultures or ethnic groups. Nevertheless, there is little research done into the students' attitudes and other intercultural competences towards their immigrant classmates. Sales and García (1995) point out there has been an increasing number of racist and xenophobic behaviors among students towards classmates of other cultures. This is the reason why it is rather important to do some research on the students' attitudes, as this will give us valuable information on how they feel and think towards classmates with an immigrant background. In addition to this, students' responses are less biased than those of their teachers, as their responses show a much more realistic and closer point of view of the intercultural processes happening within the classroom. According to everything mentioned above, the main aims set in this research have been: (a) to know the intercultural competences of students in Primary Education (knowledge, attitudes and skills with reference to intercultural education); and (b) to study the possible differences of those intercultural competences according to gender and age of students.

Method

This study presented a non-experimental, quantitative approach, using descriptive statistical tests (frequency and percentage) and co-relational studies for the analyses of data. The quantitative approach uses numerical data that can be analyzed by means of statistical techniques. Therefore, the resulting data of this study are free from subjective interpretations of the researcher (Cardona, 2002). With reference to the participants that took part in this investigation, we took a sample of students of second and third cycle of Primary education (8-11 years old) from a Spanish school in the city of Almansa (Albacete), choosing the non-randomly sampling available and opting for the criteria of sample accessibility and availability. The tool we made use of, so as to know the intercultural competences in this research, was the MCI questionnaire by Blasco, Bueno and Torregrosa (2004). This tool was composed by 60 items divided into three different sections, with 20 items in each section. In the first section, we evaluated the knowledge of intercultural education; in the second section, we studied the attitudes; and in the third one, we

dealt with the skills. The procedure, which was carried out by the researchers, consisted on giving out the MCI questionnaire to a sample of 180 students, during the academic year of 2007-2008. Before giving the questionnaire out to the students, we explained the way of answering the survey by means of choosing only one answer out of four, using the scale type Likert (from *always* to *never*). Students did not show any difficulty in answering the questionnaire, as the language was adapted in a clear and precise way for them to understand, and the time spent was relatively short. To carry out the analysis of data according to the first of our aims (to know the intercultural competences of students in Primary Education), statistical data were calculated, thus: frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations. For the second aim (to study the possible differences of those intercultural competences according to gender and age of students), we used different analysis of variance with parametric tests.

Results

The results are grouped according to each aim within this study, thus:

Aim 1: Intercultural competences of students in Primary Education (knowledge, attitudes and skills with reference to intercultural education).

Knowledge. The most outstanding data appear in items 2, 3, 12, 13 and 16. In item number 2, “I use greetings in the mother tongue of my foreign classmates”, 85% of students never use greetings in the mother tongue of their foreign classmates, although the vast majority of students in the classroom pronounce correctly the name of those students of other cultures (item 3). Regarding item number 12, “I can identify some physical characteristics of my foreign classmates”, 80% answered ‘always’ to this item. In item number 13, 60% of students answered they did not know any popular game of their foreign classmates. Item 16, “I realize I am afraid of other cultures different to mine”, shows that over half of the students interviewed never noticed they had any reaction of fear in this respect.

Attitudes. Around 70% of students answer ‘always’ in items 21, “I like learning new words in the mother tongue of my classmates”, 22, “I like the tales from other cultures”, 23, “I like the songs from other cultures”, and 24, “I don’t mind sharing the same place with classmates of other cultures”. More than 80% of students answer ‘always’, that everybody has the same rights no matter where they come from (Item 39).

Skills. Almost all the students admit to share a common place with classmates of other cultures (item 41) and to be calm when mixing with them (item 49). With reference to item 47, “I don’t admit classmates of other cultures thinking differently as me”, 50% of students state ‘never’, whereas 25% say ‘always’. Item 52, “I prefer a certain classmate to another depending on his/her country of origin”, half of them answer ‘never’. In item 60, “I find the best ways to get to know my classmates of other cultures”, almost the majority of students answer ‘always’.

Aim 2: Study of the possible differences of those intercultural competences according to gender and age of students.

Differences according to age and knowledge. The most significant data are found in items 1, 10, 11 and 14, which refer to, respectively: “I can find foreign countries in a map”, “I know tales from other countries”, “I know and can name typical objects from other countries”, “I can notice differences in other cultures”.

Differences according to age and attitudes. The most significant data are found in items 22, 24, 25, 27, 36 and 37, which refer to, respectively: “I like tales from other countries”, “I don’t mind sharing the same space”, “I like to mix with classmates of other cultures”, “I have friends of other cultures outside school”, “I think many people don’t like people from other cultures”, “I go on the defensive towards foreign classmates”.

Differences according to age and skills. The most significant data are found in items 42, 43 and 45, which refer to, respectively: “I mix with people of other cultures”, “I sit next to classmates of foreign countries”, “I have friends of other cultures”.

Differences according to gender and knowledge. The most significant data are found in items 2 and 9, which refer to, respectively: “I use greetings in the mother tongue of my foreign classmates”, “I know the country of origin of these greetings”.

Differences according to gender and attitudes. The most significant data are found in items 27 and 31, which refer to, respectively: “I have friends of other cultures outside school”, “I am interested in knowing other cultures”.

Differences according to gender and skills. The most significant data are found in items 53, 56 and 60, which refer to, respectively: “I usually mock customs of other cultures”, “I feel respect for the customs of other cultures”, “I find the best ways to get to know my classmates of other cultures”.

Discussion

After the analysis of all these data, we find the following conclusions according to each objective in this research. With reference to the first objective (to know the intercultural competences of students in Primary Education (knowledge, attitudes and skills with reference to intercultural education), students interviewed show, in general terms, intercultural competences which are socially accepted towards students of other cultures. However, the results reveal that these competences are different and do not happen in the same way for each section: knowledge, attitudes and skills. Besides, these results show that students lack of significant knowledge, as they ignore the main cultural aspects about their classmates of other cultures (songs, tales, customs, popular games, ...). On the other hand, students present positive attitudes and skills. In this respect, almost all the students interviewed think everybody has the same rights independently of their cultural origin and their families allow them to mix with students of other cultures. These answers are socially determined and confirm an obvious integration of immigrant people within the predominant culture. Thus, many students say they feel respect for the customs of classmates of other cultures, but contradictorily they avoid asking for a favour to them. Furthermore, students do not mind sharing the same common places with others and mix with

classmates of other cultures, but they do not allow classmates of other cultures to think differently to them.

With reference to the second objective of our research (to study the possible differences of those intercultural competences according to gender and age of students), the analysis demonstrates there are significant differences as for age, but not as for gender. The answers given by older students regarding knowledge are much more satisfactory, so it can be interpreted that knowledge increases with learning. If we have a look at the attitudes, 11-year-old students possess attitudes that are much more accepted socially, compared to the answers given by 9-year-old students. This fact can be explained because younger students answer in a much more spontaneous way and without any social conditioning. This same fact is also shown under skills. To conclude, we can affirm that cultural diversity must be approached in the classroom from the perspective of intercultural education, by means of the development of knowledge, attitudes, and skills in early ages, so as to favour the inclusion of those students coming from abroad and thus avoiding situations of rejection towards this type of students.

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CAMPUS CLIMATE DIVERSITY SURVEY: CHANGING THE STATUS QUO

Gloria D. Campbell-Whatley

Diversity and campus climate is a major concern on colleges and universities (Hart 2008). In the past two decades, the number of faculty with gender, racial, disability, and religious differences has increased (Locks, Sylvia, Hurtado, Bowman, & Oseguera, 2008). Sustaining and assuring a welcome environment while incorporating a diversity of voices, knowledge, and experiences in the educational and academic process is of paramount importance to schools, universities and campus climate. The present study assessed attitudes and perceptions of faculty which will have far-reaching value to the school’s diversity initiatives, while providing information to other colleges and universities.

Method

All (N = 895) full-time faculty members were eligible to participate in the survey. Of the 895 faculty, 323 (36%) responded. Seventy-four percent of the participants were white, 15% (n=47) were from other races or ethnic categories, and 11% preferred not to respond. More participants were female (55%) (n=174) than male (38%) (n=126). Eighty-three percent (n=271) of the sample was heterosexual, while 6% (n=21) indicated themselves as bisexual, gay, lesbian, or other. Ten percent (n=31) of this category preferred not to respond. Eighty-six percent (n=279) of the sample size indicated that they did not have a disability, while 6% (n=19) of the sample

indicated a disability. Eight percent (n= 25) of the population did not respond in this category. Christian-Protestant comprised the largest religious affiliation (31%) (n=100). The second largest religious affiliation was none (21%) (n=68), while Christian-Catholic comprised the third largest affiliation (13%) (n=40). The other religious affiliates, Buddhism, Christian-other, Islam, Judaism, and other, together comprised 15% (n=71) of the population sample. Fourteen percent (n=44) of the population did not respond in this area.

Results

The Campus Climate Diversity Survey was composed of 26 items, 18 related to diversity concerns and the remaining included demographic data. The rating scale contained Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Strongly Disagree, and Disagree on a 1-5 point Likert scale. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability (1951) was computed using the survey scores of participants and the reliability coefficient was .69.

A quasi-experimental comparison group design was used to evaluate differences in responses for gender and ethnic (majority/non-majority) groups. In order to reduce data to a smaller set of summary variables, attempt to measure several constructs, and to enhance reliability and validity of the instrument, an exploratory factor analysis was performed. Results were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. A t is used to test for differences among two independent groups. A t test was performed to determine significant differences between gender and ethnicity. The researchers wanted to test the difference between males and females and majority and non-majority participants. For each t test, Cohen's d was calculated to get an effect size to measure the strength of the relationship between two variables (Cohen, 1988). Due to the large number of t tests and to avoid a type 1 error (a "false positive": the error of rejecting a null hypothesis when it is actually true) a modified Bonferroni adjustment was calculated.

The first factor in the Factor Analysis consisted of 5 items, accounting for 36.13% of the variance, and was labeled Respect. This factor contained items that measure the degree to which faculty experienced an association or connection within their work environment. The second factor consisted of 5 items, accounting for 10.74% of the variance. This factor was labeled conflict because these items reflected the degree to which faculty had experienced dissatisfaction on campus or diversity training need conflicted with training aspirations. The third factor consisted of 3 items, accounting for 8.96% of the variance, and was labeled Diversity Exposure. The third factor contained items related to diverse activity or exposure on this campus.

A t test was calculated to explore differences between men and women on various survey items. Six items were statistically significant. "Faculty respect me as a professional" and "In my department, if I work hard, I'm almost assured of being rewarded". On both items, men tended to agree with these statements more than women. Men agreed more than women on only one of the three Exposure factors: "The campus climate is positive." Also of note are the statements related to two of the five Conflict factors, fewer women agreed than did men with the statement, "I have experienced conflict at work as a result of my gender" and "I experienced conflict at work as a result of my disability".

A t test was calculated to explore differences between majority and non-majority populations on various survey items. Seven items that were statistically significant. Of particular note, are the two of the five items related to the Respect factor, that state, "I feel welcome on this campus" and "Faculty respect me as a professional". Majority faculty tended to agree with this statement more than non-majority faculty. Non-majority populations agreed more on only one item of the five items related to the Conflict factor, "I have experienced conflict at work as a result of my ethnicity". It is important to note that the effect size was large for this particular statistical significance. Majority and Non-Minority faculty had significant differences in two of the five items related to the factor Exposure. Majority faculty significantly agreed more than non-majority faculty on the items, "The campus climate is positive" and "The university's faculty is diverse." Also of note are the statements, "I have been harassed on campus" and "My accent/colloquialism/ language causes me difficulty" as Non-majority faculty agreed more on these items than majority faculty.

Discussion

Despite overall opinions of a general recognition that the university is increasing diversity efforts, there remain groups on campus that have encountered negative experiences. Specifically, members of ethnic groups and women report experiencing conflict due to their race, and gender. The level of conflict mentioned by these groups is of note in this study. As previous research indicates (Brown, 2004; Hart & Cress, 2008), ethnically diverse faculty and women have experiences quite different from those of majority groups. These experiences can translate into an overall lack of belongingness to their institution, which ultimately affects recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups.

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**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDENT DIVERSITY
IN TWO COUNTRIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

M. Cristina Cardona
Shaila Rao
Randall Soffer

Today's startling classroom diversity reflects a major demographic shift around the world. The greatest wave of immigrants since the turn of the century is creating a society with no distinctive majority and with a student population enormously mixed as never before seen in single schools and classrooms (Barton, & Armstrong, 2007). Because students' individual and group differences profoundly influence student motivation and ability to succeed, teachers must understand such differences as well as the role they play in specific contexts. Historically, teachers have held ambivalent perceptions of student diversity. While teachers usually recognize the student's right to be different, they perceive such differences as a threat in academic and social contexts. Therefore, responding to the diverse needs of students in the classroom is one of the biggest challenges currently facing teachers worldwide (Meijer, 2003). In attempting to become more responsive practitioners, Tomlison (2003) suggests educators find an appropriate match between the diversity evident in student characteristics and the curriculum to be accessed. But in real practice there is little match. Paine (1990) studied teacher orientation towards diversity and identified four levels of orientation: (a) the individual difference approach, (b) the categorial approach, (c) the contextual difference approach, and (d) the pedagogical perspective approach. Paine found that teachers' attitudes most often reflected the individual difference orientation and rarely the pedagogical orientation on diversity. This assumes that differences are not simply random or natural variations, and they must be understood as having pedagogical implications and consequences for both teaching and learning. Paine's view of diversity in terms of implications offers additional support to the conflict between positive attitudes toward diversity and actual practice.

Given the ambivalence towards student differences, most attitude surveys confirm quite eloquently that educational systems continue to offer uniform responses to diverse needs creating a significant barrier to achieving full participation. Studies show that teachers lack positive views of both student differences and inclusion (Cook et al., 2000; Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1996), and that individual and contextual differences (e.g., knowledge, experience, training, support, and kind of school) may influence teacher preparedness and compromise teaching in inclusive environments. These studies, however, have only examined teacher perceptions in specific contexts. Few attempts have been made to compare such perceptions and actions cross-culturally. The present study attempted to broaden knowledge of teacher perceptions and

attitudes towards diversity by exploring several questions: (a) To what extent do regular education teachers perceive their school as diverse and sensitive to student differences, and what attitudes do teachers hold towards student diversity in terms of culture, language, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, political ideology, disability, giftedness/special talent, academic achievement, and student behavior?, (b) Do teachers feel prepared to meet the educational needs of diverse students?, (c) What similarities/differences are there in school sensitiveness, teacher attitudes, and preparedness between Spanish and US elementary and secondary teachers?, and (d) What specific teaching strategies do teachers most often use to adapt for student diversity?

Method

We surveyed two respondent groups of teachers ($n = 115$ elementary, 93% return rate, and $n = 110$ secondary teachers, 66% return rate) representing two different countries (Spain and the US) on their perceptions/attitudes and skills to teach diverse students in inclusive classrooms. The sample consisted of 225 regular education teachers who taught students between the ages of 5 to 18. Their ages ranged from 21-64 ($M = 38.55$, $SD = 9.48$, Spanish sample; and $M = 38.63$, $SD = 11.79$, US sample). More specifically, there were 135 teachers, 41 (30%) male and 94 female (70%) from Spain, and 90 teachers 12 (13%) male and 78 female (87%) from the US. The Spanish sample was drawn from three elementary and three secondary schools and was ethnically homogeneous (100% Spaniards). The US teachers came from two elementary and one middle school, as well as from a group of evening graduate students from a Northern US University who teaches during the day. Approximately 91% of the US teachers were white, 8% African American, and 1% Hispanic. Teaching experience ranged from 0 to 39 years ($M = 11.83$, $SD = 9.33$, Spanish sample) and a mean of 11.53 ($SD = 10.75$) in the US sample. The respondents indicated a considerable level of student diversity in their respective schools: $M = 2.66$ ($SD = 1.65$) for the Spanish sample, and $M = 2.95$ ($SD = 1.08$) for the US sample. The highest prevalence of diversity level (Spanish sample) was for academic achievement ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.01$) and the lowest for disability ($M = 1.64$, $SD = 1.03$). For the US sample, the highest area was for socioeconomic status ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.05$) and the lowest was for language ($M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.14$).

The instrument used was an adaptation of the original version of the *Perceptions and Attitudes towards Diversity Scale* (Cardona et al., 2005). This instrument contains six sets of questions: (a) Prevalence of diversity in school (9 items), (b) School sensitivity to student differences (9 items), (c) Teacher attitudes towards student diversity (9 items), (d) Teacher preparedness to teach diverse school populations (9 items), (e) Use of specific strategies to adapt for student diversity (9 open ended questions), and (f) Recommendations from schools and universities to better deal with student differences (2 open ended questions). The participants responded to the 36 open-ended questions using a 5-item Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *very little* to 5 = *very much*, or from 1 = *rejection* to 5 = *acceptance*. Based on the results of an exploratory factor analysis with the first four set of questions, we created four subscales for further analyses: (1) Prevalence of diversity, (2) School sensitivity to student differences, (3) Teacher attitudes towards student diversity, and (4) Teacher competency to teach diverse school populations. These factors explained 46.23% and 46.33% of the variance in the Spanish and the US sample, respectively. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of these subscales were .720, .872, .862, .839, respectively, with a total reliability scale of .859 (.861 for the Spanish sample, and .861 for the US sample). Doctoral students of the Faculty of Education assisted in the distribution of the survey after

permission was obtained from school principals. All the teaching staff in schools was asked to complete the survey. Each copy was accompanied by a small introduction explaining the study and requesting teacher participation. Descriptive analysis was used to estimate the levels of diversity in schools, school sensitiveness, attitudes and competency of teachers who took part in the survey. Content analyses of opened questions were also conducted. To investigate similarities/differences between the elementary and secondary teachers of both countries for each variable, two-way analyses of variance (2 x 2) and Chi Square comparisons were conducted.

Results

Teachers in the sample perceived their school as diverse ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.10$) and sensitive to student differences ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.00$). The mean ratings across respondent groups, situated above the scale's midpoint indicated that student diversity is quite prevalent in schools and that schools have a strong perception of sensitiveness. For prevalence of diversity, the average scores for all nine dimensions of diversity by country were for the Spanish sample 2.66 ($SD = 1.06$), and for the US sample 2.95 ($SD = 1.08$). The highest ratings were for academic achievement ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.01$) and socioeconomic status ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.05$), Spanish and US respondents, respectively; and the lowest were for disability ($M = 1.64$, $SD = 1.03$) and language ($M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.14$), Spanish and US sample, respectively. For school sensitiveness, the average scores by country were for Spain 3.55 ($SD = 1.05$), and, for the US, 3.63 ($SD = 1.08$). Gender ($M = 3.79$, $SD = .93$) and student behaviours ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.02$) were the dimensions that received the highest ratings, Spanish and US samples, respectively, while giftedness/special talent ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 1.30$) and religion ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.26$) received the lowest.

Teachers' attitudes towards student diversity were totally tolerant ($M = 4.55$, $SD = .74$) in both samples, Spanish ($M = 4.54$, $SD = .81$) and US ($M = 4.57$, $SD = .68$). In fact, more than 90% of respondents (average of all nine dimensions) self-reported high levels of acceptance toward student diversity. Teachers' ratings of their overall preparedness to teach students with SEN were more mixed, however. The average mean on this subscale was 3.90 ($SD = .99$). This suggests that a considerable number of teachers 44% and 34% of the Spanish and US respondents, respectively, felt under-prepared to teach students with diverse needs. Those who felt under-prepared were significantly ($p < .05$) more likely to feel uncertain about how to teach students who differ in language (US respondents), disability (Spanish respondents), giftedness/special talent (Spanish respondents), academic achievement (Spanish respondents), and student behaviour (Spanish respondents).

To determine whether there were any differences between elementary and secondary teachers from both countries in terms of school sensitivity, teacher attitudes towards student diversity, and teacher preparedness, a series of ANOVA's were conducted. These analyses revealed that elementary teachers' perceptions of school sensitiveness were stronger than secondary teachers' perceptions. Statistically significant differences were found for school sensitiveness in culture ($p < .05$), language ($p < .01$), social class ($p < .01$), gender ($p < .01$), and student behavior differences ($p < .01$). The results also revealed that independent from the country elementary teachers had more positive attitudes toward student differences than secondary teachers in culture ($p < .05$), and student behavior ($p < .01$). Also, an interaction was found for language ($p < .05$). While US elementary and secondary teachers had similar attitudes towards student differences in language,

elementary teachers from Spain were more tolerant of student linguistic differences than secondary teachers. The ANOVAs also showed statistical differences in teacher preparedness between countries and between elementary and secondary teachers. Respondents from the US indicated stronger perceptions of preparedness to deal with student differences in culture ($p < .05$), disability ($p < .05$), and giftedness ($p < .05$) than educators from Spain, while Spanish respondents did better in language ($p < .01$). In addition, elementary teachers indicated that they felt better prepared to teach students who differ in religion ($p < .05$), gender ($p < .05$), academic achievement ($p < .05$), and student behavior ($p < .05$) than did secondary teachers.

Finally, in examining the kind of specific teaching strategies teachers used to adapt for student differences, respondents reported the use of a variety of strategies directed to create a great deal of flexibility in their classrooms. For example, to adapt for culture, some of them mentioned that they “incorporate student backgrounds into the lessons”; language: “choose histories that appeal to more than one language”; socioeconomic status: “build relationships”; religion: “adhere to religious customs in relation to school activities”; gender: write about “The woman I admire the most”; disability: “work with what the student can do and interest him/her”; giftedness: “have extra projects ready, more creativity assignments”; academic achievement: “reward any and all gains, not just A’s & B’s”; student behavior: “connect with individual students.”

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to compare teacher perceptions, attitudes, and practices responding to student diversity in two samples of teachers from the US and Spain. In general, respondent perceptions and attitudes toward student diversity are very positive. Also, preparedness to teach diverse students can be characterized as almost adequate in both samples. However, variations exist by country and between elementary and secondary teachers when such as perceptions are broken down into the nine dimensions of student diversity addressed in this study. Although respondents reported the use of teaching strategies consistent with inclusive principles, conflicts between attitudes and practice seems to exist. Teachers’ responses to open ended questions were very low. This possibly reflects teachers’ reservations when asked about their teaching. These findings are consistent with other studies (e.g., Paine, 1990; Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1996) indicating that there is a big difference between teacher attitudes and action. Further research should incorporate in-class observations to determine how attitudes influence teacher classroom practice, and, as a result, insight will be gained on how to transform teacher attitudes into action.

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EDUCATIONAL CARING IN THE INCLUSION CLASSROOM

Janice Luke

Caring for students emotionally and educationally in the classroom is a subject that takes precedence in many middle schools (Murphy & Meyers, 2004). According to Levine (1994), educational caring allows all involved to have a clearer understanding of the reasons that children feel inadequate in the classroom. Educators have at their disposal various resources including learning styles inventories and testing as conducted by [school] psychologists (Catterall, 1995). Inclusion of those students who have needs not considered under the umbrella of general education requires that educators must be familiar with learning styles, willingly seek opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, deliver instruction that is moderately challenging, and offer remediation and enrichment (McCoach & Siegel, 2000). The purpose of this research effort was to obtain information from professionals that could be directly utilized in the inclusion classroom.

Method

The information presented in this paper has its basis in a qualitative research project that was conducted using information gathered from professionals in their respective fields. They included teachers, psychiatrists, and psychologists who were presented open-ended interview questions via e-mail and in person. All of the experts gave suggestions and professional opinions concerning curriculum modifications, executive functioning, and learning styles. Students with ADHD were the common denominator. The results were then compiled as a best practices approach for a middle school inclusion classroom.

Results

The following briefly lists some results as confirmed by Hamblen (1993): (a) 43% of students in special education classes do not graduate; (b) students with disabilities are more likely to be arrested (12% as compared to 8%), and (c) less than half of special education students who have been out of school 1 to 2 years; (d) are employed.

Packer (2002) also confirmed some results: (a) the comfort level of all students increases; social cognition and social interaction is greater, and (c) inclusion may increase graduation rates.

Discussion

Several limitations should be considered. First, the sample of professionals was small. Also, the different disciplines disagreed on several aspects of how students could best be served in the inclusion classroom. They did, however, unanimously agree that becoming more aware of the different co-morbidities associated with certain emotional disorders would benefit educational personnel. Hence, an effort to better understand the problems as a whole could enhance students' overall self-esteem.

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FAMILY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN AT RISK FOR VIOLENCE AND CRIME

Shirley A. McBride

This research evaluated a program developed by Family Service Canada and funded through the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) and tested in four communities located in four different Canadian provinces. The program, Families and Schools Together (F&ST) was developed for children ages 9-12 based on an American model previously used for younger children and their families.

At-risk neighbourhoods were selected based on characteristics associated with violence and crime later in a child's life. (Garbarino, Dubrow, Kostelny, & Pardo, 1992; Thornberry, 1994). The school was as the contact point for recruitment of families. The goal of the program is to prevent anti-social behaviour and victimization, develop resilience in children and strengthen families in ways that create protective factors.

Method

Families were recruited initially through a class-wide invitation, followed by personal contact in families who did not respond to the invitation but were identified by teachers as being appropriate for the program. Eight schools in four communities were involved. There were 11 weekly sessions in each program – two child-only sessions and 9 involving the entire family. Monthly follow-up sessions were available for two years. Each family session follows the same sequence of activities: a family meal, family communication games, time for children to socialize with one another, a parent support group, one-to-one time between parent and child, and a closing exercise designed to strengthen bonds with the family and community. A program team consisting of school personnel, community workers from areas such as mental health and community policing, and two peer models organized and delivered the weekly sessions,

The evaluation was designed around 23 questions, using a quasi-experimental design. Data was collected 11 weeks prior to the program, (which constituted a comparison group) at intake,

immediately following completion of the 11-week program and again at one and two-year intervals.

Instrumentation included family interview forms, interviews and focus groups with participants, school principals and team members, reviews of school records. Norm-referenced instruments were the Social Skills Rating System (Gresham & Elliott, 1990), Parenting Stress Index (Short Form) (Abidin, 1995) and FACES III (Olsen, Portner & Lavee, 1985) as well as a Parent Evaluation of Program form. The SSRS data was collected from teachers, parents, and the students themselves. Cost data were collected quarterly from each site, as well as from the program sponsor.

Results

Of 214 families who began the program, 206 completed it. Many families proved to be highly mobile and difficult to track, and the “n” decreased from 206 immediately post-program to 152 after the first year and 78 after the second year. The project was had been extended by an additional year in an attempt to get a reasonable “n” for the year 2 follow-up.

Comparison of parent reports and school records showed that parents significantly underestimated their child’s absentee rate from school. Findings showed increases in the children’s social skills ratings post-program, but the scores returned to intake levels after one year. There were small but statistically significant differences in teacher academic competence ratings from Intake to Year 1 follow-up.

Family cohesion increased slightly over time, but these were no statistically significant. Some children showed significant decreases in office referrals. Parental evaluation of the program indicated that 67% reported an improved relationship with their child, 57% reported improved relationships with school personnel and 82% reported strengthened relationships with the parent group. Parental satisfaction rating was 8.7 out of 10. Average cost per family for delivery of the program was \$3538 Cdn. (consisting of \$1900 in hard costs, \$1638 for in-kind contribution). In addition, training costs for teams averaged \$872 Cdn. per family.

Discussion

The follow-up period of 2 years proved difficult due to the high mobility rate among these at-risk families. Thus, data from Year 2 was of somewhat limited value despite the program extension. Despite limitations, there were some positive findings. Given the short intervention time improvements in academic competence as reported by teachers on SSRS was surprising. Marked differences were noted in results based on qualitative data and participant evaluation when compared with statistical findings. These may be due to either instrument limitations, Hawthorne effect, or both. School personnel burn-out poses a risk in delivering the program unless there is strong support.

Once communities are committed to implementation of the FAST program, they contribute in-kind resources which are at least equivalent to the hard costs, and sometimes more. The program

requires an enrolment of at least 12 families in each cycle. Otherwise, the costs on a per-family basis escalates substantially and would be politically difficult to justify.

As a consequence of program participation, some families developed a comfort level with personnel offering mental health, addiction, or marital counseling and were reported as often connected with them following the program for further intervention. The research design did not measure this factor.

There were numerous, rather remarkable individual success stories related by team members during interviews. The program shows some promise. Further studies are warranted.

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STUDENTS IN MEDICAL SETTINGS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: BROADENING EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT THROUGH COLLABORATION

Yvonne RB-Banks

Chronic illness is common and has a profound impact on the education of children. For children needing special education services and facing challenges associated with a chronic or terminal

illness the experience can be twice as overwhelming. A variety of interventions to support the transition from hospital to school for children with such health problems have been cited in the literature on how to improve their experiences. Traditional school plans that outline transition options may not be effective because often the medical service delivery team is not at the table to collaborate on behalf of the medical needs. A comprehensive hospital-to-school transition plan is needed to increase the involvement of all stakeholders working on behalf of the student. Students with chronic or terminal illness respond best when team planning includes homebound instructional strategies, hospital based educational experiences, flexible school days, differentiated strategies, and overlapping medical strategies that help the student stay connected with the school in responsible ways (Shaw, 2008).

Research Tells Us

Advocating for teams to collaborate on behalf of chronically ill students identified with special needs if moving successfully between the educational experience and the medical experience is the goal. Strategies that are grounded in both areas (hospital/school) put a shape to their lives and reflect the whole child and not only the medical needs of the child. Instructional methods should include strategies that can be replicate when the child is hospitalized and learning supports should be transferrable. Research outlines that when students are faced with chronic illnesses the success rate is impacted positively because the school experience provides an expectation of inclusion, connectiveness with peers and the team is forward thinking in its approach. Collaborative teams should work to address the increased needs of the restricted child due to their physical health and their emotional health.

Team Development

There are multiple factors to consider when collaborating on behalf of chronically ill or terminally students, with special educational needs. Team Development promotes resolving the challenges. Administrators of programs for young people in schools, agencies, hospitals, and other institutions often find their biggest *obstacle* to be interdisciplinary conflict among teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, child-care workers, and others (Gardner, 1982). Collaboration brings all players to the conference table at once on behalf of the child. An effective model shows the educational and medical team members how *to achieve optimum levels* of communication, cooperation, and consistency while working on behalf of the child. An effective team decreases competing voices about the care of the child and increase support for the parents during stressful times of decision-making.

Collaboration: Benefits to Chronically/Terminally Ill Student

Using a collaborative approach when working with students identified with a chronic or terminal illness requires advocacy in both the educational arena and the medical arena. Effective collaboration requires that the voice of the parent be heard as an equal partner in the collaboration model. Research supports wrap around services that decrease duplication of efforts and increases a focus that is singular in nature; which means on the child. For chronically ill students collaboration provides a holistic approach to their treatment. Collaboration between teams from the medical field and the educational field expands the options for students in this

category and enhances their educational experiences in positives ways. The key to successful collaboration is the ability of the team to establish the basic teamwork structure in a timely manner, delegate lines of responsibility and monitor the impact of the team on the outcomes of the student. Best practices for this population include clear directions that will keep the students focused on school and not necessary their involvement with the hospital. Collaboration, when done well, is one of the best interventions for a hospitalized student with unique educational needs.

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RISKS / NEEDS OF CHILDREN/YOUTH WITH BEHAVIOUR DISORDERS IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN CROATIA

Gabrijela Ratkajec
Ivana Jeđud

Previous research and experience in Croatia show that interventions are not matched with the risk level and intervention needs of children with behavior disorders. As a result of that, the situation in Croatia requires more actuarial approach to the risk and needs assessment of children and youth.

The purpose of the presented research is to entice a stronger and more explicit orientation of the interventions system for children and youth at-risk towards the rights and needs of those children and youth. The aim of this paper is to examine the differences, between children and youth in various kinds of institutions regarding level of risks and strengths.

Method

Risk level and intervention needs assessment was made for children and youth at-risk placed in institutional treatment in the Republic of Croatia. The sample consisted of 418 children and youth from 15 institutions. The average age was 16 years (age ranged: from 9 to 22) and 83% of children/youth were male. Almost equal percent of them went to elementary (39%) and secondary (38%) school. Institutions were categorized into 5 groups: correctional institution (19% of the sample), state residential group homes (29%), community residential group homes (42%), institution for youth with multiple problems (8%) and children's homes (11%).

A well known assessment instrument, *Youth Level of Service / Case Management Inventory – (YLS/CMI)*; Hoge, Andrews, & Leschied, 2002) was used. This instrument is used for the assessment of risk, needs and strength of children/youth and their environment with the purpose of projection of individualized treatment.

The instrument enables identification of risk levels for socially unacceptable behaviour as well as the areas of strengths. Eight risk areas (subscales of risk) can be assessed: Prior and current offence, Family, Education, Peers, Substance abuse, Leisure / Recreation, Personality / Behavior and Attitudes / Orientation. Levels of risk can be low, moderate and high. In reference to that, on an individual level, the instrument enables planning goals as well as implementation of adequate intervention. Assessment was made by specially trained professionals in February 2008.

Results

Metric characteristics of YLS/CMI show good reliability ($\alpha = 0,872$; $R_{TT} = 0,858$). Generally, 60% of the sample is estimated to function on moderate level of risk and 30% on high level of risk. In two areas (prior and current offences, substance abuse), one half of the sample reaches the result, which implicates the low level of risk. In three areas (peers, personality/behavior and attitudes/orientation) more than a half of the sample has results which respond to medium level of risk. The highest results are in the family area leisure/recreation area and education area. Using Univariate Analysis of Variance, statistically significant differences among five types of institutions were obtained on five, out of eight, assessed risk areas. These areas are: prior and current offence, family, education, peers and substance abuse.

Youth placed in the correctional institution was estimated as having a high level of risk in all five significant areas. Youth from state residential homes and institution for youth with multiple problems, as well, reach the high level of risk in family, education and peers areas, and medium level of risk in prior and current offence and substance abuse areas. Equally, children and youth from community residential homes and children's homes have the same level of risk in the same areas – high level of risk on the family and education area, and medium level of risk on the prior and current offence, peers and substance abuse areas. It seems that high level of risk in the area of family life and education is the general key reason for placing children /youth in institutional treatment, and that *differentia specifica* among these institutions could be found in risk areas of substance abuse, peers and prior and current offence.

Children / youth strengths are the most frequent assessed by professionals in the family area (35,4%), in leisure/recreation area (30,9%) and in education area (29,2%). Discriminative analysis displays differences among institutions according to the child/youth strengths. State residential homes and institution for youth with multiple problems are specific by the estimated presence of strengths in the family, education and peers areas. A negative attitude regarding substance abuse as children/youth strength is present in community residential homes. Children placed in children's homes were assessed as having strength in the peers area. No specific and significant strengths were assessed for youth placed in correctional institution.

Youth placed in correctional institution are assessed as having high level of risk on all significant risk areas and not having any strength. This result opens a question of standards and quality of assessment.

Discussion

Using risk level and areas of risk as a criterion, sample of institutions could be differentiated as follows:

- Correctional institution – high risk in area of prior and current offenses and family, education, peers and substance abuse.
- State residential homes and special institution for youth with multiple problems- high risk in area of family, education and peers and medium level of risk in area of prior and current offenses and substance abuse.
- Community residential homes and children's homes – high risk in area of family and education, and medium risk in prior and current offenses, peers and substance abuse.

Several issues arise from these results which need to be further researched:

- The treatment programs in those institutions matched with identified area and levels of risk.
- Problems in assessment procedure are notified. Especially when identifying strengths in children and youth.

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RECOGNIZING AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF ADULTS LEARNERS LABELED WITH DISABILITIES ATTENDING COLLEGE

Yvonne RB-Banks

The enrollment for adults with special needs attending college is continuing to increase and this increase requires special interventions on the part of disability service providers. Adult learners may request support services for a variety of needs associated with either an academic, emotional, or physical disability. As this population integrates into the college experience, service providers will need to look at ways to establish best practices that can support experiences that lead to success.

Success Looks Different

What does it take to succeed in college as an adult learner? This question is the focal point for many adult learners returning to college or entering college for the first time. The same question is of special importance to adults entering college and identified as needing special support services due to a disability. What best practices will help them succeed? What interventions will best enhance their college experience as they face learning, emotional, or physical challenges? How will success be defined? Defining success for this population may appear differently than the traditional college students attending without the label of a disability. In order to improve the college environment for adults learners labeled with severe learning needs professionals will need to review and implement best practices for academic accommodations designed specifically for this population. Research outlines the role of college professionals in providing appropriate services. The intervention of services for this population will need to occur across campus.

Best Practices for Adult Learners

The most effective approach involves looking at services that meet the needs of students across campus. Interventions work best when the strategies for this population address skill development in the areas of academics, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.

Educational professionals at the college level can prepare to help adult learners labeled with special needs by (a) identifying what services are required for success; (b) engaging in self-advocacy; (c) designing a model for academic success that includes mentoring; (d) providing

skill development that applies across the college setting, and (e) establishing measureable feedback markers that are tangible and timely.

To work on behalf of adult learners, labeled with special needs entering the college setting, it is important for accommodation professionals to recognize the broad range of services this population requires across campus. Professionals at the college level will need to continue to position themselves to work effectively with adult learners with unique challenges by asking ongoing questions that directly prepare them for success. Adult learners come to college with many strengths and recognizing their strengths can help prepare them to meet the challenges of college.

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CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF A COGNITIVE TEST: RESPONDING TO A WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS

R. Steve McCallum

World populations continue to shift as a result of war, political unrest, and economic pressures/opportunities. As a result children are often expected to use a second language in

school setting or a new culture. For example, increasing numbers of immigrants enter the U.S. each year. According to one estimate children in one school system in the U.S. (Chicago) collectively speak over 200 different languages (Pasko, 1994). In addition, there many school children have communication problems (e.g., elective mutism, severe hearing deficits). The need to assess the cognitive abilities of children who are at-risk academically and have related language deficits is growing. The Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT; Bracken & McCallum, 1998) is a multidimensional and comprehensive nonverbal measure of intelligence developed to meet this need in the U.S. However, because the UNIT requires no verbalizations from either the examiner or examinee, it may be particularly adaptable for other cultures, and with minimal expense.

UNIT assesses memory or reasoning and symbolic or nonsymbolic processing within three administration formats (abbreviated, standard, and extended). Subtests vary in terms of task demands (e.g., some require a motor response and some do not) and underlying abilities (e.g., attention to detail, sequencing) and may be combined to yield a FSIQ and Scaled Scores. The six UNIT subtests, three assessing memory and three reasoning, create a 2 by 2 structural/theoretical, administration, and interpretation scheme allowing several scale scores, including a Full Scale score (FSIQ), Memory Quotient (MQ), Reasoning Quotient (RQ), Symbolic Quotient (SQ), and Nonsymbolic Quotient (NSQ). Moreover, individual subtest scores can be derived for each of the six subtests for further analysis of examinee's performance. UNIT subtests are: Symbolic Memory (on the Memory and Symbolic Scales); Spatial Memory (Memory and Nonsymbolic Scales); Object Memory (Memory and Symbolic Scales); Cube Design (Reasoning and Nonsymbolic Scales); Analogic Reasoning (Reasoning and Symbolic Scales); Mazes (Reasoning and Nonsymbolic Scales).

There are several features that set the Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test apart from all or most existing nonverbal scales (e.g., it is administered solely through the use of examiner demonstrations, non-scored sample items, and a standardized set of eight gestures; subtests contain items that are as culturally universal as is possible and use line drawings of people and objects that are recognized by most individuals from all cultures; validation included samples of non-English speaking individuals). Finally, the UNIT testing and training materials provides a training video, a university training Manual, and a computerized scoring and interpretation software program.

Standardization data were collected from a representative sample of 2100 children and adolescents ranging in age from 5 years, 0 months to 17 years, 11 months carefully selected based on age, sex, race, parent educational attainment, community size, geographic region, special education placement, and ethnicity. See the UNIT Manual for results of many special studies conducted to assess technical adequacy, including reliability, validity, and fairness data for a variety of populations, including those who do not have English as a first language. According to the UNIT Examiner's Manual, UNIT reliability data are strong; the average composite scale reliability coefficients average range from .86 to .96 for the typical and clinical/exceptional samples across all batteries. The FSIQ reliability coefficients range from .91 to .93. Test-retest stability coefficients (corrected for restriction in range) range from .79 to .84 for IQs for a sample of 197 participants. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analytic data support the two-factor memory/reasoning and symbolic/nonsymbolic models.

A number of statistical procedures were undertaken to help ensure fairness, including calculation of separate reliabilities, factor structure statistics, mean-difference analyses, etc. for subpopulations. Reliabilities for FSIQs for females, males, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans were all greater than .91, uncorrected, and .94, corrected for the Abbreviated Battery, and greater than .95 for the Standard and Extended Battery. Separate confirmatory factor analyses for these subpopulations provide evidence for the test structure across sex, race, and ethnic groups (Bracken & McCallum, 1998).

Mean IQ difference analyses reported using matched groups from the standardization data provide evidence of fairness (e.g., mean differences of FSIQs, reflected via effect sizes, range from .10 to .14 for matched Hispanic Americans across all batteries; the largest raw score difference, 2.13 occurred on the Standard Battery). A Standard Battery FSIQ mean difference of 5.33 was found between Ecuadorian and matched non-Ecuadorian examinees. Upson (2003) applied a more refined SES matching strategy and found a further reduction of mean difference scores between Hispanic Americans and Whites, from 2.13 to .47.

Because the costs of developing psychometrically sound individually administered intelligence tests are significant and the global economies increasingly reflect fewer financial resources it is imperative that educational experts rely on more cost-conscious strategies for delivering assessment services. There is an economical strategy for adapting a well-developed test from one culture to another. This strategy, described here, could be one response to a world financial crisis because it has potential to offer assessment opportunities and services to special needs children using a fiscally conservative strategy.

Guidelines for cross-cultural use (McCallum, Bracken, & Wasserman, 2001):

- Establish cross-cultural item equivalence using techniques described by Gittler and Tanzer (1998) using 200 randomly selected individuals from the target culture and 200 from the standardization data of the anchor culture.
- Check for evidence of Differential Item Functioning DIF using non-sample based chi-square indices, and/or IRT statistics. Criteria may be liberal or conservative based on perceived level of need to use the test in the target population.
- Establish local norms for the target culture by using the 200 individuals in the original sample to: (a) compute mean subtest raw scores at four ages; (b) create regression formulas to predict means of all ages; (c) obtain raw score differences (by age) between predicted means of target sample and the U.S. standardization sample; (d) generate adapted norm tables by adding/subtracting raw score differences as a constant in the raw-to-scaled score transformation formula; and (e) using existing norm tables to transform sums of subtest scaled scores to composite scale scores.

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**SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND
COLLABORATIVE SERVICE LEARNING PEDAGOGY**

Teshami Reid
Rebekka Jez

Service learning pedagogy and projects (SLPs) are rooted in a multitude of educational and social philosophies, from cognition to democratic citizenship. Regardless of the discipline, philosophy, or theoretical framework employed, researchers have consistently argued a need for SLPs in compulsory and higher education. Using the common constructs of experiential learning, action and reflection, inquiry and questioning, and civic responsibility and care, researchers note that SLPs benefit all members of a group, institution, community or society as a result of the relationships that are formed during the SLP. In this way, interactions in an SLP help give voice to the problem or issue under study, as well as to the people involved (Oberbauer, 2006; Hildreth, 2004). The purpose of this paper is to present one model of service learning involving general and special education teachers working in urban, diverse compulsory school settings.

Program Model

In an effort to address the critical educational and citizenship related needs of students with and without disabilities in urban, diverse schools, the Teacher Education for the Advancement of a Multicultural Society (TEAMS) Program was developed and made possible by federal grant funding and is housed in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco (USF) in Northern California. The TEAMS Fellowship Program provides academic, professional, financial and social support to aspiring teachers and school counselors in the San Francisco Bay

Area, Los Angeles, San Diego and Seattle regions. Participants in TEAMS, called Fellows, are enrolled as AmeriCorps members and receive education awards, mentor support, academic and career advisement, and professional development training via monthly pedagogical seminars and mentor support. Fellows complete their credential programs while gaining hands-on experience through job placement in a public school community of cultural, linguistic, and ability diverse students with and without special education needs. Among other requirements for successful participation in the TEAMS Program, Fellows must complete one Service Learning Project (SLP) with their class that is narrowly focused on a school or community need or problem, based on state curriculum standards, and exemplifies the seven components of integrated learning, high quality service, collaboration, student voice, civic responsibility, reflection, and evaluation.

As a learning methodology, SLPs lend themselves to the specific needs of any community, school and culture. By identifying a genuine need, students have a voice in shaping how they will link their learning to the curriculum, and are active participants in that learning. Teachers then guide, support and facilitate student learning through diverse learning experiences involving the full inclusion or collaboration of all students. One example of the diversity and inclusivity SLPs can facilitate was demonstrated by first year TEAMS Fellow and middle school special education entitled “*A Recycling & Ability Awareness Revival* (Teng, 2008)”. Through consistent monitoring and financial support for his SLP, Teng’s (2008) classroom of students with severe disabilities were provided with opportunities to work alongside their non-disabled peers on implementing a school-wide recycling program. As Teng reported in Salazar (2008), “Overall, the project [SLP] has been rewarding for my students, giving them a sense of purpose and an opportunity to meet and interact with their peers (without disabilities). It has become clear that most of the teachers and students who have participated in the school wide project have become more comfortable seeing and interacting with my students.”

Teng’s commentary above holds predictive power for educators: When students learn about themselves and their roles and responsibilities in their respective communities, students simultaneously develop an understanding about the critical needs of others. It also provides the educational community with a concrete method for assessing the effects (long and short term) of critical pedagogy with a social justice emphasis in education by TEAMS Program staff on the academic and social outcomes of culturally, linguistically and ability diverse students

A harder push for advancement in standards-based educational assessment by all students mandates effective preparation of students for the 21st Century global workplace. Yet, schools across America continue to struggle with effective preparation of students in meeting postsecondary challenges. Fortunately, SLPs may be one effective method of teaching students to make connections from their individual and collective actions to their roles and responsibilities as a global citizen. One example of how SLPs can promote global learning resulting from local action, involves students attending school a poor, urban school in Northern California who were compelled to research the lack of educational support in third world countries. The SLP facilitated by the teacher involved research on education in Africa which was taught thematically across all core (mandated) academic classes for English, History, Math, and Science for all students attending the school. Based on the research, knowledge, care, compassion and empathy developed during the SLP, the students decided to raise money for books, uniforms, and supplies for children in Ghana and Ethiopia. Finally, at the time of this

writing; the school continues to maintain a connection with the schools in Africa via email (Jez, 2006).

Discussion

Students from culturally, linguistically and ability diverse backgrounds living in urban areas often struggle to engage in the educational system while simultaneously, educators cite a lack of resources, time, training, and administrative support; as inhibiting factors to creating culturally responsive SLPs (Frey, 2003). Research on SLPs offers promising results in the areas of effective facilitation of student learning using information and by posing questions; validating and valuing students' knowledge and experiences, and by developing discourse around the question, issue or problem to be investigated (Daigre, 2000). Therefore, academic and social horizons are broadened for students with special needs via development of academic and pro social skills in authentic and inclusive settings and situations. The SLP program model presented in this work conducted within the TEAMS Program is preliminary evidence that students' differences can be minimized around a common purpose while their recognition, acceptance and inclusion into general or mainstream settings are maximized (Billig, 2000; Frey, 2003; Jez, 2006).

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**PREVALENCE ESTIMATES FOR VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS IN
INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PLACEMENTS IN SPAIN**

Cristina Miralles
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Susan V. Sanhueza

The need for data on the prevalence of visual impairments in inclusive classroom placements in Spain has become increasingly urgent. Estimates of prevalence help blindness organizations to plan services realistically, as well as to document the need for funding of services. In Spain the lack of trustworthy count of the number of visually impaired students who need special services suffers from widely discrepant or undercounted estimates. This problem turns more evident when considering the overriding emphasis on “most appropriate placement”, defined as “the environment in which all the needs of a student with a visual impairment, are best met” (Curry, & Hatlen, 1988, p. 420). Children who are blind or visually impaired require training in high specialized skills such as braille, technology and walking independently. This requires instruction by personnel with specific knowledge in these areas and who have sufficient instruction time with each student. However, there is a profound national shortage of information in regarding both prevalence estimates for visual impairments in inclusive settings, and teachers and other personnel’s perceptions on the conditions necessary to ensure an appropriate education for these students.

Education of students with visual impairments in Spain has changed greatly since the first residential schools for blind children that were opened in 1944 in Madrid, Pontevedra, Sevilla, Barcelona, and Alicante. Students from all over the country attended school at ONCE Centers

(residential facilities dependent from the Spanish Organization for the Blind), either boarding at the school or attending as day students. The ONCE Centers provided comprehensive instruction on a daily basis in academics, communication skills including braille, activities of daily living, orientation and mobility, technology, as well as other skills. Latter, beginning in the 1980s, social and political forces, enacted through PL 13/1982 (LISMI, 1982) and PL 1/1990 (LOGSE, 1990), contributed to change the character of schooling practices for these students. Local districts instituted resource-room programs, and itinerant specialized services to teach this special group of students in regular education (RE) classrooms. Before PL 13/1982, 60% of children with visual impairments attended separate day schools or residential schools, meanwhile at the end of the 1990s, 91% of these students were enrolled in regular school programs (Díaz-Veiga, 1997; García-Pastor, & García-Jiménez, 1991, 1994).

Although many schools have been educating students with visual impairments in inclusive settings for more than 25 years, families often still have to fight to get their children into general education classrooms, receiving their education in the most enabling educational placement. The problem is that despite these mandates, decisions on educational placements are not always made on the basis of what is appropriate for a student. Rather, these decisions are sometimes made solely on the perceived availability of resources. We suspect that still today there is a small percentage of students that attend residential schools because the local schools are unable or unwilling to provide educational supports needed for success. Therefore, the lack of necessary trained personnel and the scarcity of resources can be the reasons why some students with visual impairments are not enrolled in local regular schools. This study reports on an estimation of two key components focusing first on the number of students with visual impairments currently enrolled in regular classrooms, and second on analyzing teacher and family' perceptions of the inclusion of students with visual impairments in RE classrooms.

Method

This study used two sources of information: (a) state and regional data bases from the Ministry of Education and Science (Madrid), and (b) regional data from a survey on the inclusion of students who are blind or have low vision (Valencian Community). The sample was representative of the three Valencian provinces and resembled national distributions on relevant indicators such as ethnicity, school level, educational attainment, type of school, and school setting. Respondents were contacted by mail and phone. The target respondents of the survey were regular education, resource room, and itinerant teachers, as well as families of students with visual impairments. The survey covered approximately fifty regular public (70%) and private (30%) schools, the teachers (regular education, resource room, and itinerant), and the families of students with visual impairments. Overall, return rates varied from 22% (schools) to 35% (teachers). Participants were asked to respond on a scale of 1 to 3 (1 = *yes*, 2 = *no*, and 3 = *not sure*) or 1 to 5 (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*).

Results

In fifteen years between 1990 and 2005 (MEC, 2008) placements of students with visual impairments in RE classrooms changed little. By 2005, for example, only 2.5% more students with visual impairments were in inclusive classrooms environments: 93.5% in 2005 compared with 91% in 1990. Placements of students with visual impairments in residential schools declined by 2.5%: 6.5% in 2005 compared with 9% in 1990 (MEC, 2008). MEC's estimation of

the number of students, ages 3-21, with visual impairments who received special education services in residential schools in 2005 was 2.726 (2% of total special education school population). In the Valencian Community, with 100% of students enrolled in RE classrooms, the Department of Education and Science (2006-07) released an estimate of 234 students. The estimate shows that 75 students (32%) with blindness and 159 students (68%) with low vision are all included in RE classrooms. Boys had a higher prevalence of low vision in elementary school than did girls ($p < .05$). This difference between boys and girls disappeared at the lowest level of vision (blindness). The prevalence rate of visual impairments in public schools were twice (66%) than in private schools (34%), rates that are similar across the country. Teacher and family' perceptions of the inclusion of students with visual impairments were very positive to items of the survey addressing their personal support of the concept of inclusion (92% and 85% of teacher and family respondents agreed, respectively), and their agreement with the effectiveness of this practice (93% and 96% agreed, respectively). Teachers and families were far less positive, however, when asked about their perception of the level of support teachers and students received. Only 57% of RE teachers agreed that they were provided with sufficient support, time (59% agreed), and material resources (51% agreed) for teaching students with visual impairments. Even less positive were responses to items referring to personal training (only 32% of RE teachers agreed that they had sufficient preparation to teach these students).

Conclusion and Educational Implications

Inclusive education is highly dependent on the school system (teachers, specialized personnel, resource centers, and parents) all working in the search for the most appropriate education for students with visual impairments, but also dependent on teacher preparation, and personnel/material supports for including any student with blindness/low vision. The critical point in this investigation is the lack of adequate resources and supports to sustain the most enable environment for these students in regular education settings. The results of this study can be informative for efforts to me made toward the inclusion of this special group population.

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COLLABORATING PARTNERS: INCREASING PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN HELPING THEIR STRUGGLING CHILD

Tamar F. Riley
Denise J. Callwood-Brathwaite

Many researchers have acknowledged the role of parents as important for helping their children acclimate successfully to school (e.g., Epstein, 1987; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Often parental involvement is associated with the achievement-gap between African American and White students (O'Bryan, Braddock, & Dawkins, 2006). Parental involvement has been linked to such factors as positive attitudes toward school, improved homework habits, reduced absenteeism, reduced student's risk of dropping out of school, and enhanced academic achievement (Astone & McLanahan, 1991; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Large urban school districts, which are often overrepresented by minority groups, are often riddled with the opposite of those factors mentioned above. The dropout rates and the grade retention rates are also higher for these groups of students. African Americans also have higher dropout rates, with inner-city youth dropping out at a rate of 80 percent. Some researchers suggest that the more confidence the parent has regarding helping their child, the more likely they are to be involved (Eccles & Harold, 1996). Typically, parental involvement tends to be higher in smaller schools, and in private schools (Zill & Nord, 1994); this is a contrast in what typically occurs for minority students in urban schools. Research suggests positive benefits of parental involvement on academic outcomes regardless of racial or ethnic ancestry (Jeynes, 2003). Therefore, an important idea to improve outcomes for students is to increase parental involvement (Epstein, 1995). The purpose of this investigation is to describe the strategies used to improve both the academic skills of child and parent through instructional parent workshops using three different venues.

Method

Two faculty members at an urban, small Historically Black University prepared special education graduate candidates, who are all fulltime practicing teachers, to deliver K-8 content area workshops for parents and their academically struggling child through three different venues. Over 3 consecutive years, a total of thirty-four Exceptional Student Education (ESE) graduate students planned one 2-hour workshop in collaboration with program peers for a Professional Development School (PDS), a grant-funded after school program at a local inner-city church, or on the university campus through the school districts "Parent Academy." The Parent Academy (TPA) is a year-round initiative designed to facilitate parents' access to classes and courses including those that can help them help their children become more academically successful. Our PDS is an alternative 6-12 girls' school for students who have been suspended long term or expelled from their home school. Strategy plans from all collaborative planning groups were collected from graduate candidates. Workshop evaluations were completed by parents, students, professors, as well as self and group evaluations from all group collaborators. All documents were reviewed and categorized for common themes among strategies used, facilitators and barriers within collaboration, and parental comments for improvement and satisfaction.

Results

Strengths of the Program. The PDS positive strengths included (a) the use of the school liaison to contact parents, (b) the teachers' use of offering extra credit to students if they brought their family member to the event, and (c) the school providing meals to everyone who attended. The meal was served at the end of the workshops and prizes were raffled off to parents and the students. The after school church program strengths included the location and a free meal. All the students who attended the program were within walking distance to the church site. The program coordinator personally invited parents who came to pick up their children to stay for the workshop and partake in the meal made by church members. TPA perceived strengths included the use of school liaisons as well as flyers and advertisements at targets schools. The liaisons were helpful to encourage teachers, students, as well as parents to attend the event.

Weakness of the Program. At the PDS, there were two perceived weaknesses of this model. The biggest issue was not all students lived in the area and had transportation issues. Families often had difficulty coming to the school and most students are bused. The second limitation is linked to the first, most families and students were not vested in the school due to the temporary placement at this school site. Most students stayed 90 days, and if their behavior improved, were sent back to their neighborhood school. At the church after school program, there were three limitations seen by participants. First, participation of families was solely dependent on the church workers to get families there. If they remembered to tell them, the turn out was better. Second, parents wanted incentives to participate in the workshop. On the first time with this group, parents were given \$20 gift cards to Wal-Mart. They expected gift cards each time they came. Finally, parents hardly interacted at these workshops and didn't value the materials they were given. Most parents who came were high school drop outs and had difficulty in school themselves. Finally, at TPA, there were two limitations. Firstly, often there was last minute notification going to families about our campus workshops. Secondly, these flyers did not indicate the specifics about our workshops that we provided to the district liaison.

Discussion

The research indicates that there is a critical need to provide urban parents with the tools necessary to help their children to be academically successful (Epstein, 1995; Jeynes, 2003). Parents need to see the importance of their role to facilitate their child's education. However, many parents themselves do not have the necessary skills to begin to help their children and they are often in need of more support than the children they are trying to help. In these environments, often times family priorities revolve around basic needs such as access to food and transportation. Access to programs must be intrusive, in their communities, in places of convenience to them. Parents want incentives, food, and convenience in order to participate in workshops. Students having incentives to encourage family members to come also increases parent commitment.

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**A SWOT ANALYSIS OF SPANISH DEAF BILINGUAL EDUCATION: LESSONS
LEARNED FROM INSIDERS**

Irma M Munoz-Baell
Emilio Ferreiro-Lago

Central to the education for all policy framework is the idea of promoting quality education through the concept and principles of inclusive education. In the context of post-Dakar 2000, inclusive education may be defined as a strategic process of identifying any barriers within and around the school that hinder learning and participation of ALL children, and reducing or removing these barriers (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Lynch, 2001; UNESCO, 2004). Despite encouraging developments in developed and developing countries, hundreds of Deaf children,

who are especially vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation (Hegarty, 1995; Michailakis, 1997), still receive a non-barrier free education that is largely inappropriate to their needs and human, linguistic and educational rights (Booth, 2000; UN, 2006; WFD, n.d.). The purpose of our study was to identify and tackle significant factors, both internal and external, affecting those current existing Deaf bilingual practices in Spain which promote or prevent the processes through which more inclusive (barrier-free) educational provision for Deaf children can be successfully implemented and good practice promoted.

Method

We drew upon the research findings of a first phase of the same project aimed at identifying Deaf bilingual practices in primary schools throughout Spain through a snow-ball key-informant approach at a national, regional and local level (Munoz-Baell et al., 2008). Eleven schools with leading Deaf bilingual initiatives for Deaf children and a regional department of education were selected to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis facilitated through the nominal group technique. Ways to improve accessibility to the whole SWOT process were explored to ensure that genuine and significant participation of ALL school representatives was actually possible. A Facilitation Team – comprising three university researchers and two members (one of them Deaf) of the Spanish National Confederation of Deaf People – worked together throughout all the phases of the study using a participatory approach to research.

Results

Seventeen deaf and hearing professionals participated in the SWOT analysis. Strengths and weaknesses were found in the following areas: staff (e.g., staff qualifications, involvement, participation, past experiences and training), school administration, school philosophy and values, school learning environment (classrooms and facilities), curriculum and instruction, teaching materials, financial resources, involvement of parental and Deaf organisations, and collaboration with other schools and educational professionals. The primary strengths participants identified in the study highlighted the importance of participation and involvement of staff and other members of the educational community as a resource in furthering Deaf bilingual programmes. Besides, participants felt that the lack of a learning environment fully accessible to Deaf children was one of the cardinal weaknesses of bilingual approaches. Opportunities and threats covered the following dimensions of the school external environment: legislative and governmental support, social values, institutional and pedagogical environment, resource barriers, new technology, inter-learning among countries and within the same country, a ‘medical model’ of deafness, lack of cooperation between Deaf associations and associations of parents of d/Deaf children, and research. Notable opportunities included a growing acceptance of the bilingual and inclusive school concept by regional educational administrations and societal and parental changes towards bilingualism and sign language. Participants also felt that the lack of official recognition of sign language in Spain was the greatest foreseeable threat to Spanish Deaf bilingual practices at present.

Discussion

We consider that a strength of our study was the application of a tool at the heart of strategic planning, the SWOT analysis, to the assessment of current environmental conditions around Deaf bilingual programme offerings. Another strength was exploring how participatory processes can be made accessible for everyone, particularly for Deaf people. In interpreting our findings, it is important to bear in mind a number of methodological limitations that might have influenced them. Limitations included: (a) this study was limited only to a discussion of Deaf bilingual education in primary school classes; (b) the information about commonalities and differences among the various school programmes participating in the study was collected via a self-administered questionnaire; and (c) due to the representative group consulted, the final SWOT assessment may not reveal all the areas which may be a source of strength, weakness, opportunity or threat within Deaf bilingual programmes as a whole. Despite the limitations noted above, the findings reported in the current study highlight and bring to the fore some of the central questions that remain open in Deaf bilingual education from the point of view of school representatives, and can serve as a starting point for a more structured and effective approach to the education of Deaf children. Strategic planning tools, such as the SWOT analysis, can help counteract micro- and macro-barriers by differentiating internal weaknesses, which can be changed to improve the bilingual programme, from external threats, which cannot be changed by the bilingual programme alone.

Note

This study is part of a research project, titled 'Investing in health: basis for a benchmarking study on the Spanish deaf and hearing-impaired education', funded by the Spanish Medical Research Council No. PI021068. An earlier version of this paper was presented at ICERI2008. International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation, Madrid (Spain) on November 18, 2008. A lengthier version is to be published in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. For more information on this research project, please visit our website at <http://www.ua.es/webs/opps/actividades.htm>, which includes links to a Spanish and an English version of the project.

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TO COOPERATE TO LEARN / LEARN TO COOPERATE. EVALUATION OF A DIDACTIC PROGRAM TO TEACH AND TO LEARN IN A COOPERATIVE WAY

Gemma Riera Romero
Pere Pujolàs Maset

The paper is linked to an research fruit of a doctoral thesis that tries to be the offer on the evaluation of a didactic program, in a school of Infantile and Primary education of Catalonia. The program is a fruit of a work realized by a group of teachers of the group of research on of Attention to the Diversity (GRAD) of Vic's University. We depart from an inclusive approach and our aim is to put to the practice in a cooperative structure of the learning, with the purpose of which it could be a point to improve the current educational practice. The precedents from which we depart nowadays, on one hand are the international directives promoted by the UNESCO, which express the need to develop educational inclusive systems, which make possible the educational attention of the whole student body, be which are his personal characteristics; and on

the other hand, they are the legal dispositions of our educational system, from the LOGSE up to the LOE (passing for the LOCE), which also go towards inclusive expositions. Methodology for the evaluation of the above mentioned program, we have used the methodology of the Evaluation Responsive de Robert Stake. More concretely, the hypothesis of the investigation is: "The Program CA/AC" ("To cooperate for to learn/learn to in Cooperating"), based on cooperative learning, improves educational practice. Cooperation facilitates positive interactions between the student body, making possible the active participation of the students in the process of education and learning and, in general, it improves the climate of the classroom. Consequently, it improves the school performance. When applying this program, if there are no significant discrepancies between the program applied in a certain context and what was initially planned, it is sustained. Greater the cooperation the more effective the program will be. It is teamwork that we want to introduce in the classrooms.

There are four phases of the investigation. Phase I: preparatory Phase; Phase II: application of the program CA/AC in the school, the course 2006/07, with a group of the third course of primary education, and the course 2007/08; Phase the III: evaluation of the applied program (analysis of the coherence and of the quality of the program); Phase IV: final conclusions. The instruments used for the withdrawal and the triangulation of the information are: a sociogram, interviews, groups of discussion, insoles of observation, spreadsheets, and questionnaires.

Results

Results indicate that: (a) the teacher has followed in an effective enough way all the aims and the activities proposed in the program, especially in the second course. Therefore, there is coherence between the planning and implementation of the program; (b) the group has integrated much more--there are more "popular" pupils and not so many "underprivileged persons", in both courses; (c) all the pupils have taken part more, and more concretely those who present more lacks; (d) the group has been developing increasingly the capacity of help and motivate, but one has declared overcoat more during the year 07/08; (e) the performance in general for all the pupils has progressed being employed in a cooperative way at both courses, and (f) in relation to the degree of cooperation, we can say that when greater cooperation is employed in the classroom, the quality of teamwork will be greater. This is especially true, when we compare the results of both courses (years). Finally, we can say the group development has become more cooperative when we compare the course 06/07 with the course 07/08.

Discussion

Nonetheless, we would like to express that we cannot generalize that the development of cooperative structures in the classroom is the "magic formula" to answer to all the needs of the student body, since indisputably many other factors (e.g., attitude of the teacher, typology of the student body ...) have to be considered. But, based on the data accrued we can say that the approach appears to help attend to the diversity of the student body from an inclusive point of view.

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CREATING A TEAM AROUND THE STUDENT: CHALLENGING DISAFFECTION THROUGH COLLABORATION

Richard Rose

Progress towards inclusion in England has been steady, but schools working in isolation cannot create the changes required to sustain inclusive societies. This paper reports research into procedures to place more schools and their influence at the heart of communities. Using semi-structured interviews with service users and providers the research investigated multi-disciplinary working and increased liaison with families and communities to support the inclusion of students and families at risk of disaffection.

Exploring the Relationship Between Schools, Communities and Inclusion

Research into the development of inclusive schools has, in recent years examined this complex issue from a range of perspectives. These have included school improvement models, addressing the necessity to change school cultures (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006; Tisdall & Riddell 2006), and legislative measures for the development of inclusion policy, (Hunter & O'Connor 2006, Rouse & McLaughlin, 2007). Likewise, studies of classroom conditions for the development of inclusive practice (Rose, 2001; Snell, 1998) and those focused upon changing attitudes towards students with diverse learning needs (Ellins & Porter 2005; Forlin, Au, & Chong, 2008) have attempted to identify the means by which a more equitable education system might be achieved. Whilst these studies have yielded valuable insights into the ways in which teachers and schools may create a more welcoming environment for students with diverse needs, they have tended to focus upon the exclusion of learners as a largely school-based problem which can be addressed through educational reform.

A more holistic approach for the promotion of inclusion has recently been witnessed with the development in England of “extended schools”. This initiative, similar to the USA model of full service schooling (Cahill, 1996; Dryfoos, 1996) places schools at the hub of a community by basing additional services in schools and offering a multi-disciplinary response to both educational and social challenges. Within the extended schools initiative educational professionals work closely with those from health and social services and with the voluntary sector in order co-ordinate responses to young people and families at risk. The location of provision such as child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), community police officers, family liaison services and careers advice on a single school site is intended to ensure a more cohesive and rapid approach to addressing child and family issues as they arise. In addition, the development of after school and breakfast clubs, holiday activities and mentoring support has become a feature of these schools as they attempt to confront disaffection and promote a more positive attitude towards schools.

Method

This paper reports upon the findings from two research projects, which considered the efficacy of extended school provision for students, perceived to be at risk of exclusion from school. The first of these projects examined the provision made in two secondary schools (student ages 11 – 16) and their feeder primary schools (students aged 5 – 11) within a single local authority area in England. These schools were located in an area with poor socio-economic indicators, including unemployment rates and dependence upon social benefits, which were above national average. Data pertaining to the services provided for support of students and seeking views of the impact of these were collected through an initial survey of all school staff (academic, supportive and administrative). Two hundred eighty-seven questionnaires were distributed with a return of 110 (38%). This initial survey was followed by a series of semi-structured interviews (N=73) conducted with both service providers (teachers, social workers, family liaison workers, community police officers, health service professionals) and service users (parents/carers, students). From the data obtained, illustrative case studies were constructed which exemplified

practices within the schools and the impact of these upon both students and families (Rose, Smith & Feng 2009).

The second project, which is ongoing, has collected data through a series of filmed interviews with service users and providers in both mainstream primary, and secondary, and special schools offering extended services in two parts of England (the Midlands and South West). The filmed interviews (N = 30 to date) have been used as a focus for discussion groups with students, teachers and parents/carers to elicit their responses to a range of models of extended service provision provided in different school settings.

Findings and Discussion

The development of extended schools in England has not followed a uniform pattern. The diversity of responses to the creation and deployment of extended services tends to result from the focus of school managers and colleagues from other services upon the specific needs of local communities. This personalisation of services appears to be strength of the approach. The research revealed that those students identified as being disaffected or at risk of school exclusion receive better co-ordinated services in extended schools than had previously been the case prior to implementation of the service. Parents of these students, many of whom felt antipathy towards schools before the development of extended services report that the deployment of family liaison workers and improved access to support from other professional agencies since their location within the school has resulted in a changed expectation of the schools. Those parents interviewed expressed greater confidence in schools and increased willingness to engage with support services. Students within the sample schools express increased confidence in their own abilities, report improved relationships with teachers, and other school based adults. This is reflected in improved school attendance figures and a lessening of exclusions. Similarly, they articulate the benefits of breakfast and homework clubs and the opportunity to participate in school holiday activities both in respect of maintaining their social contact with peers and the alleviation of boredom through the provision of focused activities outside of school hours. Professionals from other agencies, including, health, social services and the police who are based within the schools cite improved communication across services and with the schools as a key factor in the provision of a more comprehensive and individually focused approach. They perceive significant benefits in respect of delivering a more cohesive system of support for students and families and in ensuring a swift response when difficulties arise. Of equal significance is the changing perception, which professionals have of the services offered, by their colleagues which they suggest has led to improvements in service delivery and a lessening of disaffection on the part of families, staff and students.

Discussion

The development of full service extended schools figures high on the government's agenda in England. Evaluations of the efficacy of this approach are as yet, few in number and based upon small scale studies. The research reported here is also limited in terms of size of sample and geographical location. However, the provision of case study materials related to the deployment of extended services and their impact upon both students and families is important in informing the next tranche of schools considering this route. Examples of the benefits of extended schools

as seen from the perspective of service users and providers are helpful to those schools involved in a review of services and the means through which they may provide improved support for students and families. Findings from this research, and that of other Studies, (e.g., Dyson, Millward & Todd 2002) indicate that the effective coordination of services through extended schools may be having benefits for those students described as disaffected or at-risk of exclusion. Longitudinal studies are now necessary if we are to gauge the impact of this provision and its sustainability over the longer term.

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ENHANCING THE SOFT SKILLS OF STUDENT EMPLOYEES WITH MILD DISABILITIES

Maureen Nolan

“Soft Skills”, like professionalism, enthusiasm, initiative and integrity, are clusters of traits and abilities that impact an individual’s job performance and job stability. For individuals with a disability acquiring these skills is often difficult. Not only is the lack of soft skills the leading cause of job loss for persons with a disability, it can also lead to peer and co-worker rejection (Black, 1995). Workplace soft skills, such as achieving self-awareness, independence, and the ability to problem-solve, are cited as being critical to maintaining employment as well as friendships. As documented by the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), high school students must develop a new set of competencies, referred to as Workplace Know-How, and foundation skills if they plan on being successful adults. Interpersonal/soft skills were among the competencies SCANS recognized as essential for maintaining employment (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). Unfortunately, persons with mild mental disabilities and learning disabilities are disproportionately unemployed or underemployed when compared to the general population (Miller, Smith, 2002). Accordingly, soft skills should be an integral part of a school curriculum which places emphasis on increasing assertiveness, listening to others and sending clear messages, personalizing feelings, making requests, initiating and maintaining conversations, making friends, managing anger, and solving problems (Hepworth, Larsen, Rooney, 1997). Transition, a comprehensive term that includes all the adjustments and changes needed for youth to adopt adult roles appropriately, should be incorporated into the curriculum and should address the chronically poor outcomes in employment and integration among disabled individuals. Therefore, a transition program’s main goal should be to provide methods that promote social competence. Employers expect their employees, whether disabled or not, to exhibit the following behaviors once they’ve been hired: dependability, honesty, competency in employee-supervisor relations, employee-co-worker relations, an aptitude for organization and initiative, adaptability, and the ability to assert the appropriate attitude and self-esteem (Black, 1995).

Method

Five student employees, who were enrolled in the district’s Occupational Skills Program and whose ages range from 17-20 years old, participated in this action research project. Their Mean Intelligence Quotients (IQ) were significantly below the average range and were classified as

moderately handicapped. The female to male relationship was 4 to 1. Family structure and socioeconomic background varied greatly amongst the group. After realizing the students' inability to effectively demonstrate workplace social skills, permission was granted by school principals, supervisors, and parents to conduct an 8-week intervention program. Both quantitative and qualitative measuring devices were used to gather data at the program's onset and culmination. Data from all participants' pre-surveys (that is, from the 5 student employees and their floor supervisors) indicated the need for an 8-week intervention program, which focused on enhancing the soft skills of the student employees who worked at a local nursing facility. For both pre and post surveys, students indicated, on a rating scale of "Always," "Sometimes" and "Never," how frequently they performed 7 crucial soft skill behaviors, such as: using appropriate eye contact, starting and holding a conversation, accepting constructive criticism and asking for help when confused. Likewise, floor supervisors documented whether or not the students possessed or initiated 12 essential interpersonal skills by rating each behavior with the following scale: 3, skill is present at the highest degree: 2, skill is present: 1, skill is rarely present: and 0, skill is not present. Supervisors identified 7 of the 12 surveyed skills as imperative for maintaining employment, and those skills were incorporated into the program's curriculum.

Results

Quantitative data collected from the supervisors and student employees yielded the following information:

- Floor supervisors did not assign any student a rating of 3 on their pre-surveys: the rating that was most prevalent for all behaviors, on the pre-survey, was a 1. The breakdown of modes for the 7 behaviors was as follows: 2 skills received a mode of 2, 1 skill had a mode of 1.5, and 4 behaviors received a mode of 1.
- Supervisors' post surveys yielded a notable increase in the students' social skills by the conclusion of the intervention program. Regarding the 7 skills addressed during the 8-week session, supervisors noted that all students increased performance in at least 1 area. Students 1, 2, and 4 showed a rating increase in 4 of the 7 targeted soft skills. Student 3 showed the least improvement and Student 5 improved performances in 5 of the 7 skill areas.
- Student employees' pre surveys indicated that all were more likely to identify their social skill performance as "Sometimes" occurring rather than "Always" or "Never." Four behaviors, listed under Always exhibiting, rendered a 0% response rate. Conversely, only 1 behavior for "Never" initiating had a 0% response.
- Student employees' post surveys revealed significant improvement in the performance of their soft skills. There was a 40% - 60% increase in response rate for "Always" exhibiting 6 of the 7 social behaviors. Furthermore, students were less likely to identify their skill behavior as "Never" performing.

Even though 4 of the 5 student employees showed an increase in at least 6 of the 7 targeted skills, a recommendation for change would be to limit the program's focus and only address the 5 most important skills. For example, the supervisors' post-surveys indicated that only 1 student displayed improvement in using appropriate eye contact. Factors that may have hindered the results of this study were: the low cognitive levels of the students, which may have affected their understanding of various terms used on their surveys: and, the students' eagerness to please, which may have made them unintentionally misrepresent or inflate their responses to the survey questions.

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COLLABORATION AND TECHNOLOGY: EFFECTIVE APPROACHES FOR TRAINING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Terri Rothman
Lynn Romeo
Mary Brennan
Donna Mitchell

With the increasing focus on the use of technology, educators are beginning to examine whether or not Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), which includes wikis, can affect the development of new literacy skills, including sharing ideas, writing, communication, using the web, and reflecting (McPherson, Wang, Hsu, & Tsuei, 2007). The purpose of the current study was to explore the potential of a new collaborative relationship between preservice special

education and alternate route teachers and its impact on dispositions and collaboration. Using survey data and collaborative discussions posted on a class wiki, we found that participants highly valued the collaborative process, and an informal type of mentoring unfolded during the process. They perceived that the wiki holds promise as a collaborative tool, but also identified limitations. Finally, the alternate route teachers showed a significant change in dispositions.

Method

Preservice special education teachers (n = 11) in a university practicum course met weekly for one hour with alternate route teachers who had been teaching for one month (n = 19). A second section of the practicum course (n = 21) served as a control group.

During weekly (8 weeks) class sessions, alternate route teachers' authentic classroom cases served as a basis for on-line reflection, and participants were required to respond to both instructors' prompts and classmates' comments posted on the wiki. We created a collaborative wiki where each small group had its own page to write their reflections.

Participants completed a 10-item likert-type Disposition Survey (Cronbach alpha > .90) that was created for the purpose of this study, as well as two open-ended survey questions about the strengths and weaknesses of the wiki process. Qualitative data also included open-ended responses to wiki reflection prompts. Reflections posted on the wiki and two independent researchers descriptively coded responses to the two open-ended questions. Using content analysis, themes were identified for each question. Once consensus was reached, the data were given to a third researcher for reliability purposes. After the coding scheme was finalized, all responses were coded, and frequencies were calculated (Ryan & Bernard, 2000).

Results

Paired samples t-tests were conducted for each of the three groups and found that only the alternate route group showed a significant (positive) change on the disposition survey. Participants perceived the wiki as: an effective mode of communication (92% of those who responded); an effective and flexible way to communicate (69%), easy to use (65%); an effective way to share ideas and learn about divergent points of view (58%); and recognized that the wiki is a tool with extensive capabilities for sharing ideas, projects, etc. (54%).

In contrast to the positive perceptions noted above, most of the concerns pertained to overall system glitches (58%); the suitability of the wiki for creating extensive lesson plans (50%); frustration in waiting for others to post before moving forward (33%); and the realization that people have varying levels of technological skill (27%).

Discussion

The present study indicates that participants responded very favorably to this new collaborative model, using the wiki as the format for collaborative reflection, and led to changes in dispositions in alternate route teachers. Results of a recent study (Rothman & Bazler, 2008) indicated that nearly all preservice teachers preferred the use of wikis to other collaborative

activities and that they would be likely to use it in their own teaching. Developing effective collaborative processes is important, considering past research on the positive benefits of informal mentoring. The wiki format is an avant-garde venue for encouraging collaboration; it offers a means of fostering and sustaining the collaborative discourse inherent in effective mentoring. Jorissen (2003) espouses that relationships with peers ostensibly influence teachers' decisions to remain in the profession.

The largest advantage of the wiki is that it allows the instructor to institute controls and enables participants to collaborate on work (Siegle, 2008). The wiki is one type of ICT that provides opportunities for authentic apprenticeship experiences in interactivity and exchange with global peers, structured and purposeful uses of the Internet for research, and production and publication of ideas, creative works, perceptions and reflections and expressions of voice (McPherson et al., 2007).

Studies consistently show that the mentoring relationship between alternate route teacher candidates is a vital component of the program (Rothman & Mitchell, 2008). In addition, this informal mentoring that occurs is often sustained after the alternate route program ends. Both formal and informal mentors provide additional information on issues that most beginning teachers find difficult, thus perhaps fostering a higher likelihood of success, commitment, and retention. We have thus expanded this model to include preservice teachers in a university-based program and have integrated a technological component. As educators, we continue to examine the collaborative process and its impact on teachers' thinking, collaboration, problem solving, and teaching.

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MOODLE APPLIED WITHIN A SPECIAL NEEDS CLASSROOM

Pablo Ortega Gil
Francisco Arcos García

There are many LMS (learning management systems), among them Moodle. Interactive tasks (integrated in Moodle) can be a successful solution to many of the problems raised by students with special education needs for a number of reasons, such as appeal, transfer value, availability, and adaptability.

We review some of the main advantages of Learning Management Systems, and give an account of a project being carried out now. An LMS was established in a secondary school to be used by a group of students with special needs. Although the project is still being developed, feedback from both teachers and students is positive. The latter are happy with a new model of teaching which gives them a leading role.

Which Students and Which Special Needs?

All through this article, the term "special needs" refers to students who have been diagnosed as having specific learning problems, whatever their nature may be. These students leave their

respective groups for a number of hours every week to join specific programs or to receive individual or small group lessons so that they may acquire the basic skills. Our LMS was specifically devised for the individual or small group lessons. We had observed that, for most special needs students, the time devoted to this purpose ranged between one third and one half of school time. Very often, this time is spent with a teacher doing remedial work on core subjects (Language and Maths above all). Many of the students we talked to said they had been doing the same kind of exercises for years. They seemed to have developed a knack for answering without making any effort to understand whatever they had been asked.

Why with Moodle?

In our opinion, special needs students are at a disadvantage in everyday lessons because of the combination of two factors: their individual traits (low intelligence, social conditions, disabilities, etc.) and traditional priorities at schools. Let's analyse the latter: most teachers organise their lessons around a textbook, a fact which stresses content and leaves other skills such as meaning making and transfer in second place. This is often referred to as the climb-the-ladder approach and it is believed (Wiggings & McTighe, 2008, p. 37) to have "a negative impact on low-achieving students [who] are often confined to a regimen of excessive teacher talk, rote memorization of discrete facts, and mind-numbing skill-drill worksheets".

In contrast to such a dismal picture, Learning Management Systems, in our case Moodle, are powerful tools when it comes to dealing with special needs students. They are known to: increase student engagement in the curriculum, provide detailed and immediate feedback, promote redoing tasks, integrate technology, be independent of time and location, score and assess all tasks immediately, save time, etc.

What Did We Do?

The repertoire of tasks we built let these students work on their own while being monitored by a teacher. The tasks were devised to cater for the students' diversity and for their different learning styles. They included visual information and abundant feedback in the form of (Vovides, Sanchez-Alonso, Mitropoulou, & Nickmans, 2007, p. 71) "stop and think triggers and feedback loops"; that is, all exercises are connected to an explanation and to other exercises which either reinforce their learning or help them achieve the learning goal. The tasks provide ample scaffolding so that the students can build an adaptive route to learning. Or said with other words, all exercises are graded and referred to a scale of difficulty; students choose those that best fit their competence and are occasionally referred to a higher level to avoid stabilisation (where no progress occurs). Finally, the tasks are also very progressive, starting with simple questions and leading up to authentic tasks with a high transfer value, because the ultimate goal of education must always be to prepare students for the world beyond school.

What Did We Achieve?

In a recent survey, the *Educational Leadership* journal (2008: pp. 48-51) asked a selection of students from different schools across the United States what exactly they expected from their teachers. The former came up with the following answers: they wanted their teachers to take

them seriously, challenge them to think, nurture their self-respect, point them towards their goals, build on their interests and tap their creativity. Some of these demands are clearly met by our own proposals. By using an LMS, students can face tasks that are above their individual capacity by working cooperatively in small groups; they can also learn faster as they work in a digital environment that somehow resembles the one they use in their spare time. As they feel more confident, they can be more creative and discover for the first time that school can provide them with efficient tools for the real world. It is the transformation of compliant passive learners into engaged learners as described by Zmuda (2008). As several of the students in the project said, for the first time in their school years they enjoyed the tasks and had a clear perception that they were useful for real things in real life.

Conclusions

By using Moodle and blended learning, we immediately noticed how quickly students were attuned to the system's layout and the new learning scenarios, which by no means took us by surprise. We suspected, and now we know, that Moodle meets up perfectly with the characteristics of today's youngsters, how well they respond to clear, immediate, and consistent expectations, how well they got used to working in the new technological environment and how much they favor the change.

For us teachers, blended learning has meant a new stimulus to reflect on actual learning. We have evolved from being simple "information transmitters" to "facilitative teachers" who design active learning by means of taking into account the special needs of many of our students. By doing so, we have designed a LMS for meeting the requirements of these students within the value system they embrace.

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ATTITUDES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SEVERAL SCHOOLS IN ALICANTE

Sofía Ortiz Collado

This research approaches the concepts of *attitude*, *difference* and *attitudes towards differences* in an education system which seems to be blocked. More than ten years after the *Salamanca Conference* (1994), there have not been any substantial changes. The legislation in this country as regards general and special education has been very unstable. Primary schools in Spain need actual changes in order to implement inclusion and one of them is a change in teachers' attitudes. The purpose of this study was to know primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and their degree of competence in teaching all kinds of students. In order to detect any possible differences of beliefs among teachers, both *attitudes* and *degree of competence* were compared in two groups: head teachers versus the rest of teachers.

Method

The approach of this study was quantitative according to a non experimental descriptive design. The participants were 86 teachers who accepted to participate from the 125 proposed for the survey. The sample was available, non probabilistic. The definition of attitudes which was used was the 3 components one: cognitive, affective and behavioural and the survey was translated and adapted from Avramidis (2000). It was transformed into a Likert scale with 40-items. There were four variables: (a) cognitive component of attitudes, (b) affective component, (c) behavioural component, and (d) competences of teachers to look after all students. Each part was presented in a one-dimensional scale. Reliability was assured (Cronbach's alpha ,8610) and so was validity by a pilot study based in Balbás Ortega (1999).

The data analysis was done with SPSS 9.0 and the analysis was descriptive, non-experimental for all the participants. Besides, the *t test* was performed to compare the different groups of teachers. The factor analysis was achieved for the whole questionnaire and for each part, but the number of factors was minimum in each scale.

Results

In the cognitive component of attitudes towards inclusive education, the results were positive as regards the socialization of students with special education needs, but, generally speaking, teachers thought that those students would learn more in a special class. In the affective component teachers defined themselves above all as committed professionals. As for the behavioural component, the majority of participants did not believe in full inclusion and they were not very enthusiastic about training themselves for it. Most of them showed that they feel capable of collaborating with other professionals, but they did not think they are competent to diagnose SEN or make and evaluate curriculum adaptations. The attitudes of head teachers and those of the rest of them were not substantially different.

Discussion

Several limitations must be considered with regards to this study. First, use of a larger sample size may have yielded different results. Second, some qualitative research was conveyed in a school, but it would be interesting to do it with a larger number of participants, as there were found some contradictions in the results. For example, teachers declared themselves as committed to teach all students. However, they would not learn more about inclusive education. In addition, they would not believe in full inclusion and the reasons for that could have been researched in a qualitative way in order to obtain more meaningful information.

The findings of this study, despite the limitations noted above, indicate that further research about inclusive education, teachers' attitudes, and their competence is needed in this country so that the concept of inclusive education is understood and actual changes in all the levels of the education system may happen. Besides, the importance of a clear and stable legislation and specific materials that guide teachers must be taken into account as well as the economic and human resources.

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**THE USE OF MICROTEACHING IN A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER
PREPARATION PROGRAM**

Dorothea “Mike” Ryan

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 have focused attention on students with diverse learning needs achieving high academic performance in general education (Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2004). Over the past several decades, various strategies have been incorporated into courses teacher preparation in an attempt to (a) increase the overall effectiveness of pre-service special education teachers working in the general education classroom (Benton-Kupper, 2001) and (b) at the same time meet the demand of NCLB for highly-qualified teachers. To better prepare pre-service teachers for these challenging classrooms, the Department of Special Education at Slippery Rock University has implemented a microteaching component into their professional semester block that provides students with the opportunity to practice their knowledge and skills prior to entering the field.

Microteaching is a cooperative learning experience intended to challenge prospective teachers' thinking about teaching and learning, and encourage their connection between theory and practice (Fernandez & Robinson, 2006). It provides pre-service teachers with an opportunity to practice their teaching skills in an instructional setting in which the normal complexities of the classroom are limited and in which they can receive feedback on their performances (Allen & Ryan, 1969). A number of studies have been conducted that provided evidence that microteaching is an effective means of improving pre-service teachers' teaching skills (Albrecht & Carnes, 2006; Benton-Kupper, 2001; Fernandez & Robinson, 2006; I'Anson, Rodrigues, & Wilson, 2003).

Method

Participants were pre-service teachers in the Special Education Department enrolled in their senior year Professional Semester block. This block includes four methods courses and a three week field experience. This study was completed in two parts. First, prior to field experience, pre-service teachers completed a micro-teaching assignment to demonstrate their knowledge of the co-teaching methodology along with current best practices in teaching. Second, in the field-based experience of the course, each pre-service teacher developed and completed several teaching observations that were evaluated by their host teacher and university supervisor.

Data was collected for all observations using the Practicum Observation form that is aligned with the Council for Exceptional Children's standards and with the Universities conceptual model, Danielson's Framework for Teaching. The Observation form used the following rating scale; 4 – Distinguished; 3 – Advanced; 2 – Proficient; 1 – Basic; and 0 – Unsatisfactory. Data was collected during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Results

Data was analyzed to determine if the micro-teaching assignment improved pre-service teacher's teaching skills during their field experience. Data from the micro-teaching assessment and field observations revealed a number of important issues for consideration. First, data from micro-teaching assessment revealed that pre-service teachers demonstrated either distinguished or advanced rating in the domain area of Professional Responsibility. This is not surprising as this domain area is stressed throughout the student's experience in the College of Education at Slippery Rock.

Areas of concern within the micro-teaching data indicate students were less than distinguished in some skills found within the Classroom Environment domain. Manages Classroom Procedures and Manages Student Behavior were the main areas of concern within this domain. In addition, the domain of Planning, Preparation, and Assessment had varying scores. The areas of Demonstrates Knowledge of Students and Demonstrates Knowledge of Resources may be seen as a strength for the pre-service teacher, while the remaining categories show areas of weakness. Finally, data from the micro-teaching assessment reveals that many pre-service teachers rated less than distinguished in some skills found within the Instruction and Communication domain. Those area of concern were in the skills of Providing Feedback to Students, Communicating Accurately and Clearly, and in Uses Questioning and Discussion Techniques.

When comparing the data from the micro-teaching assignment and the field-based instruction, many improvements can be determined. Improvement was seen in all domains, particularly in the domain of Planning, Preparation and Assessment. All pre-service teachers received a rating of either distinguished or advanced in all categories within this domain. The category of Manages Student Behavior continues to be an area of weakness for the pre-service teachers during field-based teaching, as does Communicates Clearly and Accurately, and Uses Questioning and Discussion Techniques. Overall, the scores of pre-service teacher's practical experience improved greatly with the use of a micro-teaching assignment prior to entering a field based instructional setting.

Discussion

Several limitations must be considered with regard to this study. First, the number of students participating changed each semester. The varying sample sizes may have yielded different results. Second, the host teachers participating in the field portion of this study also changed every semester. At the beginning of each semester a requests for placement are sent to surrounding area schools. Placements are determined by the responses to these requests. Finally, managing student behavior has been a consistent concern for the Special Education department

for several years. Because of these findings the department has implemented additional training for the students prior to field placement.

Due to the legislative changes and the need for highly-qualified teachers, many teacher preparation programs are looking for new innovative ways to train pre-service teachers. The results of this study, despite the limitations noted, has shown that the use of micro-teaching in a teacher preparation program is an effective means of improving pre-service teachers' teaching skills.

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CREATING DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH TECHNOLOGY-INFUSED MULTI-GENRE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Diane DeMott Painter

After reading Tom Romano's *Blending Genre, Altering Style: Writing Multigenre Papers* (2000), a Fairfax County, Virginia technology resource teacher with previous experience as a special educator trained in assistive technology met with her school's sixth grade language arts

specialist to share Tom Romano's notion of the *multi-genre paper* which is more than just a writing assignment. Romano states that a multi-genre paper is a multi-layered, multi-voiced literary experience that allows writers to use their imaginations as they blend facts with imagination through their poetry, short stories, personal narratives and any literary format that Romano calls genres of narrative thinking (Romano, 2000). When the teachers met to plan and co-teach a five-week language arts multi-genre project, they embraced the constructivist approach to learning (constructing knowledge and meaning from experiences) and incorporated Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles into their instructional plan that provided their students with multiple and flexible opportunities to receive information; allowed them to express what they know and can do; and, engaged them in activities designed to tap into diverse interests (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006).

When designing the project, the co-teachers began by identifying the purpose of the project (how it would fit into the curriculum standards), and then they determined the standards, content, skills, and products that would become the foundations of the project. Integral to this project was the goal that students would construct their own learning about social studies topics of interest to them, and demonstrate skills related to reading comprehension, expressive writing, verbal skills and the use of various technologies when creating their own multi-genre projects.

The teachers identified the essential questions that would be used to guide the students throughout the project. They were: How are things, people and events connected to one another? How can one express one's ideas in a variety of genres? How do effective writers hook and hold their readers? Next, the co-teachers developed a curriculum map that contained curriculum standards, content, topics, resources, skills and possible products. They created a guide sheet for students to use that outlined specific steps for the students to follow; and a rubric that would be used to evaluate the multi-genre products.

Just over ninety students from five sixth grade homerooms worked on this project in daily sixty-minute language arts periods. Assisting the co-teachers was one special education teacher, an instructional assistant and the sixth grade social studies teacher who gave his assistance with various social studies content reading materials and electronic resources.

When observing students produce the wide variety of genre projects, the co-teachers kept an observation research journal. They were looking for how the students worked together in partner groups, the types of materials and resources students chose to access, the kinds of researching and technology skills that students developed, and how students demonstrated their literacy skills such as reading, writing and oral expression. From these observations came some interesting findings. It was noted that one boy seemed to enjoy his role as a cartoonist as he created a political cartoon about an event in the Civil War. His partner stated that he enjoyed writing stories as he used PowerPoint to create a multimedia personal narrative about an historical figure from the Underground Railroad. He incorporated sound and digital images from The Library of Congress' American Memory collections Web site (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>). Another student created a PowerPoint documentary, using his own voice to portray a major historical character as he retold an historical event. He put a lot of time and effort into drafting the script even though he had deficits in written expression and was known to resist writing.

Linear thinkers created timelines to illustrate historical events, and social learners became “entertainers” as they created trivia games and invited classmates to engage in their computer-created games. Even some students with learning challenges, particularly those with oral expression problems, took on roles as game hosts. The teachers were amazed to see students with special learning needs showing persistent interest to complete their work, even giving up free time such as recess to work in the computer lab. Students readily shared newly developed technology skills with one another. For example, one student who received special education services for underachievement in written expression and a visual-motor integration problem showed several students how to create a timeline in PowerPoint. He made the point when talking to his classmates that using the “technology” to draw lines and boxes was a lot easier than using paper, pencil and a ruler. Another student demonstrated how to use draw and paint tools, and even how to convert a PAINT document into an animated gif to include on a Web page. Every student, regardless of ability, produced quality work.

At the end of the project, the co-teachers reflected upon their own *teaching* roles. They realized that they did very little “directed” teaching. The language arts teacher stated the experience transformed her teaching style. She learned to let go of a totally teacher-directed instructional style, and she was pleased that she had become a facilitator of learning. The technology resource teacher was delighted to see students independently demonstrating technology competency skills and learning to use new technology applications that were unfamiliar.

The project was deemed successful because it engaged all students, regardless of abilities, learning styles or personal interests. It was noted that there had been very few discipline or “redirecting back to task” occurrences. Because the students were so engaged in what they were doing, the co-teachers found plenty of time to spend with individual students or partner groups to give assistance with such things as final editing. In addition, it was clear that when students presented their final products to one another, all students had constructed their own knowledge about historical events, and that they had independently demonstrated technology and research skills they had learned throughout their elementary school years.

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**SHIFTING PRESERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SERVICES
PROVIDED FOR STUDENTS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES**

Diane Lea Ryndak
Ann-Marie Orlando

General educators report the lack of skills necessary to support students with multiple disabilities in general education classes (MacPherson-Court, McDonald, & Sobsey, 2003). To address their need for such skills teacher education programs must change and prepare *all* preservice teachers to meet the needs of *all* students with disabilities, including students with multiple disabilities, in general education classes (MacPherson-Court et al., 2003; Ryndak, Clark, & Conroy, 2001; Schrock, 2003; Stella, Forlin, & Lan, 2007). Skill areas critical for the delivery of effective services for students with multiple disabilities in general education classes include: (a) collaboration and consultation; (b) identification of instructional content; (c) identification of modifications to curriculum, materials, supports, and instructional strategies; (d) design and implementation of instruction across general education contexts; (e) strategies for differentiated instruction; and (f) positive behavior supports and behavior management strategies (Gut, Oswald, Leal, Frederiksen, & Gustafson, 2003; Schrock, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to examine shifts in preservice teachers' perceptions about services (i.e., curriculum, materials, instruction) provided for students with multiple disabilities. Information was gathered on the perceptions of participants in a five-year early childhood teacher preparation program focused on children both with and without disabilities. Information was gathered at the beginning and end of their only course on students with multiple disabilities when the preservice teachers observed services in a segregated school for students with multiple disabilities. Observations were conducted in this school because the majority of the preservice teachers had no experience with individuals with multiple disabilities and this school provided access to a large number of students across ages with various types of multiple disabilities.

Method

Participants were 68 preservice teachers across three separate cohorts of students (i.e., 21, 27, and 20, respectively) enrolled in a unified early childhood program. All of the preservice teachers were female and in the fourth year of their program. As part of a course on curriculum

and instruction for students with multiple disabilities, the participants completed 2 three-hour observations at a segregated school for students with multiple disabilities ages 3 to 21 years. The first observation occurred at the beginning of the semester and was followed by a written reflection about their observations. The focus during the observation was to become familiar with the various abilities and learning needs of students with multiple disabilities and the services provided in this educational context. The preservice teachers then completed a full-semester course during which they read, summarized, and analyzed research-based practices for students with multiple disabilities in inclusive general education classes. At the end of the semester the preservice teachers returned to the segregated school to complete the second three-hour observation and to write another reflection of their perceptions.

Constant comparative method was employed by the authors to analysis of the students' reflections (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). After reading the data the coders discussed their impressions of the content, established an initial set of codes, and coded 22% of the data from one cohort. The coders then refined the codes and individually recoded the same subset of data and, again, refined the codes. Using the new codes the coders worked in pairs to code 22% of the two remaining two cohorts. Based on the coding of 22% of the data across cohorts, interrater reliability was 70% with a range of (62% - 77%).

Findings

For all three cohorts differences were evident between the preservice teachers' initial and ending perceptions of services (i.e., curriculum, materials, and instruction). During the first observation and prior to instruction on research-based practices for students with multiple disabilities, the preservice teachers did not describe or critique the use of research-based practices in the school, although their comments reflected a strong commitment to effective education for students with multiple disabilities. Their perceptions of services and staff, however, were favorable in relation to teacher-student ratio, the caring and sympathetic nature of the staff's interactions with students, and the relevance of the developmental and functional instructional content and materials. During the second observation and following instruction on research-based practices for students with multiple disabilities, the preservice teachers described those practices. Their perceptions, however, were that these practices were not evident in relation to curriculum, instruction, or materials during their observations. In addition, the preservice teachers' comments reflected a new commitment to the use of research-based practices in inclusive general education contexts for *all* students.

Themes emerged from the content analysis of the preservice teachers' comments in two main areas. First, in the perceptions for the second observation many of the preservice teachers reflected an internal conflict between their expectations and their perceptions of reality about the use of research-based practices in the school. For example: (a) the curriculum, materials, and instruction frequently were described as repetitious, age-inappropriate, and unlike general education, resulting in decreased engagement in activities, worsening with age; and (b) access to same-age general education peers was described as lacking, resulting in students interacting primarily with adults whose comments were mostly directive. This internal conflict raised questions for the preservice teachers about implementing research-based practices in segregated contexts. Second, in the perceptions from both observations the preservice teachers did not

differentiate between curriculum and instruction. For example, the preservice teachers frequently described an ongoing activity in a classroom without delineating an instructional goal of the activity or an instructional strategy being used.

Discussion /Emerging Impressions

Two conclusions can be derived from these findings. First, the preservice teachers demonstrated an emergent level of understanding about issues related to implementing research-based practices in educational settings. Second, the preservice teachers demonstrated confusion about the concepts of, and interactions among, curriculum, instruction, and materials in educational settings.

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A SELF-EVALUATION GUIDE FOR INTERCULTURAL AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING¹

Auxiliadora Sales
Odet Moliner
Lidón Moliner

The analysis of school reality that our and other research teams have made in this field, confirm the general and priority need of giving a proper educational answer to diversity and multiculturalism. Although education laws and multiple school experiences have tried to get adapted to social, cultural and economic changes produced by the new society of Information, the results have still been too short and insufficient. We demand a global transformation of school's structure, culture and practices. The goal is to generate intercultural and inclusive projects that can provide professional development for teachers and participation of community as central and priority processes. This study tries to look at school as an organisation that can learn and as a privileged space to develop intercultural inclusion. Different studies (Gather, 2004; Hargreaves, 2003) have pointed out the key factor in school change: Teachers and community feel the goals like theirs, and start action-research processes to improve school structure and practices.

Method

Our research team has analyzed two types of evaluation tools: (a) Index for Inclusion (Booth & Ainscow, 2000) and (b) Cultural diversity and school equity--diagnosis of educational actions in multicultural school contexts (Aguado, 1999). Considering the characteristics of effective schools and their organisation model from the perspective of diversity, we have elaborated our own self-evaluation tool: *A guide to develop intercultural inclusive school*, from a action-research approach. This guide consists on two phases and three parts:

Phase I. WHERE WE ARE

A. How we are. How we see ourselves.

- A.1. Shared values
- A.2. Positive evaluation of diversity
- A.3. High expectations

B. How do we organize ourselves? (Policies and organisation)

- B.1. Intercultural inclusive educational project.
- B.2. Inclusive Leadership
- B.3. Collaborative culture
- B.4. Time and space for reflection and innovation
- B.5. Intercultural communication and mediation
- B.6. Community participation

C. How do we learn? (Teaching-learning process)

- C.1. Heterogeneous Grouping
- C.2. Curricular competences

- C.3. Active and cooperative methodology
- C.4. Global activities
- C.5. Multidimensional evaluation
- C.6. Dialogical management of classroom
- C.7. Teachers' intercultural communication competences
- C.8. Professional and communitarian development.

Phase II. WHERE WE WANT TO GO. (How do we want and can improve?)

- What we do well?
- What we want to change?
- How we can change?
- How we can evaluate change

We have used interviews, discussion groups and life stories to collect information about all dimension and factors, throughout open questions. This tool enables community to implement this guide by their own criteria and needs.

Results

This self-evaluation process has been developed in a Primary School in Valencia, in a socio-economic area deprived and with 90% of students and families in social exclusion conditions. The need to improve the school situation and students achievement made the principal to start this self-evaluation process with our research team as critical friends (Hick, 2005). This process was developed from October 2007 to January 2008 and the Final Report was delivered at the end of February. Then staff, students and families created mixed commissions to set up priorities and improving action for next. These priorities were consulted and made consens in one assembly at the end of school year. This year they are going to begin the agreed actions through an Action Research process with the whole community.

Discussion

The study connects three sides of the same research topic, that we have developed during the last years: interculturality, inclusion and sociocommunitarian perspective. This integral approach is still a very innovative one in Spain, because there are few research teams working on it but none in the Valencia region. We have no space in this paper to show the results of this self-evaluation process, but we want to point out some implications for future. The self-evaluation tool has to be useful and easy to manage in order to facilitate its use for community and schools. Maybe, the best way to guide self-evaluation could be provide schools of resources to elaborate their own scales, guides or items to analyse and think about their own school reality.

The process to collect information has been hard, long, and intensive. We consider that the self-evaluation process was too guided by us, and next year they have to manage the information and its interpretation directly. Our role as critical friends requires us to give more autonomy to teachers and students to collect and analyse data and make decisions.

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¹This paper is the result of a research project financed by Generalitat Valenciana (GV/2007/103).

INCLUSIVE SCIENCE TEACHING¹

Filiz Polat

An increasing number of pupils with a diversity of needs are being educated in mainstream schools as a result of a broad inclusion agenda supported and legislated in England in the last few decades. Teachers, as the frontrunners of the inclusion agenda, however, are not always equipped with the necessary skills to reach out to the diversity of pupils' needs, in particular regarding those with special educational needs (SEN). The most recent survey by the Training and Development Agency (TDA, 2007) indicated that Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) were feeling better prepared than previously to teach learners with SEN and learners of different

abilities. Despite this positive trend, it is increasingly recognised that many providers do not have a comprehensive approach to inclusion in teachers' professional development. Schools are expected to find innovative and effective schemes to develop within-school support to meet the diversity of pupils' needs and to implement the SEN Code of Practice (DfEE, 1994). There is substantial body of literature on teachers' continued professional development (CPD). Within proposed and implemented CPD models, it is widely accepted that these models are based on a belief that learning to teach is a linear process and that educational change is a "natural consequence of receiving well-written and comprehensive instructional materials" (Hoban, 2002, p. 13). However for CPD to be effective, a more complex view of professional development is required, incorporating professional learning systems. From the onset of this project, we were aware that educational change is complex and it takes time (Fullan, 2001), and it was never anticipated that fundamental and substantial changes could be achieved within a short period of time such as the timeframe of this project. Furthermore, within the UK context of accountability and high stakes assessment, our aim was to initiate change that, with detailed analysis, could inform professional development programs that could be implemented within systems that experience curricular constraints.

The purpose of this project was to create the space for science teachers to identify potential inclusion issues in their classes and develop strategies to tackle such issues. The main proposition of this project was that teacher collaboration and support in a challenging school environment as well as considering the diversity of their pupils' needs can create a positive and relaxing environment leading to confidence in teaching all pupils and as a result better student outcomes. Central to the project was enabling teachers' ownership of a CPD process that focused on promoting science teaching for inclusion. To achieve our objectives in the project, we incorporated many of the elements that Supovitz and Turner (2000) identify as critical to high-quality professional development.

Method

The project was based on collaborative research philosophy driven by teacher team partnership to promote inclusive science teaching using evidence-based teaching strategies. This was a steep learning curve for both partners that embedded tensions and uncertainties especially at the outset of the project. The project lasted 5 months (November 2007 to March 2008) and involved 3 workshops; one-to-one in-depth interviews with the participants; group discussions; collaborative enquires both between the teachers as well as between the participants and university researchers and videotaping of teaching by the teachers which led to group observation and group and/or self-reflection by the teachers. The school team comprised five members of staff including four teachers at different stages of their teaching careers and a teaching assistant. The first workshop identified issues around inclusion. The second workshop was conducted between teachers where they identified three year groups (Year 7/8/10) who presented inclusion issues ranging from behavioural difficulties to self-esteem issues. The third workshop aimed to reflect on teachers' experiences of the CPD process including choosing clips from video recording to reflect on strategies developed by the teachers.

Results

Due to word limit it is not possible to present and discuss all findings in detail; therefore, this section is presenting some of the key themes emerged from the project.

Teacher Ownership of the Project. The CPD model for the project rested on empowering the school team and allowing them control over the choice of inclusion issues and strategies to implement. At the first workshop, this seemed to create some apprehension and confusion among the teachers, indicating that this CPD model did not echo their “usual” experience since most of their prior experiences of CPD could be summed up as placing them in the role of “passive participants”. Ongoing feedback throughout the course of the project suggested that the teachers appreciated and enjoyed developing their own agenda of CPD where they had freedom to choose what to focus on and develop strategies collaboratively.

Inclusion Agenda. At the outset of the project the teachers agreed that their school had achieved a notion of equal opportunities and they felt fairly confident regarding issues around disability. Their initial discussion on inclusion revealed limited understanding of inclusion perceiving inclusion to be about including students with SEN and disability. It became evident that the teachers’ notion of inclusion had changed by the end of the project.

Collaborative Consultation and Teaching. Collaborative teaching can be defined as a process that enables a group of educational professionals with range of expertise to combine their resources to generate solutions to problems over a period of time. Views expressed by teachers both at the workshops and during the individual interviews showed that teachers lacked time and space to initiate collaborative work to learn from each others’ strengths and weaknesses tackling challenges they face in their diverse classrooms. The teachers appreciated the value of team consultation and team teaching, which they thought, should be more encouraged as part of their CPD.

Inclusion and Science. Teachers’ views were sought regarding whether there were particular barriers to inclusion in science classes. The data revealed mixed views among teachers. According to some, scientific terminology created extra barriers towards inclusion in science classes while others believed that inclusion is not a subject specific matter. Moreover, behavioural issues were considered to be one of the main barriers in science classes. The complexity of science texts has been highlighted by number of researchers (e.g., Maccini, Gagnon, & Hughes, 2002). Moreover, there is international acknowledgement of the difficulties that mainstream teachers are likely to face providing meaningful accommodation for the diverse needs of all learners in science lessons (e.g., Mastropieri, Scruggs, & Graetz, 2003; Palincsar, Magnusson, Collins, & Cutter, 2001). The project demonstrated importance of including teachers’ voice regarding their professional development with a specific emphasis on inclusive science teaching. It is important for CPD providers to assess areas of professional developments by involving one of the primary beneficiaries of CPD in determining such agendas. Collaborative inquiry, as proved by team of five teachers, as well as reflective teaching via videotaping of classes proved to be effective.

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¹This project was funded by the Teacher Development Agency (TDA), England. The project team consisted of: Dr. Sibel Erduran, Reader in Science Education at the University of Bristol, who was the co-investigator of the project; Dr. Maroussia Raveaud, visiting Post-doctoral Fellow at the University of Bristol, who was the researcher of the project; and, last but not least four teachers from the Science Department of Ridings High School, England.

ON THE ROAD TO HIGHLY QUALIFIED VIA A DATA-BASED MENTORING PROCESS

Karen Sealander

In an age of increased accountability, teachers must meet many challenges, including competently teaching students with diverse needs and from diverse backgrounds (e.g., culturally, linguistically and socio-economically). As we continue to face teacher shortages, especially in special education (Darling-Hammond, 2003), preparing teachers to withstand the behavioral and academic challenges of students, handle the pressure to perform and meet state standards, and

maintain the motivation to continue their professional development is no small feat.

Anderson and Hendrickson (2007) note that teacher preparation programs that incorporate support through mentoring have provided experiences that contributed to the continued improvement of special education teacher candidates in their first years of teaching. Merrow (1999) reports that field-based experiences beginning early in the teacher preparation program and continuing throughout the program provide much needed multiple opportunities for feedback and mentoring. Kutilek and Earnest (2001) note that mentoring (in an ideal form) is a collaborative effort and ongoing effort between the university professor and the teacher candidate allowing for professional growth via supportive feedback in a safe environment.

To provide a continuous, dynamic mentoring process for teacher candidates, we designed a systematic data collection and feedback form to record teaching behaviors such as those outlined in the work of Englert, Tarrant and Mariage (1992). Our form enables the mentor to record specific teaching behaviors (e.g., use of advance organizers, cues, prompts, models, varied question forms, specific praise, feedback) as the teacher candidate delivers a lesson. The mentoring form used for feedback consists of focused questions that promote teacher candidate reflection.

Data are collected using a momentary time sampling procedure and recorded on the mentoring form. Following the observation the teacher candidate meets with the mentor to discuss the observed session. The mentor begins by asking the candidate to reflect on the lesson--what they liked about their lesson, what they think went well, followed by asking what, if anything the candidate would change. After the candidate has articulated what they liked and what they might change data collected from the session is shared. Using the data and input from the teacher candidate a plan for the next lesson is formulated.

Method

Seven teacher candidates participated in this pilot project. All were observed using the data collection and mentoring process briefly described above. Mentoring feedback was provided within 48 hours of each observation session. At the end of the academic semester, the teacher candidates were asked the following six questions (3-point Likert Scale--*Yes, No, or Somewhat*). Comments were also solicited after each question. (a) Overall were the observations that targeted specific teaching behavior helpful to you? (b) Was the mentoring session helpful to you? (c) Did the opportunity to reflect upon your teaching serve to remind you of what you do well? (d) Was the data shared by the mentor helpful in validating your use of effective teaching behaviors? (e) Did the process help you grow as a teacher? (f) Would you like to engage in a data based observation and feedback process like the one we used in the future?

Results

In response to question 1 related to overall helpfulness of the observations, all candidates answered "Yes." Comments included statements that the process helped them to develop target teaching behaviors and allowed them to be more knowledgeable in their strengths and challenges in teaching. All respondents answered "yes" to Question 2 -- that the mentoring sessions were

helpful. Teacher candidates commented that the guidance that resulted from the mentoring sessions resulted in their growth as teachers.

For question 3, five of the seven responded “yes” that the opportunity to reflect on their teaching reminded them of what they do well. They noted that positive feedback on their teaching behaviors, no matter how seemingly small, was helpful. The two students who noted “somewhat helpful” reported that they did not take enough time to reflect on their own teaching.

All seven participants answered “yes” to question 4, indicating that the observational data shared by the mentor was helpful in validating that the teacher candidate was using effective teaching behaviors. Teacher candidates stated that the mentoring feedback allowed them to target specific teaching behaviors to increase and allowed them to see themselves through a different lens.

Question 5 asked the student if the process helped them grow as a teacher. All participants answered “yes” and noted that they ‘loved’ the experience; it enhanced their growth, and helped them overcome weaknesses. All seven answered, “yes” to question 6 and indicated that they would engage in a data based observation and feedback process in the future.

Conclusion

As our classrooms become more diverse and more challenging, preparing teacher candidates to meet these challenges is of utmost importance. We need teachers who not only know what to teach (i.e., the content of the curriculum) but how to teach (i.e., the process/pedagogy of instruction). By providing early and continuous field based experiences and mentoring based on the scientifically based evidence, our teacher candidates are more likely enter the profession, stay longer, and be more effective.

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**COLLECTING AND SHARING RELEVANT CLASSROOM DATA-BASED
INFORMATION USING ECO-BHEAVORIAL ASSESSMENT (EBA)**

Karen Sealander
Jo Hendrickson

Special education teachers and school psychologists are frequently called upon to collect data necessary to conduct behavioral assessments and collaborate with classroom teachers regarding interventions. Data collection processes that facilitate communication and guide the design of individualized interventions are needed. Eco-Behavioral Assessment (EBA) is a data collection process ideal for obtaining driving educational decisions related to behavioral interventions.

Overview

There is wide recognition that students with behavior and/or learning problems display social and academic behavior that varies as a function of the instructional setting (ecology), curriculum content, and response mode teachers require of students. In the United States, best practice and the federal special education law—the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA, 2004), mandates that a behavioral assessment or a functional behavior assessment (FBA) be done for any child for whom behavior is especially problematic. School psychologists, behavioral specialists, and special education teachers are among those routinely called upon to collect and interpret FBA data. Training related to FBA procedures and subsequent data collection varies and can lead to inconsistent and unreliable outcomes. An eco-behavior assessment (EBA) is a useful approach to reduce variation in data collection and provide data on both ecological (e.g., lecture, use of manipulatives, instructional games, transition time) and behavioral aspects (i.e., appropriate or inappropriate) of the student-environment interface (Heiby & Hanes, 2004). Moreover, since specific categories within EAB can be modified, an EBA is applicable across cultures, student populations, and educational settings (e.g., public schools to residential).

The EBA is an observational recording system for collecting student behavior (appropriate and inappropriate behaviors located at the top of the matrix) associated with the classroom contexts and activities (ecology categories listed down the left side of the matrix) in an easy to interpret matrix. The EBA herein is adapted from the work of Greenwood and Carta (1987) and Gable, Hendrickson, and Sealander (1997). By recording the occurrence of student behaviors in relationship to ecological categories, the observer/teacher/consultant can begin to determine the impact of the classroom ecology on student deportment, identify conditions related to appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and hypothesize as to the primary function of the behavior (e.g., attention, escape). In turn, intervention options formulated on the primary function of the behavior can be designed.

Method

Graduate students in Special Education and School Psychology enrolled in an assessment practicum (n=7 school psychology students, 12 special education students) participated in this study. The practicum sites included suburban and rural elementary and middle school settings.

All students were required to complete a data collection project to include using the EBA matrix to collect FBA data and write a case report. The students were trained in the use of the EBA form, and inter-rater reliability was established at or above 90%. The students each collected baseline data on one child with special needs. From the data collected the student identified a target behavior, generated a hypothesis as to why the behavior might be occurring based on the apparent function of the behavior, and developed an intervention plan. The intervention plan was implemented for a minimum of 10 days with data collected daily. Upon completion of the project and their case reports, the students were asked to reflect on the process of using the eco-behavioral approach as a means of data collection.

Results

Overall participants reported that they found the EBA data collection process to be very beneficial especially as it related to (a) the process of operationalizing behaviors, (b) the development and observation of ecological categories, and (c) the establishment of inter-rater reliability. They noted that having data on both appropriate and inappropriate behaviors within the ecological categories gave them increased confidence in designing interventions and in fact drove the generation of stronger hypotheses as to why a behavior might be occurring. That, in turn, made the development of an intervention plan more straightforward and realistic. In fact, they concluded that the EBA data collection process was necessary for them to be able to link their data to the design of effective interventions.

Implications

An eco-behavioral approach to data collection is an effective tool in classrooms serving students with persistently challenging behavior. The EBA approach is helpful for practitioners in anchoring educational decisions. The matrix serves as a tool to facilitate communication among professionals and families and the data generated provide a basis for solid intervention recommendations. EBA data has broad applicability and allows the evaluator to collect data on students in various settings and tasks, regardless of the student's disability, age, or cultural background.

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**SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION IN IMPOVERISHED OR
REMOTE AREAS IN ARIZONA, USA**

Kathleen Puckett
Coleen Maldonado

Staffing highly qualified special education teachers in high poverty and remote rural school districts has always been a challenge. Project ASPIRE (Arizona Project to Recruit Special Educators) addresses the shortages of special education teachers by offering a model for recruitment, training, and support that promotes a “grow your own” philosophy. Sponsored by Arizona State University and the United States Department of Education Transition to Teaching Program, Project ASPIRE combines two effective strategies in the preparation of teachers for students with disabilities: training within a community using a Professional Development School model, and recruiting teachers from the communities in which they will serve (Esposito & La, 2005; Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar, & Misra, 2007). Partners are six high need school districts scattered throughout the state of Arizona: two school districts in high poverty urban areas, and four remote school districts, including two first nation reservations, and two US-Mexico border towns. University courses are delivered in the community schools, connected to each site and to the campus using video conferencing technology, thus alleviating challenges of geography and distance that would otherwise prevent non-traditional candidates from seeking a career as a teacher.

The project recruits qualified local residents who are committed to the success of the community and to serving children with special needs for each of the partner districts. Recruits are supported through district employment as teaching assistants during their training year and receive a modest tuition stipend. The partner districts provide a video conferencing studio, mentoring support and supervision, program coordinators (called ASPIRE coordinators), and internship and employment placements. The ASPIRE coordinators participate in weekly governance meetings, and district officials participate in a quarterly governance structure that ensures joint decision making. Twenty participants were recruited during the first year of the project; of these, 16 finished preliminary coursework and advanced to student teaching. Ethnic and cultural diversity was apparent in this first class with 5 participants claiming Hispanic background, 1 Native American, and 2 African Americans, for a total of 50% ethnic or racial diversity.

Participants are evaluated using a comprehensive assessment procedure that measures the extent of implementation of teacher competencies as learned in classes. This evaluation process, the Clinical Performance-Based Assessment (CPBA) reflects two assumptions; that the reflective practice of the craft of teaching develops deliberate and intentional decision-making in the classroom, and that this practice should be central to all facets of the training of pre-service teachers. Building on recent models sharing a similar assumption (e.g., the California PACT assessment), the CPBA requires these pre-service teachers to submit a portfolio that includes both teaching artifacts and reflective analyses (commentaries) of various dimensions of instruction.

The portfolio is submitted and assessed at the end of every semester, offering participants a formative case-study of their teaching development. Portfolios include the context of the class and the community in which it resides, lesson plans with learning and language objectives, instructional and assessment materials, a planning commentary, a daily self-assessment, action plan, and improvement goals, analysis of improvement of instructional decisions in action, evaluative criteria or rubric assessment of student work, a learning segment video, and a revision commentary.

These tasks are organized into a number of lenses on the instructional process: the context for learning, planning instruction and assessment, instructional decisions in action, assessing student learning, and re-teaching for mastery. Key module design features link with theory and research, develop action research skills, and foster deliberate action. Aspire CPBA Modules are embedded in the program and courses. They are reinforced through ASPIRE coordinators, and implementation is analyzed through faculty lesson study. Preliminary assessment results are encouraging and document the extent of generalization of teaching knowledge and skills. Project ASPIRE has become a viable model for reaching out to would-be special education teacher preparation candidates who serve ethnically diverse areas over large geographic distances. This model is being replicated without additional funding in two additional urban districts in the greater Phoenix area with promising preliminary results.

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BEHAVIORAL CUSPS AND PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING: KEY TO ESTABLISHING PIVOTAL BEHAVIORS AND REPERTOIRES

Garnett J. Smith
Patricia J. Edelen-Smith
E. Geralynn Olvey

For more than 25 years, a small but growing group of behavioral scientists have been describing and developing a conceptual model of human behavior gathered from a family of normative behavioral practices and procedures referred to as *cumulative-hierarchical learning* (CHL) (Koegel & Koegel, 2006; Smith, McDougall & Edelen-Smith, 2006; Staats, 1995). Increasingly, behavioral and developmental scientists are concluding that cumulative hierarchal learning (CHL) is best viewed as a nonlinear process in which small changes in certain behaviors can result in disproportionately large reciprocal effects for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as well as the stakeholders involved in their lives. These small changes have potential to open the door to especially broad, complex and important changes in personal behavioral repertoires that can have a transformational effect on everyone involved. Rosales-Ruiz and Baer, (1997) captured this transformational notion through their conceptualization of the *behavioral cusp*.

Conceptual Framework

In the computer industry a *killer app* is jargon for a new application that "transforms industries,

redefines markets, and annihilates the competition". In the realm of human behavior, the *behavioral cusp* has the potential to become a killer app. Rosales-Ruiz and Baer (1997) identify a "behavioral cusp" as a pivotal instance of behavioral change whose effect is so far reaching that "it exposes the individual's [behavioral] repertoire to new environments, new reinforcers and punishers, new contingencies, new responses, new stimulus controls, and new communities of maintaining or destructive contingencies". As does a killer app, a behavioral cusp has the power to transform, render obsolete, or virtually annihilate preexisting behavioral repertoires (Bosch & Hixon, 2004; Koegel & Koegel, 2006; Layperson Summary, 2007; Staats, 1975).

For more than five years we have been describing, testing and disseminating an introductory set of guiding principles helpful in determining if and when a behavior might be a cusp (Smith, Edelen-Smith & Olvey, 2006; Smith, McDougall & Edelen-Smith, 2006). In order to make these principles even more pertinent we have specified five criteria first suggested by Bosch & Fuqua (2001) as being supportive in selecting and prioritizing potentially important target behaviors. These include (a) access to new reinforcers, contingencies or environments, (b) generativeness (i.e., cusp behaviors that lead to further learning by being either a prerequisite of a step leading to more complex responses), (c) competition with inappropriate responses (i.e., cusps that are incompatible with or compete with inappropriate or maladaptive behaviors), (d) number and relative importance of people affected (i.e., does that cusp behavior result in a response or outcome that is of benefit to others), and (e) social validity (i.e. stakeholder satisfaction with the viability of the cusp).

Theory-to Research-to Practice

As Dunst, Trivette & Cutspec (2002) emphasize, creating a theoretical conceptual model framed around CHL and the concept of a behavioral cusp is only the first factor in bridging the widely acknowledged theory-to research-to practice gap. The second factor is to tell compelling stories about the data and theory – stories that will (a) make use of and explain real world observations, (b) present what views fit or don't fit the conceptual model, and (c) illustrate what alternations or transformations have resulted from our intervention efforts thus far. For each of the criteria proposed, we provide empirically derived examples that demonstrate how: (a) modest behavioral cusp changes have resulted in significant changes in overall behavior repertoires ; (b) some behavioral cusps with seemingly dubious social validity have expanded dramatically learning opportunities, not only for persons with autism, but also for their families, friends, caregivers, and community acquaintances; and (c) the philosophical tenants of person-centered planning, and positive behavioral supports lend themselves to behavioral cusp determination and evaluation (Dunst, 2007).

Discussion and Summary

Davis (2007) states that too many researchers report snapshots of behaviors that occur at a single time and in a controlled setting – snapshots that fail to capture the patterns, routines, trends, or rhythms that are representative of reciprocity embedded in the concept of CHL. We believe our stories will foster direct discussions of such patterns, routines, trends and rhythms. We strongly advocate for practitioner approval of a *behavioral cusp* conceptual model as a way to help practitioners and stakeholders alike think about CHL behaviors in children with ASD, and to

provide a framework from which to examine CHL in situ. Our final plea is to invite professional practitioners and lay stakeholders alike, in their individual and collective efforts, to consider the advisement that *a journey of a thousand miles can begin with a single cusp*.

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IMPACT OF METACOGNITIVE TRAINING IN CHILDREN WITH WRITING DISORDER

M.V.R.Raju

Metacognition is ‘thinking about one’s own thoughts. But understanding of this process is not that simple. Metacognition is a higher order function, where the person thinks about his/her own cognition, evaluates the performance, makes necessary changes and uses appropriate strategies to improve a cognitive task. The present study aimed at evaluating the efficacy of metacognitive training skills for the remediation of writing disorder in children. A test of Metacognition on writing was adapted and Therapy progress checklist was used. Pre and post test design was used. The findings showed significant improvement. Recent researches in this area indicate that conscious control and regulation of learning strategies, labeled as ‘metacognition’, provides the key to efficient learning.

Metacognition as any knowledge or cognitive activity that takes as its object, or regulates, any aspect of any cognitive activity (Flavell, Miller, & Miller, 2002). Metacognition skills refer to a person’s procedural knowledge for regulating one’s problem solving and learning activities (Brown & De Loache, 1978; Veenman, 2005).

Among listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing has been thought to be the last to be mastered (Johnson & Myklebust, 1964). An inability to acquire and/or adequately deploy written expression may be a characteristic of a high percentage of students who struggle in school (Hooper et al., 1993). In the area of written language research among students with learning disability, a preponderance of evidence suggests that written language is one of the most difficult academic areas for students to master (Graham & Harris, 1993). Berninger and Hart (1992) have reported that about 1.3% to 2.7% of 300 primary grade children have problems with handwriting. The present study was aimed to find out the effectiveness of the metacognitive training programme in improving the writing skills of children with writing disorder.

Method

The study consisted of 8 children (8- 14 years) identified by class teachers of Andhra University High School, Visakhapatnam. A test of Metacognition on writing was adapted and Therapy progress checklist was used for the present study which was developed by Biji. V, (2008). The writing test included tests on dictation, copying and narrative writing. The metacognitive assessment was done in terms of the discrepancy between self assessment by the child and the objective assessment by the examiner. The therapy progress checklist is a four point rating scale

consisting of 26 statements for the purpose of assessing the impact of training on the performance of the child. The rating was done by the parents.

Training on writing skills was aimed at improving the spelling, copying, and narrative writing skills of the children. After 10 weeks of metacognitive training the test of metacognition on writing and therapy progress checklist were re-administered. Pre and post test were analyzed using t-test for paired observations.

Results

The impact of training was assessed. There was significant improvement in all the subtests of writing test. A significant change was observed in between the self evaluation and metacognitive assessment with regard to dictation. Test of dictation was significant.

Similarly in copying test, the children were significantly varying between self perception and examiners assessment. Copying test was significant. Regarding the test on narrative writing, significant change was noticed in examiners rating in addition, the metacognition on narrative writing was significant. But there was no significant difference in the self perception of narrative writing. Therapy progress checklist also proved to be highly significant.

Discussion

Findings indicated that the positive changes observed in the training situation got generalized to various other real life situations of the child. The training was given twice a week for 10 weeks. The training was concentrated on awareness building, goal setting, self evaluation, strategy instruction, building memory capacity and various aspects of writing skills. The study concludes that metacognitive skills are effective in improving and overcoming writing disorders. These techniques can be easily applied in the class room.

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**ISSUES OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SPECIAL EDUCATION: STUDENTS
COMMUNICATING ACROSS DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED NATIONS**

Nancy McK. Smith
Griet Geysels

Students preparing to be special educators around the world generally begin their programs by studying typical stages in human development as a basis for understanding special education programs serving people who do not follow the typical developmental path. Texts written in English and produced by American publishers using research conducted in developed countries constitute the content for these human development courses. However, when educators and researchers raise the topic of human development in an international and multicultural context, immediate differences appear as to how to characterize human development, thus calling into question its fundamental nature and, by implication, what constitutes atypical development.

This paper describes assignments in a human development course that is part of an international special education program for university students from developing nations based in Belgium and for teacher education students at an American university in Washington, DC. For a complete description of the program, see Wall, Lonke & Smith (2006). Students consider what constitutes human development, whether there is typical development across cultures and how these issues relate to special education.

Method

The students in Belgium came from six African and Asian countries and were all men ranging in age from 26-45. None of them spoke English as a first language. The 19-21 year-old US students were predominantly middle class Caucasian women who were fluent in English. Since cultures are constructed and maintained through shared activities (Rogoff, 2003), the course

created a temporary but memorable community among the Belgian and US students, one that would allow them to explore their own ideas about culture within a safe environment that also offered a structured framework for reflection. Students contacted one another through one-to-one assigned partner E-mail links. Written assignments asked both groups to examine the same set of pictures taken from Rogoff (2003) with their e-mail partner, summarizing and reflecting on what they and their partner had discussed. In both classes, the instructor also introduced the *Denver II Developmental Screening Test*, a widely used instrument in the US that identifies developmental milestones and corresponding ages at which American children typically achieve them. Finally, both groups responded to questions ranging from child rearing practices to the treatment of the elderly that the instructor posted on the common class electronic discussion board web site (BlackBoard).

Results

Both classes were amazed at the variety of interpretations of the pictures they all viewed. One picture showed a group of young Guatemalan girls pretending to grind corn for tortillas using sticks and stones. The younger girls watch the older girl perform the actions. One US student related her e-mail partner's response, "He thought the children were happy while I felt sorry for the children because they were playing in an alley with dirt. He thought they were learning from each other, modeling and practicing adult roles. I thought the children needed toys." Later the student went on to write, "Maybe they (the Guatemalan children) are using their imaginative skills. Maybe they are more developed because they are forced to imagine that the rock is corn...I feel this project not only made me look at children being raised in different cultures but also showed me how someone who was raised in another culture looks at these children."

A student from the People's Republic of Congo spoke with his partner about a picture of a woman carrying a child on her back in a market place in Ituri, DRC. He wrote, "For (the US student), it looks like a strange situation, but for me, that is nature, that is normal."

Students also found commonalities. They all recognized that each culture tries to protect their young and encourages youth to become responsible adults even though they may go about it differently. They all concluded that assumptions people bring to the pictures because of their cultural experiences affect what they see in them.

In comments about the Denver II, US students saw no difficulty with the instrument or its use as a screening device for special populations. The students in Belgium agreed with the US students on the timing of some of the itemized behaviors and disagreed on others. However, they rejected the underlying assumption of the instrument, the idea that one can characterize typical development as a series of discrete behaviors tied to a specific age and that children who do not pass the age-graded items "on time" may need special education.

Students' discussion board messages revealed starkly different value systems regarding treatment of children and the elderly. Several US students reported that the best way to promote the development of young children was to enroll them in early childhood programs, where they are encouraged to socialize with their peers and get an initial introduction to formal schooling. In contrast, the African and Asian students emphasized the importance of the mother-child bond.

They wrote that children should stay with their mothers so that they could learn to feel love and security as part of the larger (village) community. With respect to the treatment of the elderly, several African students wrote that there were no retirement homes in their countries, because the average life span is 45 years and because it is an honor for children to care for their parents in old age. When reading this response, a US student reported that it changed all of her “ideas about development.”

Conclusion and Implications for International Special Education

In order to understand the influence of culture on development, these students needed to hear the perspectives of people with contrasting backgrounds. Then they could identify how their own culture was influencing their judgment of others. Because of the personal interactions between these two groups, we saw the students grow in their ability to reflect on and articulate their own views of human development and to recognize the role of their own culture in shaping their views. Through structured exercises that highlighted cultural activities and values, both sets of students learned that not everyone views typical or atypical human development in the same way.

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PREVENTION SCIENCE IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: DO TIER TWO BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS PREVENT THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL DISABILITIES?

Douglas Cheney

The behavioral challenges presented by students in U.S. public schools have been an enduring issue over the past three decades. Students who are at-risk for chronic problem behavior have created the need for schools to re-examine their existing school practices and consider identification of and intervention for these students who require attention, time, and resources. Left unattended, behavioral issues are likely to become exacerbated (Kauffman, 1999) and eventually reduce the child's learning and the learning environment of others. To thwart the development of inappropriate behaviors, prevention and intervention services must be provided.

Despite the growing rate of students at risk of emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD), most schools are still ill equipped and many teachers inadequately prepared to meet these students' exceptional needs (Sachs & Cheney, 2000). To address this service gap, schoolwide positive behavior supports have emphasized the importance of Tier two behavioral interventions to ameliorate behavior problems of children (Hawken, Vincent, & Schumann, 2008). The purpose of this paper is to discuss the development, implementation, and results of a Tier two intervention with elementary aged students at risk of developing EBD.

The intervention, the Social Response to Intervention System (SRIS; Cheney, Lynass, Flower, & Walker, 2009), was developed to address children's behavioral problems by improving their interpersonal relationships, reinforcing their prosocial behavior, and enhancing their overall engagement in school activities. SRIS uses response to intervention metrics to evaluate student progress (Cheney, Flower, & Templeton, 2008; Gresham, 2005). It also incorporates evidence-based practices from previous research in two interventions: the Check & Connect Program (Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, & Hurley, 1998), and the Behavior Education Program (Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004).

Method

Participants. Two hundred and seven students in grades one through five, who were at-risk for EBD, participated in a two year randomized, controlled trial of SRIS. All students were selected by passing Gate 2 of the Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (Walker & Severson, 1992). The SSBD is a reliable and valid measure that uses teacher nomination and completion of rating scales to identify students who are at risk of EBD. Based on school assignment (nine intervention and nine comparison schools) social skills and problem behaviors of 119 students in SRIS were compared to 86 comparison students. Of those in the intervention, sixty-one percent ($n = 73$) graduated from the program by the end of the second year while 39% ($n = 46$) did not based on RtI metrics. These students were all included in the growth curve analysis reported, while a slightly smaller sample of 162 students (64 graduates, 27 nongraduates and 71 comparisons) was used in ANOVA findings reported. Students in the study participated for a total of two years and had major outcome data collected every Fall and Spring of the study, and for follow-up, in the Spring of the third year.

Procedure. SRIS connects students with an adult mentor called the “coach” who systematically checks students in and out each day and tracks their behavior using a Daily Progress Report (DPR; Crone et al., 2004). Each morning the coach checks students in by meeting and greeting them, giving them a new copy of the DPR, and collecting the previous day’s DPR signed by the student’s parent. The coach encourages the student to be successful, specifies daily goals, and checks to see if the student has all needed school materials.

During the day the teacher rates the student’s behavior at set intervals (e.g. start to recess, recess to lunch, lunch to dismissal etc.) on the DPR. At each interval, students are rated by the teacher on their ability to meet school-wide social expectations and receive positive and/or corrective feedback as needed. At the end of the school day, students check out with the coach by adding up DPR points, and seeing if they met their daily goal. Students who meet goals receive verbal praise and social or tangible reinforcement. Criteria for success is initially set at 75% of possible daily DPR points and adjusted up or down based on student performance.

Measures. The full complement of measures used in this study can be reviewed at uwbrc.org. For this paper, outcomes on the *Social Skills Rating System* (Gresham & Elliott, 1990), the *Teacher Report Form* (Achenbach, 2001), the *Behavior and Emotional Rating Scale-2* (BERS-2; Epstein, 2004), and the *Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Tests* (WOJO; Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001), and special education status are reported.

Results

Linear growth analyses of the measures found that standardized problem behavior measures (TRF & SSRS) significantly decreased to non-problem levels for SRIS graduates compared to comparison students and non-graduates. Social skills (SSRS) improved for all groups over time, and were higher for SRIS graduates at the end of year two. Academic measures (WOJO) did not significantly change over time, but were found to be in the normative range for the student groups (Cheney, Stage, Hawken, Lynass, Meilenz, & Waugh, in press).

Analyses of two strength-based BERS scales were completed using ANOVA across three years of the study data. SRIS intervention students were found to be significantly higher on Intrapersonal Strength Scale scores than their comparison group by end of Year 1 and 2. At follow-up at the end of Year 3, SRIS graduates were significantly higher than both the comparison and non-graduates students, and found to score in the normative range of the BERS. SRIS graduates were found to be higher on BERS Interpersonal strengths at the end of Years 1, 2, and 3; and were found to score in the normative range on the scale at the follow-up period.

We also analyzed growth of students who were identified as having internalizing behavior on the TRF. No significant between group differences were found at the end of year one, but by the end of Year 2, the intervention group was significantly lower on the scale than the comparison group; and at follow-up at end of Year 3, the SRIS graduates were found to be in the normative range on T-scores, and significantly lower than the comparison group.

Using data between SRIS graduates and non-graduates one year after participating (end of Year 3) in the intervention, there was a difference between the percentage of those identified for special education. Non-graduates were 2.5 X more likely to be identified for special education services (Cheney, Lynass, Flower, Waugh, & Iwaszuk, in press).

Discussion

The results of this three year study suggest that the SRIS may be a very positive prevention model for thwarting the development of EBD. Students who were responsive to the intervention (graduate) were rated as having fewer behavior problems, greater growth in social skills, intrapersonal and interpersonal strengths, and decreases in internalizing problems. In addition, the cumulative percentage of those referred to and identified for special education across two years of intervention was 50% less in the intervention group. Both intervention and comparison groups showed stable performance on achievement tests in reading and math in elementary school suggesting that they were making acceptable progress in academics. We recommend that schools adopt the three level PBS approach, and use a system like the SRIS or similar systems like BEP can CICO to prevent the development of students with EBD. Further research needs to consider factors such as cost benefits for hiring coaches in schools and fluency of use of this system with effective professional development models. In addition, sample sizes should be increased and studied across regions of states for a larger effectiveness study.

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EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: EXAMINING POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

Geeta Chopra

According to the Census findings, India's disability population is 21.9 million, or 2.13% of the total population (Census, 2001). The National Sample Survey Organization has estimated the number of disabled at 18.49 million, or 1.8% of the total population (NSSO,2002). In view of the unreliability of the existing data, according to World Bank (2007), it is estimated that people with disabilities comprise between 4 and 8 percent of the Indian population (around 40-90 million individuals). At this juncture, it would be worth while to try to estimate the number of Children with Disabilities (CWD) in India. Ministry of Human Resource Development (2004) suggests 1.6 m CWSN in 6-14 age group in a total child population of 209 m in 2001. Census (2001) estimates 5.66 m CWD in age group 0-14 years. Office of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (2003) says that depending on how conservative the estimate is, there are between 6m and 30m CWD in India (cited from Singal, 2006).

Education Status of PWD

While trying to measure the status of education of PWD in India, Singal (2006) has cited various sources to highlight the gross variations in literacy figures for CWD. This paper quotes in an NCERT survey carried out in 1998, about 84,000 CWD are enrolled in schools. They also quote unpublished data gathered for Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1999, which suggest that approximately 55,000 CWD are enrolled in schools. The paper contrasts these figures with total population on CWD between 5-15 yrs age group at 10.39 m, which shows that less than 1% CWD attend school. A position paper drafted by NCERT (2005) notes that the office of Chief Commissioner Disabilities stated that not more than 4% of CWD have access to education. Compare this with the figures put across by Ministry of Human Resource Development (2004) which says that of 1.6m CWD in 6-14 age group, 1.08m (i.e., 67.5% are receiving education; cited from Singal, 2006). However, according to government figures from Census (2001), the literacy rate in India is 65.38%, but for PWD, it is 45%.

Legislations, Policy Framework in India for Education of PWD

The National Policy on Education (NPE)1986, revised 1992: stated that the “ where feasible, children with motor handicaps and other mild handicaps will be educated with others, while severely handicapped children will be provided for in special residential schools”. The National Plan of Action1990, ambitiously committed to universal enrollment by 2000 for both children with and without disabilities. It also strengthened the NPE by demanding that CSN be educated only in regular schools and not in special schools as had been allowed earlier. The Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act: Governments shall ensure that every CWD has access to free education “in an appropriate environment” until the age of eighteen..... promote integration of children with disabilities in normal schools.... Establishment and availability of special schools across the nation..... all public educational institutions and others receiving aid from Government shall reserve not less than 3 percent of seats for PWD (i.e., for PWD over 18 years)..

National Level Programmes for the Education of Children with Disabilities

The Government launched the Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme in December 1974. The aim of IEDC was to provide educational opportunities to CWSN in regular schools. This scheme was revised in 1992 and is presently being implemented in over 90,000 schools benefiting over 2,000,000 children with disabilities. (Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of ‘Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS)). Project Integrated Education for the Disabled (PIED) was launched in 1987 in 10 blocks where 6000 CWD were integrated in special schools. In this approach, a cluster, instead of the individual school approach was emphasised. The next major initiative came in the form of District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) which was launched by the government with aid from World Bank in 1994. With its child - centered pedagogy, DPEP set a stage where children with special needs could be provided learning opportunities tailored to their needs. From a few hundred blocks in 1998, IED is currently being implemented in 2014 blocks of 18 DPEP states (Chadha, 2003). The next major programme geared towards EFA was launched by the government in 2004 and was called the Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). SSA ensures that every child with special

needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. The current coverage of CWSN in the SSA is 21.86 lakh (71.99%; Inclusive Education in Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan). It is estimated that there are 3200 special schools in India (Chadha, 2003). Though the government of India does not directly run special schools, it funds and supports NGO's through various grant-in-aid schemes of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. In addition, CWD are also opting for open schooling system for educational opportunities.

Discussion

In India, a large percent of PWD come from poverty conditions, where all kind of needs, including educational of the CWD are more often than not compromised. India has a literacy rate of a little more than 67 percent. The struggle to achieve compulsory education for majority of children takes precedence over the educational needs of those with disabilities. Also, CWD are a heterogeneous group, and to handle such children, the teachers have to be very competent, skillful and motivated to embrace diversity. Also, we still are to reach a consensus on the number of Children With Disabilities in India. We have legislations, policies and constitutional provisions in place. But these need to be translated into action.

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THE INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY VIA LITERACY ON SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

Julie K. Corkett
Blaine E. Hatt

Students' academic performance is influenced not only by their cognitive ability, but also by affective and non-intellectual variables, such as self-efficacy. The belief students have in their ability to accomplish a task determines how much effort they initiate and the extent to which they persist when faced with obstacles and adverse situations (Bandura, 1977; Kim & Lorschach, 2005; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The implications of the impact that student self-efficacy has on academic achievement, particularly in relation to literacy, should not be overlooked.

Teacher self-efficacy is one of the few teacher characteristics that is correlated with student achievement (Coladarci & Breton, 2001; Schunk & Rice, 1992; Woolfolk, 1998). A contributing factor that may differentiate student academic achievement is teacher self-efficacy. Research (e.g., Kim & Lorschach, 2005) indicates that teachers are fairly accurate in their ability to assess the level of student self-efficacy.

Polychroni, Koukoura & Anagnostou, (2006) state that "it has been consistently found that high motivation and positive attitudes are related to higher reading achievement and more frequent reading" (p. 417). In addition, it is the students' beliefs about others' expectations; their own beliefs about their reading ability; and, their past reading experiences that influence their attitude toward reading. Students with reading difficulties evidence a low motivation to read and are more likely to attribute their reading failures to internal and stable causes and their reading successes to unstable and external causes (Polychroni, et al., 2006).

To improve their writing performance, students must not only possess the required knowledge and skills, but must also possess high self-efficacy (Kim & Lorschach, 2005). Kim and Lorschach (2005) found that the students (grades K-1) with high self-efficacy had a higher level of writing development than those with low self-efficacy. As with other research, they found that the low writing self-efficacy children avoided writing tasks more than the children with high writing self-efficacy. Both the high and low self-efficacy students took a long time completing the writing task, but the reason for length of time differed for both groups. The high self-efficacy students

took a long time to complete the task because they wanted to do it well, while the low self-efficacy students took a long time because they had difficulty with task. Furthermore, even though the students were in kindergarten, the student's perception of their writing self-efficacy was similar to their teacher's perceptions.

The purpose of the current study is to begin to address these inadequacies by answering the following questions: (a) Are teacher and student perceptions of student literacy ability accurate? (b) Are teachers' perceptions of student literacy ability the same as students' perceptions of their literacy ability? (c) How does the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher's perception of a student's literacy ability vary from the student's belief in his/her literacy ability?

The preliminary analysis of the data suggests that the students' overall literacy ability and writing ability did not vary by gender. The female students performed significantly better than the male students on the reading task. However, the teachers consistently viewed the female students as having a higher degree of literacy self-efficacy than the male students. The students' overall literacy ability positively coincided with their teachers' perception of their overall literacy self-efficacy. While a similar relationship was found in both the students' reading and writing ability, the relationship was stronger for writing than for reading. When gender was taken into consideration, there was a stronger relationship between the students' reading ability and the teachers' perception of the students reading self-efficacy than between the students writing ability and the teachers' perception of the students writing self-efficacy.

The students' perception of their literacy self-efficacy, reading self-efficacy and writing self-efficacy did not vary by gender. There was no significant relationship between the students' overall literacy ability and their reported literacy self-efficacy. When gender was examined there was a weak negative relationship between the male students' overall literacy ability and their reported literacy self-efficacy as well as between their writing ability and writing self-efficacy suggesting that male students' reported literacy and writing self-efficacy does not strongly reflect their actual literacy writing ability. The female students, on the other hand, consistently reported a weak positive relationship between their literacy, reading and writing ability and their literacy, reading and writing self-efficacy, suggesting that they may be more accurate in assessing their self-efficacy than the male students.

The implications of our findings for Special Education Programming are several: (a) teacher predictions did not match and were not reflective of the students' actual reading ability for low reading ability students; (b) there was no significant relationship for low ability students in reading and writing between their overall literacy ability and their reported literacy self-efficacy. The reported literacy and writing self-efficacy of male students does not strongly reflect their actual literacy writing ability; (c) there is no correlation between the teachers' perception of the students' literacy self-efficacy and the students' reported literacy self-efficacy; (d) the teachers' teaching self-efficacy may influence both areas of literacy for male students' self-efficacy but does not appear to affect the female students' self-efficacy; and, (e) the teachers' teaching self-efficacy as it relates to writing was correlated with the low ability writers' writing self-efficacy.

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IDAHO'S EC BLENDED CERTIFICATE: A LIFEWORLD VIEW THAT MAXIMIZES LEARNING FOR ALL

Shelly Counsell

Idaho State University's (ISU) Early Childhood Blended Certificate Program embodies a constructivist approach shifting away from the transmission model toward a more active learner-centered approach that flexibly serves diverse populations within inclusive settings. ISU's Blended Certificate believes this approach can best prepare early childhood majors to address and satisfy the learning and developmental needs of the full continuum of diverse populations within the natural (inclusive) environment. Habermas' (1987) Theory of Communicative Action provides an important framework for examining how Idaho's Blended Certificate satisfies the lifeworld view of maximizing learning and educational opportunities and experiences, increasing access to social justice (emancipation) for all children and families.

Theoretical Framework

In the course of social evolution, modern society became differentiated as both a lifeworld and system in response to increasing demands for economic markets (Habermas, 1987). The lifeworld represents the normative consensus of beliefs and values of any social group expressed and interpreted by actors through communicative action. Systems, associated with social organizations (private enterprises and public bureaucracies), are comprised of management designs and protocols, strategic and tactical actions, policies and procedures, and efficiency and accountability assurances (Sergiovanni, 2000). According to Weber (1968), modern bureaucratization results in a "society of organizations" placing societal rationality and acting subjects under an objective force working autonomously over them (cited by Habermas, 1987, p. 306).

Like the system rationales, steering media and mechanisms have been advanced historically in public education reform for the "betterment of society." In this colonization of the lifeworld view, the system rationale has been granted the power and influence needed to force actors into its service and dominate their everyday working life (e.g., operationalizing the "disabled" based on standardized norms and assessments).

Special Education System Rationale of Deficit

The special education system rationale of deficit views children as those "who differ from the norm - the average, the typical" (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005, p. 21). Disability is operationalized as an, "inability to do something that most people, with typical maturation, opportunity, or instruction, can do" (p. 30). Diagnostic tools (including standardized assessments), eligibility criteria, program funding, academic tracking, and classification labels are among the steering mechanisms used to support and satisfy the system rationale of diagnosis and treatment of deficits.

Idaho's Blended Certificate: Maximizes Lifeworld Rationale for Lifelong Learning

If parents and educators agree that the ultimate lifeworld rationale for early childhood education is to increase learning opportunity needed to maximize development and lifelong learning for all young learners regardless of ability or developmental needs, then it becomes necessary to understand, design, and implement a system or program with the steering media and mechanisms needed to fulfill this desired outcome. To achieve this lifeworld view, it became imperative for ISU's Early Childhood Education and Intervention Program Area to abandon the meritocratic ranking and sorting mechanisms (central to the traditional special education system rationale of deficit) that limit or even eliminate overall learning experiences and opportunities for young learners in order to effectively prepare teacher candidates to teach the full continuum of learners.

ISU's Early Childhood Education and Early Intervention Program's conceptual framework utilizes the following (steering mechanisms) initiatives: (a) abandon the transmission model in favor of a constructivist approach; (b) promote the construction of knowledge within social contexts (DeVries, Zan, Hildebrandt, Edmiaston & Sales, 2002); (c) design and implement learner-centered curriculum play-based and activity-based interventions; (d) use Vygotsky's (1935/1978) ZPD and scaffolding; (e) employ authentic assessments; (f) increase access to natural (inclusive) settings; (g) emphasize collaboration and team-based approaches; and (h) incorporate current research related to brain development and the importance of affect, attachment, and caring relationships (Greenspan, 1997; Cook & Cook, 2005; Shore, 1997; Zero to Three, 1998-2001). Together, these initiatives demonstrate collectively how Idaho's Blended Certificate satisfies the lifeworld mission to maximize learning and development for all learners regardless of ability or developmental needs within inclusive settings.

Conclusion

Abandoning distribution schemes based on deficit in favor of conceptualizing the continuum based on diversity used to inform and guide instruction rather than for inclusionary or exclusionary purposes, celebrates the whole child's strengths, talents, and interests. The central question now becomes: "How can we best enhance young learners' participation within natural settings according to individual ability and developmental needs?" Preparing a generation of early childhood educators who understand, appreciate, and celebrate the full continuum of learners and advocate for the natural environment "not as a privilege, but a right" is our program's greatest mission and the best way to ensure access to lifelong learning essential to democracy and social justice for all.

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**EMPOWERING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH THE USE OF OBJECT
LESSONS ANALOGIES METAPHORS PARABLES PARADOXES AND SHORT
STORIES**

Peter Cowden
Susan Sze

Inclusive education embodies the principle that schools should accommodate all children, regardless of an identified disability or any cultural, emotional, social, or linguistic difference. Today, the culture of schools have become increasingly more diverse with students encompassing a widespread range of socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, family structures, and languages thus bringing a vast array of abilities and disabilities inside the classroom.

Although it is clear that contemporary legislation and federal operated programs demand an increased emphasis on social development in the classroom, an abundant number of students fail to demonstrate social skills and/or social competence that is fundamental for successful interactions in the learning process. Arguably, teachers have exerted tireless energy dealing with the challenging behavior of students including discipline and the rectification of disruptive and socially unacceptable behaviors displayed in the classroom. Teachers must work together to

improve not only the general population of students but also the inclusive education strategies for students with disabilities (LD). Empowering Children with disabilities through the use of object lessons, analogies, metaphors, parables, paradoxes and short stories provides an active learning vehicle where these students can gain meaning in their studies and interact with all students.

Explanation of Terms

Analogy plays a significant role in problem solving, decision making, perception, memory, creativity, emotion, explanation and communication. It lies behind basic tasks such as the identification of places, objects and people, for example, in face perception and facial recognition systems. It has been argued that analogy is "the core of cognition" (Hofstadter in Gentner et al. 2001).

Metaphor is a Greek word to describe a figure of speech in which an expression is used to refer to something that it does not literally denote in order to suggest a similarity. (wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn)

Object lesson is an English language phrase which describes a type of lesson which uses common objects and activities to drive home a point by connecting it to thoughts and memories already in the listener's mind. (<http://www.articlesforeducators.com/dir>)

Parable is a brief, succinct story, in prose or verse that illustrates a moral or religious lesson. It differs from a fable in excluding animals, plants, inanimate objects, and forces of nature as actors that assume speech and other powers of mankind. A figure of speech in a story setting to illustrate a moral or spiritual truth taken from the people's everyday experiences. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable)

Paradox is a statement or expression so surprisingly self-contradictory as to provoke us into seeking another sense or context in which it would be true. . . "Paradoxical language is valued in literature as expressing "a mode of understanding [that] . . . challenges our habits of thought." (CB) A paradox occurs when the elements of a statement contradict each other. Although the statement may appear illogical, impossible, or absurd, it turns out to have a coherent meaning that reveals a hidden truth, (miriams-well.org/Glossary/index.html)

Short story is a brief piece of fiction that is more pointed and more economically detailed as to character, situation, and plot than a novel. (www.brochure-design.com/brochure-design-publishing-terms.html)

Application

Use your gift to spot fascinating elements that most people overlook. Use metaphors, analogies, short stories, and familiar objects, to give a running commentary along with specific instructions for using the objects to teach a lesson. The result will be an unforgettable lesson enjoyed by many diverse learners.

Children and adults alike, take a special delight in the little things of creation. We are fascinated by rocks, flowers, twigs, diamonds, cars, and react to these with a sense of wonder. Analogy, metaphor, short story, and object lesson appear to learners' delight and fascination by using ordinary objects often ignored. Each lesson enhances the learners' sense of belonging and brings them closer to the heart of knowledge.

The objects themselves are easily found, usually right in front of us. The lessons are arranged in learning order. Every student has an individual style or presentation, these object lessons are suggestions, and can be easily altered to suit your style. Each lesson, however, can be given exactly as written, since it is presented in conversational form. Take a few minutes to look, listen, feel, and think of objects you can use to teach a lesson.

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MUSIC INTEGRATION IN THE CLASSROOM: EMPOWERING STUDENTS WITH DIASBILITIES

Susan Sze
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During the past decade, there has been a steady growth in the research base on the impact of music to children with disabilities. A vast majority of the research has mainly focused on music and medicine (Pratt, 2001; Chaquico, 2005), music therapy (Pelliten, 2000), music as the basis for learning (Collett, 2002), usefulness of expressive arts (Dixon & Chalmers, 2000), usefulness of music to treat students with emotional and behavioral disorders (Gfeller, 1989, King, 1994; Houchens, 1983; Shennum, 1987). Very few studies provided a comprehensive view of some disability categories such as autism (Staum, n.d.; Stambough, 1996), mental retardation (MR) or cognitive delays, attention deficit disorders (ADHD), learning disabilities (LD) and physical and other health impairments (POHI). The current review builds on previous efforts to examine research on the effects of music therapy to children with disabilities.

Students with disabilities arrive daily in music classes from kindergarten through high school. Effective integration of music in the content areas creates a learning environment that makes all children want to learn. Collett (1992) reported a successful music integrated curriculum which works well with bilingual and special education students. Music integration provide children with concrete, hands-on experiences that are essential to developing each child's ability to reason, think, solve problems, analyze, evaluate, and to enhancing creativity (Houchens, 1993).

Several studies have investigated the effects of music therapy on children with cognitive disabilities. Straum (n.d.) suggested the use of music to assist students with autism disorder in the areas of social and language development. Autistic children have eliminated their monotonic speech by singing songs composed to match the rhythm, stress, flow and inflection of the sentence followed by a gradual fading of the musical cues. The author also argues that music can be used as a tool to encourage human development in cognitive, learning, perceptual, motor, social and emotional development. In a related poster, Stambough (1996) conducted an action research at a music camp to 37 campers ages from 9-45, each suffers varies degree of a genetic condition called Williams Syndrome, which leads to cognitive impairment. She found that several strategies and techniques, combined with a great deal of patience, helped to accommodate the special needs of the students.

Others researchers suggested steps for facilitating the integration of students with emotional or behavioral disorders into the regular music classroom. Results gathered from King & Schwabenlender (1994) reported various supportive strategies for promoting emotional well-

being in children from a diverse background. Allow children to be expressive provides them with a sense of empowerment (Dixon & Chalmers, 1990).

Special education teachers have used music to alter mood and assess emotional problems. Music allows the individual to invent emotions. Music is viewed as an integral part of all children's lives. Children enjoy listening to music, singing, and humming. Music may effectively enhance the ability to cope with stress. The author suggested that music be found in both music classes and regular education classrooms. She found that integrating literature with musical content helped to bring books alive and that musical classrooms encouraged children to relate and participate in the activities (Giles, Cogan, & Cox, 2001).

However, very few studies provided a comprehensive view of some disability categories such as autism (Staum, n.d.; Stambough, 1996), mental retardation (MR) or cognitive delays, attention deficit disorders (ADHD), learning disabilities (LD) and physical and other health impairments (POHI). Below is a list of practical, relevant, and evidence based strategies teachers can use to help students with various disabilities through music.

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**UNDERSTANDING PERCEPTIONS ON DISABILITY, INCLUSION, AND
NECESSARY TEACHER SKILLS IN TANZANIA**

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Post-secondary education for the citizens of Tanzania, Africa, is pivotal for their future vision of government and economic stability. Sebastian Kolowa University College (SEKUCo), the only college in the Tanga Region of Tanzania, seeks to expand the quality and accessibility of educational services for individuals with special needs. This is the only higher education institution in the country of Tanzania that has a teacher preparation program in the field of special education.

This investigation was implemented seamlessly in a 10-day co-taught course titled, *Classroom Administration and Management in Inclusive Classes*. The investigation sought to understand participants' perceptions on the knowledge and skills necessary for beginning pre-service teachers and practicing teachers to be effective teachers of students with disabilities in the context of the Tanzania educational system. Additionally, the investigators were interested in how the views of course participants' changed as a result of course instruction in inclusive practices.

Participants

The 101 participants were a convenience sample in the special education teacher preparation program at SEKUCo in the previously named course taught in June 2008. Fifty-seven percent of the participants were male and 43% were female. Participants ranged in age from under 25 years (16.8%), 25-30 years (14.8%), 31-36 years (36.6%), 37-41 years (10.9%), and over 41 years (20.8%). Participants reported their current role of a special education teacher (40.6%), general education teacher (33.7%), higher education faculty (2%), or students preparing to be a teacher (23.8%).

Procedures and Methodology

The investigation collected qualitative data to provide insight into participants' pre and post course perceptions in two areas of teacher skills: (a) teacher skill set needed for special education teachers to teach students with disabilities, and (b) teacher skill set needed for general educators to teach students with disabilities.

Each investigator used previously agreed upon coded themes to independently complete a two-step inter-rater reliability process. A sample set of 25% of the 101 pre and post response sets for Question 1 and 2 was identified. Each of the sample set responses were independent. The investigators reported 81% and 88% inter-rater reliability for Question 1 pre and post. They reported 81% and 78% inter-rater reliability for Question 2 pre and post.

Following review of the sample set, the investigators independently coded all 101 participant open-ended responses for the two questions and shared their coding for all responses. For Question 1, investigators reported an inter-rater reliability of 99% in the coding of all pre-and post course responses. For Question 2, the investigators reported an inter-rater reliability of 98% and 94%, respectively in the coding of all pre-and post course responses. The investigators jointly reconciled all coding disagreements and then compiled frequency count data.

Results

Question One sought participants pre-post perceptions on the teacher skill set needed for special educators to teach students with disabilities. The pre-course results indicate the special education teacher skill of *Actual Teaching Students with Disabilities* was the most important (59% frequency). The second most important skill was *General Special Education Knowledge* (19% frequency). The two skills that tied for third in the pre-course perception of most important were *Professional Beliefs* and *Collaboration Skills*, each with 7.5% frequency. The teacher skill of *Understanding Emotions and Behavior* was fourth (5% frequency) and last was *Understanding Societal and Individual Impact* with 2% frequency.

The post-course results for Question One are similar to the pre-course for special education teacher skill set with the number one skill identified as *Actual Teaching Students with Disabilities* (51% frequency). The second most important skill was *General Special Education Knowledge* (23% frequency) and *Professional Beliefs* as third (9% frequency). In the post-course

data, the fourth important teacher skill was *Understanding Emotions and Behavior* (8% frequency) followed by *Collaboration Skills* (5% frequency), and *Understanding Societal and Individual Impact* (2% frequency).

Question Two sought participants' pre-post perceptions on the teacher skill set needed for general educators to teach students with disabilities. The pre-course results indicate that the most important skill for general educators was, *Actual Teaching Students with Disabilities* (59% frequency) and second was *General Special Education Knowledge* (23% frequency). The third most important skill for general educators was, *Collaboration* with 12% frequency. The skills of *Professional Behaviors* and *Understanding Emotional and Behavior*, tied for fourth, each with 3% frequency.

Question Two post-course results on necessary skill set for general education teachers to teach students with disabilities repeated the pre-course in the three most important skills. This included *Actual Teaching Students with Disabilities* (51% frequency), *General Special Education Knowledge* as second (21% frequency), and *Collaboration* (16% frequency). The fourth important teacher skill for general educators *Understanding Emotions and Behavior* (4% frequency) followed by *Professional Behaviors* (8% frequency).

Discussion

This investigation process and subsequent results provide a valuable global contribution to higher education as well as teacher preparation programs for students with special needs. The participants in this investigation were consistent from pre-to-post in their perception on two most important areas of knowledge for special education and general education teachers' skill set. The participants supported as a priority the ability to teach students with disabilities as well as having a foundation of knowledge about special education.

There was an increase in post-course perception of the importance for special education teachers to be able to collaborate and understand emotions and behavior. There was a post-course increase in the perception of importance of collaboration skills for general education teachers in being able to develop professional skills that would enhance their work with students with disabilities. The participants were consistent from pre-to-post in placing a low priority for teachers to understand the social and individual impact of disability. Investigators would like to explore this in the future as it is thought that societal perception of disability is critical to future success of educational services for individual with disabilities.

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**MAXIMIZING THE TRANSITION PROCESS FOR
CULTURALLY/LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE YOUTH: ESSENTIAL PRACTICES**

Bridgie Alexis Ford
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Despite legal mandates under *The Individuals with Disabilities Act* (2004) to enhance the effectiveness of the transition process in the U.S.A.'s public school system, it is often fraught with challenges and stress which leaves individuals and families ill prepared to deal with activities which would either enhance development or lead to more productive lives (Hughes, 2001). Multi-faceted racial, cultural, socioeconomic, and political reasons, further exacerbates problems of culturally and/or linguistically (CLD) youth who are at a higher risk for encountering difficulties are less likely to be appropriately supported during the transition process therefore ultimately resulting in fewer positive outcomes (Ford & Daviso, in press; Geenen, Powers & Lopez-Basquez, 2001; Kim & Morningstar, 2005). The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition Study -2 (NCSET, 2003) reports that not only do CLD youth have lower rates of enrollment in postsecondary education programs. Employment rates and wages continue to be lower for CLD youth with disabilities when compared to their White counterparts.

The transition planning process serves as the educational technique to help ensure that young adolescents with disabilities, upon completing high school, are prepared to integrate into their respective communities or engage in postsecondary activities that promote productive lives. To this end, strategies that maximize this process must be incorporated. Generally, two critical issues confronted by CLD youth with disabilities during the transition process are a lack of understanding by the transition team regarding the essentiality of cultural differences and the team's limited or no engagement with valued systems of supports operating within the communities of CLD youth.

Maximizing the transition process via person-centered, culturally responsive planning central to the transition process is the transition team which often holds youth with disabilities from CLD backgrounds to lower expectations than their counterparts due to stereotypes and prejudices. The lack of cultural competence, the ability to recognize the background, traditions and values, creates a cross cultural dissonance which may explain why traditional transition team processes

are not always effective (NCSET, 2003). Concomitantly, critical then to successful transition to the postsecondary environment is person-centered planning within a culturally responsive framework. The best practice pedagogical perspective requires the ability and willingness of the transition team to seriously consider cultural attributes specific to the unique strengths and needs of the CLD youth with disabilities (Ford & Daviso, in press; Partington, 2005; Storms, O'Leary & Williams, 2000). As identified by Ford (2004, 2006) for CLD youth Significant Multicultural Community Resources (SMCR) should be considered in developing a system of supports within community based experiences. These SMCR include not-for-profit services, social organizations, clubs or agencies, religious groups or churches and other local services valuable to the youth (Ford, 2004, 2006).

Establishing Common Ground: CLD Families and School Transition Teams

The significance of community-based informal systems of supports to CLD families cannot be ignored (Ford, 2006; Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2001; Kim & Morningstar, 2005). However, traditional transition processes have not incorporated the use of informal system as best practice for CLD youth with disabilities and their families. As delineated by Ford and Daviso (in press) the following are the benefits of transition team interactions with informal systems of support: (a) increased parental involvement, (b) sensitivity toward culturally relevant transition programming through face-to-face encounters between administrators, teachers, and CLD families and community resource persons (e.g., informal systems of supports), (c) exposure to a network of community-based job opportunities and job related skills and experiences, (d) reinforcement of school-related academic, life, and social skills, (e) exposure to self-enhancing/affirming activities (e.g., development of values and cultural group identity; positive decision-making skills; goal setting; rites of passage), and (f) forum for dissemination and collection of information.

Implications for Transition Teams

Reshape Attitudes and Personal Re-definitions of CLD Communities. Fundamental to a culturally responsive transition planning process is for the transition team members to reexamine their perspectives regarding the pockets of strengths that are operating within the communities of the CLD youth with disabilities and their families. This promotes a higher probability of the informal systems of support being seriously incorporated in the transition process for post secondary. Professionally acknowledgement of informal systems of support increases educators' sensitivity to the development of individualized student planning as well as promoting family involvement and participation.

Review and Redefine School-Community Partnerships. This process will necessitate an examination of roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the transition process, the evaluation of historic and existing school-community partnerships, the adequate refinement of existing structures and practices to include all students, and the development of databases detailing significant (multicultural) community resources in the geographic locales/neighborhoods served by the school.

Promote Successful Participation of CLD Youth with Disabilities within School-Community Partnerships. This demands establishment of a structure for communications between schools and stakeholders, a dissemination of school-community engagement information, incorporations and integration of appropriate classroom (and community-based) activities, and the implementation of monitoring systems regarding the impacts of services on student school performance.

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EDUCATION AND TRANSITION TO THE LABOUR MARKET FOR DISABLED WOMEN

Prudencia Gutiérrez Esteban
M^a Rosa Oria Segura

In this study, we question whether the education for persons with disabilities is being translated into the highest promotion of their human capital and in which sense the largely agreed "right to education" is translated into a true "right of citizenship participation". We have consulted both national and regional statistics on education and employment rates paying attention to the variables "gender" and "disability". The purpose of this study is to discuss the implementation of government policies developed in our country and our region and delineate the key elements to consider for improving the situation of disabled women.

Aims and Methodology of the Study

Through descriptive and critical analysis of national and regional extremeña as well as the measures approved by the Ministry and the Ministry of Education and Employment, we tried to identify: (a) to what extent the education of persons with disabilities is really contributing , after the compulsory period, the high qualifications of these persons, (b) what effect their level of qualification may be having in employment, and (c) what is the actual level of employment or facilities and the obstacles encountered in the insertion of working women with disabilities.

A survey carried out by the Ioé Group in their study The transition to the labour market of disabled people in Spain revealed that (2003:84): "while the latter paid work is the most common in adult life (53% of the Spanish population between 16 and 64 years was occupied in 1999), only 24% of people with disabilities have access to paid jobs and in addition, with a strong gender discrimination (32% men and 16% women), as also happens for the general population (69% and 38%)". The study showed, moreover, that the main route for women towards employment was domestic work.

Results

Data based on enrollment data from the Spanish Ministry of Education (MEC, 2008), during 2006/07, the specific special education students (i.e., disabled) school was 28,871. In Extremadura are 704 (2.44%), of whom 255 are women. Extremeños students of specific special education after the compulsory basic period are in full program of transition to adulthood (187, of whom 65 are women) that do not provide job skills. It is much more difficult to detect in the

statistics of the real situation of disabled students in the mainstream because it is recorded within the concept of "special educational needs, including learning disabilities and behavioral disorders. In Spain in the year 2006-07 there were 104,783 students, of whom 3626 were in Extremadura. In the post-training study there were only 15 people (9 female) high school, 11 (6 females) in vocational training courses, 28 (8 women) in Social Guarantee Programs ordinary and 145 (53 women). Social Guarantee Programs in Education especially in the latter is mixed support for other needs not related to incapacity, so the number is increased artificially. We see that the training of disabled people in 2007 was concentrated in lower levels of qualification. These data are a continuation of a trend going back more than a decade.

Data from the INE on the job in 2004 did not allow us to accommodate best hopes. For example, the activity rate in the age group 16 to 24 years for men with disabilities was ten points lower than that of people without disabilities (41.8% versus 51.8%) and women the difference is lower but because there is more unemployment in this group (38.8% vs women with disabilities. 40.8% of women without disabilities). The most active age group in the population is between 45 and 65 years, of which men have a rate of 86.8% (without disabilities) vs. 33.3% (with disabilities) and women 42.1% (without disabilities) vs. 20.5% (with disabilities).

To this, we must add the difficulties of disabled people to overcome major threats to job search. Available data from INE (2008) reflect social prejudice: They think they cannot work, they will find it difficult to find work or that no are available, there are those who do not know where to go or are waiting for results of some interview work, and are not seeking work because they are in training. However, it is striking that the highest percentages are bound together in that order that do not work because they cannot because they believe it would be difficult to find to be receiving a pension and personal or family reasons. Disabled women insist more on the idea that they cannot work or have no need in the personal or family reasons, they receive a pension and believe that they won't find it never having looked. All these reasons are ahead of the idea that higher education will facilitate access to jobs, as both women and men relegate this reason compared to those mentioned.

The European Disability Forum (EDF) published in Spain by CERMI figures in 2003 shows that: The participation rate of persons with severe disabilities in the labor market is less than that corresponding to half the workers who are not disabled. Most Member States have undertaken efforts to improve the participation rate, but the barriers to get and keep jobs, such as lack of access to education and training or the limited availability of housing; assistive technologies and accessible transportation are still significant (EDF, 2003: 6).

Discussion

It may seem that at this stage the question of the right to education of people with disabilities is already largely outdated; however, we are fully convinced it is necessary to continue deepening on it to avoid the risk of invisibility. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) provides that "they can contribute a broad range of knowledge, skills and talents" but at the same time an important number of them find several difficulties in getting a job. If we add to this situation the gender factor, the situation becomes more complex, increasing

the social disadvantage.

The shortage of official data on this topic creates a serious problem on how to determine elements for changing, because none of the Government educational bodies acknowledge that during their mandates some injustices could happen. Despite the shortcomings of statistical surveys, data surprise in terms of training and their relation with employment rates of European graduates of compulsory education, for instance, comparing Italy and Spain, as reflected the newest Household Panel available (Eurostat, 2001) and the Quality of Life Survey that replaced it afterwards. In our attempt of contributing to establish reliable data set, we base our research on the current situation of the region of Extremadura.

Obviously, we cannot pretend that education is to serve the labor market, but it is clear that the attachment between the two, backed by the national legislation each country assigns to education, among other things, the granting of a qualification that allows taking up work. Access to economic independence affects the risk of marginalization of this group and to be fighting on multiple fronts: physical, legal, financial and most difficult, to remove: attitudes. Currently the educational care for people with disabilities is a form of attention to diversity, and means that education must try to avoid the risks of exclusion from education and, therefore, social. However, according to data from the MEC (2008) the vast majority of this group is studying lower-skilled courses (Initial Vocational Training Program, PCPI) in which, furthermore, there is a certain gender bias in their professional choices.

The incorporation into the labor market comes, on many occasions, principally at hand of family members who devise realistic solutions than at the hand of government. School systems could help improve their quality of life for people with disabilities if their training was done taking into account real life projects, adapting the curriculum not only to work at the time at school, but actually connected with life expectancy and labor of these people, particularly the women for their greater risk of exclusion in their dual gender and disability.

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**INNOVATIONS IN TEACHER PREPARATION: AN EXEMPLARY DUAL
ELEMENTARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Patricia Edelen-Smith
Amelia Jenkins

Federal legislation in the United States, along with the inclusive education movement, places demands upon general educators to meet the needs of all students, including those with a disability. However, many general education teachers feel ill equipped to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Winter, 2006) and students with disabilities may fail to benefit from the general education curriculum (McLeskey, Henry, & Hodges, 1999). In many cases, students with disabilities are put into part-time special education classes for content instruction. However, the data on pullout special education delivery models indicate that pullout programs are not producing adequate long-term benefits for students with mild disabilities (Rea, McLaughlin, & Walther-Thomas, 2002). Likewise, the data on inclusion models of instruction are not encouraging. Not only are general educators reporting their lack of preparedness to teach students with disabilities, but also there is a shortage of special educators prepared to support students with disabilities in the general education classroom (Stayton and McCollum, 2002).

To address these issues, faculty at the University of Hawaii at Manoa designed a Dual Preparation Elementary and Special Education program that integrates special education and general education teacher training. It was designed to be highly structured, carefully sequenced, well supervised, and conducted with as many diverse learners as possible. The Dual Preparation

Program is jointly coordinated between two departments, Elementary and Special Education, and prepares pre-service elementary teachers to teach either in general education inclusive classrooms or in special education settings. The program has undergone several iterations and recently received national recognition as a fully accredited teacher training program that met all Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standards for special educators.

Method and Results

To evaluate the effectiveness of this program, three types of data were gathered and analyzed: (a) data on student progress in meeting national professional (CEC) standards, (b) survey data of candidates' confidence to teach students with disabilities, and (c) follow-up data of graduates. Each area of assessment is briefly described below with the results.

Six student assessments were selected to evaluate teacher candidates' performance and progress in meeting the 10 CEC standards. These included content knowledge as measured by two PRAXIS special education content tests, and five specific project products attached to specific classes that were designed to demonstrate one or more CEC standards. Rubrics were used to assess if the product was "target," "acceptable," or "unacceptable" in meeting criteria that met the standards. Data across 2000-2005 on all six measures indicated that program participants consistently had high outcomes in meeting the standards. For example, the average pass rate for the candidates who took the two PRAXIS tests was 98.4% (range: 96-100%) and 91% (range: 81-100%). The other five product evaluations averaged similar high Target/Acceptable rates of 94%, 96%, 99%, 91% and 98% (target range: 61-89%; acceptable range: 10-30%).

A student survey (Jenkins & Ornelles, 2007) was constructed using the 10 principles that specify what all general and special education teachers should know and be able to do to teach students with disabilities developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). Two groups of students in their final semester of their teacher training program and about to graduate were surveyed, those in an elementary general education (GE) program (n=43) and those in an elementary and special education dual program (DP) (n=38). A comparison between the two groups was done using SPSS Base 9.0 for Windows. Results indicated that students graduating from the DP program reported greater confidence in their ability to teach students on all 10 principles when compared to their counterparts in the elementary program ($p \leq .002$; effect sizes ranged from .071-1.30). This supports the literature that general education teachers do not perceive themselves as prepared to teach students with diverse needs (Cook, 2002; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991) Results also imply that a dual preparation program can provide the necessary knowledge and training for general and special education teachers to teach students with diverse needs.

Follow up data of the graduates of the Dual Preparation Program is currently limited to data from the state of Hawaii and includes the number of years in special education, the number of years in general education, the total number of years teaching in Hawaii and whether the graduate is still teaching for the HDOE. (Note: Hawaii is the only state with a statewide education system). The overall retention rates from years 2000-2008 ranged from 66% to 76% but these rates are somewhat misleading since they do not include data on graduates who may be teaching

general/special education in private schools or in states other than Hawaii. We are in process of collecting more specific follow-up data to expand and clarify the currently available data.

Summary

As the expectation that general educators will provide more direct service to students with disabilities increases, the need for teacher training programs to better prepare them also increases. Likewise, as the role of special educators changes to one of more collaborative consultation and co-teaching with partners in general education classrooms, it is incumbent upon institutions of higher education to prepare them for these new roles (Jenkins, Pateman, & Black, 2002). This study assessed three outcomes of the effectiveness of a dual preparation program designed to meet these new challenges.

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PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE CHANCES OF COLLEGE SUCCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Stan F. Shaw

Students with disabilities who graduate from college exhibit similar employment rates and annual salaries compared to their counterparts without disabilities (Madaus, 2006). The National Longitudinal Transition Study 2 (Newman, 2008), reports that when surveyed in high school, 76.7% of youth with disabilities aspired to attend a postsecondary school or program. However, two years after high school, only 19% were attending a postsecondary school. Although postsecondary disability policies and procedures are undergoing rapid development across the globe, making college a reality for students with disabilities requires the kind of careful transition planning described below.

Self-Determination

Self-determination skills, knowledge, and beliefs that promote goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior, have proven critical to success in postsecondary education (Field, Sarver & Shaw, 2003). Since laws applicable to postsecondary education settings require the student to self-identify, provide disability documentation and request reasonable accommodations, it is critical that students begin that process in high school through active participation in decisions regarding long-term goals, course selection, and reasonable accommodations. While some high school students may find becoming a self-advocate challenging, it is critical that a designated professional encourage student leadership. Meetings to discuss postsecondary goals or student use of materials (e.g., self-directed transition planning tools) that present his or her voice during transition planning can be a bridge to self-advocacy. Interactions that generally lead to student input, those that help him or her participate in accommodation decisions, and those that garner student feedback regarding the use and utility of chosen accommodations will bolster self-determination skills (Shaw, Madaus, & Dukes, in press).

Transition Elements

A student's transition process includes specification of appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessment, as well as the transition services needed to help the student reach postsecondary goals. It should include the following elements:

Student Preferences. Assessment includes the determination of the student's postsecondary goals. School personnel should identify the student's preferences, interests, skills and aptitudes using both school records and academic assessments. To the degree possible, the student should actively participate in the transition assessment process by personally declaring goals and dreams and defining expectations.

Anticipated Postsecondary Outcomes. Transition must include measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments. Historically, transition plans have included goals that have not been written specifically enough to be measured and therefore do not provide for the intended accountability. Effective practice suggests a broad goal such as "Sarah will acquire the skills to enroll in a two or four year college" followed by specific objectives that would lead her to achieve that outcome and provide a basis to plan services and monitor progress. These objectives provide clear direction regarding activities and transition services that Sarah would need to achieve her postsecondary education goal.

Transition Services. Transition services include a course of study, special education, related services and technology, as needed.

Course of Study. As a function of the need for higher-level skills to achieve productive employment, schools have increased academic requirements. Standards-based education, the concept that common expectations applied to *all* students can be a catalyst for improved educational outcomes, has become a driving force in determining what should be taught and for measuring what all students should be expected to know (Kochhar-Bryant & Bassett, 2002). Transition services, on the other hand, require the school to provide interventions to accommodate individual student needs across a broad range of domains including personal adjustment, independence and social development. Kochhar-Bryant and Bassett (2002) recommend "opportunity standards" as a construct to bridge the gap between group standards and individual needs. The "opportunities" needed by students with disabilities in their planned program may include individualized instruction, a responsive curriculum, adequate time for learning, positive behavioral interventions, valid assessment and access to technology (Shaw, et al., in press).

Technology. In addition to traditional assistive technology devices (e.g., personal data managers, recording devices, talking calculators, screen readers), it is critical to prepare students to meet the many technology competency expectations of colleges (e.g., database basics, graphics, multimedia, and use of the Internet), that include skills such as functioning in a web-based class, online research, and netiquette for virtual learning communities (Shaw, Madaus & Banerjee, 2009). College students with cognitive disabilities, for example, may have functional limitations that make it difficult to master both academic expectations and new technology skills required in college classes. A thorough assessment of technology needs and the provision of necessary services to help students use both assistive and learning technologies should greatly enhance transition outcomes.

Accommodations. When considering accommodations in high school, it is very helpful to wean the student from accommodations that would not be allowed in college. Colleges will not provide accommodations that are believed to be inappropriate or unreasonable or if the disability

documentation does not clearly justify the need for that accommodation. Course modifications (e.g., student only does half as much work as other students, grade is based on a different scale or content) will often not be permitted. Most colleges do not provide “untimed” tests but rather extended time based on the specific assessment data (i.e., student processing time requires time and one half only on math exams). It is best to help the student learn to succeed using supports and accommodations that will be allowed at the next level of education.

Summary

College is a realistic and necessary option for many students with disabilities. High school personnel need to use these years to implement transition planning that fosters self-determination and independent learning in students with disabilities.

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INTEGRATING SERVICE LEARNING (SL) INTO SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL PREPARATION

Anthony M. Denkyirah

Service learning (SL) creates learning opportunities for all learners, particularly preservice special educators, to develop skills crucial for working with children with special needs, parents, and service providers. Like volunteerism, SL provides crucial learning opportunities and leadership development for those who volunteer (Manuel-Ubaldo, 2003). SL research suggests that connecting school work to community service contributes to effective, deeper, and long-lasting learning (Ehrlich, 2005). Consequently, schools and colleges promote SL activities on their campuses, and many instructors include it their courses (Anderson, 1998). Astin and Sax (1998) report that some educators do not think SL is suitable to their particular discipline, and also, SL does not result in increased student learning outcomes. Those educators think that SL activities tend to fulfill internship and apprenticeship requirements, or to achieve some political resolve, but do not benefit learners in the long run.

Existing opportunities for pre-service special educators to practice in the field, such as practicum and student-teaching assignments, last only a few weeks (Denkyirah & Petchulat, 2007). Well-organized SL offers students additional opportunities to connect theories, concepts, and issues they learn about in class to real life situations because students get opportunities to select, design, implement, and evaluate the service project. Students learn how to effectively communicate and interact with the community and encourage partnerships and collaboration (Lynass, 2005), which are critical skills for pre-service special educators in the field. Furthermore, students reflect on their SL assignments before, during, and after service, and enable them to employ multiple methods to critically think out solutions to solving them. Lastly, SL provides hands-on experiences for developing important helping and advocacy skills needed in community settings.

The purpose of this paper would be two-fold: (a) How SL is integrated into the preservice special education personnel preparation program at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIUE), IL, USA, and (b) Effects it has had on the professional and academic achievements of both practicing and preservice special educators from the SIUE program.

Preservice special education students spend 40 hours in a group-designed or individually designed service learning activity, working with a family with a child with disability, or at a center where opportunities for working with such a family exist. Students identify areas where coursework is relevant or irrelevant to their SL experiences. In addition, students report on how they attempt to solve problems that have not been discussed in class. Time spent in meeting service learning requirements is not counted as part of students' typical instructional contact time.

Method

Participants were 22 special education graduates (17 females; 5 males), who had participated in the SIUE special education SL assignment within the last two years, and 28 student teachers (25 females; 3 males), who were involved in their SL project at the time of the study. The

participants completed a 20-item survey administered by the University's Student Leadership Center, regarding the impact of their involvement in the SIUE special education SL program on their academic and professional development.

Results

- Both practicing teachers and student teachers reported that they learned more about children with special needs during their SL assignments than from college coursework.
- Concepts they had difficulty understanding became easier for them when they connected them to their SL experiences.
- Student teachers felt they were more confident to talk about their experiences in class than before, and practicing teachers indicated that their involvement in the SL program helped them to confidently take up their roles as special educators.

Discussion

Many SL programs are organized by instructors, thereby giving very student very little input in the planning and implementation process. The student-led, student-designed SL assignment has proved to be more effective in providing pre-service special educators at SIUE additional opportunities to learn about their profession of choice.

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**HANDING OVER CONTROL WITHOUT LOSING CONTROL-INVOLVING
STUDENTS IN THEIR EDUCATION**

Carol Dinsdale

Both special and general educators face the challenge of continued student assessment and accountability for their pupils' achievement. Motivation, an internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behavior over time (Murphy & Alexander, 2000), is one of the most critical components of learning. The instructor's job is to discover, prompt, and sustain that motivation to learn, and to engage students in activities that lead to learning (Slavin, 2006). The implementation of learning goals rather than performance goals tends to increase the use of metacognition, or self-regulated learning strategies, as well as perseverance. The focus of learning goals is to gain competence in the skill being taught. Performance goals tend to focus on outcome, such as grades. A marked difference may be observed in the classroom performance of students with learning and performance goals. Studies have shown that performance-oriented students are likely to become easily discouraged and frustrated when faced with an academic challenge. Learning-oriented students, however, tend to persevere when faced with such an obstacle, and their motivation is likely to increase (Pintrich, 2000; Schunk, 1996).

The instructor's role is vital in that teachers must encourage students to believe that learning, not grades, is the purpose of academics. Teacher attitude is important as the interest value and practical importance of materials students are studying is emphasized and the focus on grades is reduced (Anderman et al., 2001). When students perceive there is only one standard for success (grades) and that only a few can achieve it, those who view themselves as low achievers quit trying immediately (Ames, 1992). Use of tasks that are challenging, yet meaningful and relevant to real life promote learning goals and increase achievement (Maehr & Anderman, 1993).

The intrinsic motivation to learn is enhanced by use of interesting materials and variety in the mode of presentation. Knowing student interests and providing them choices in lesson presentation or materials maintains attention. These choices allow them some control, yet the instructor still organizes and teaches essential skills/concepts. Engagement in books of choice is strongly related to reading achievement. Stimulating tasks, such as artifactual learning (using realia, or actual objects, whenever possible) and hands-on activities, increase motivation and achievement. A captivating classroom environment creates situations that satisfy the students' basic needs for curiosity, artistic involvement, challenge, and social interaction. For example, a student may communicate interest in motorcycles. The educator must use that expressed curiosity as the "activator for cognitive strategies" or motivator to learn. Various individual or personal needs may be met by carefully designing and shaping school-relevant tasks. The activities will satisfy or continue to spark the student's curiosity or desire to gain knowledge

about the topic (in this case, motorcycles). Aesthetics, or artistic involvement, comes through drawing motorcycles or simply the sheer enjoyment of reading text that truly holds interest. Challenge is derived from learning complex concepts concerning motorcycles, perhaps in the form of balance, mechanics, and propulsion knowledge. Social interaction is increased as the student gains the self confidence required to “hold his own” in conversations and discussions on the subject. Gratification may be an additional benefit as peers and adults within the school setting take notice of and compliment/reinforce both the student’s academic and personal growth (Guthrie et al., 2006).

Student involvement in daily classroom decision-making increases motivation. Surveying students for their interests and allowing them to provide input in lesson choices maximizes participation. Educators can present choices for supplemental texts, develop innovative outdoor activities, and infuse drama within the curriculum, for example, while continuing to meet standards and lesson requirements. As pupils become aware of their individual behavior improvement plans and begin to self-monitor, they can contribute to the development of successful, creative classroom management systems. Their interests are peaked when they are recognized as valuable contributors to novel approaches to learning situations.

Pupils who are encouraged to engage in self-generated thoughts and behaviors related to their own goals become involved in their own learning processes and are highly motivated to learn. Students should maintain individual data folders, create academic and behavioral goals, and design graphs highlighting their progress. Personal goal-setting increases academic performance and self-efficacy (Page-Voth & Graham, 1999). Student-led parent conferences increase pupil responsibility, as well as ownership of learning and behavioral progress as the pupils share their individual strengths and goals for improvement. Paris, Wasik, and Turner (1991) examined research which points out that students who possess a sense of control over their learning achieve more and participate more in school activities than other students.

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EFFECTIVE TRANSITION STRATEGIES FOR PRESCHOOLERS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Anthony M. Denkyirah

A child with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), like all other children, encounters several transitions in his or her life (Stoner, Angell, House, & Bock, 2007). Transition to an out-of-home program could be complicated in every young child's life, but more complicated for children with disabilities (Janus, Lefort, Cameron, & Kopechanski, 2007). Children with ASD experience even greater transition difficulties because of social and communication deficits that limit their interactions with peers and care-takers (Forest, Horner, Lewis-Palmer, & Todd, 2004) Those limitations make transitions to new social, academic, and physical settings stressful (Forest et al, 2004; Harris & Handelman, 2000; Pierce, 2001). Strategies that are critical in insuring successful transition of young children with ASD to settings outside of their home should, therefore, be a legitimate concern for teachers, parents and other child-care professionals. The purpose of this study was to identify strategies that teachers of young children with ASD in Ghana and USA considered as effective in transitioning children to out-of-home settings.

Method

Participants were 275 certified early childhood teachers of children with disabilities (210 from a Midwestern state in USA, and 65 from Ghana). All the participants were female, with a mean

teaching experience of four years. Participants completed a 10-item survey selected from the National Center for Special Education Research (2008) questionnaire on the following themes: (a) Planning and preparation; (b) Sharing information with family; (c) Discussing placement with family; (d) Helping family with school and community resources; (e) Preparing child for changes in services; (f) Supporting sending and receiving programs and professionals; (g) Assistive technology; (h) Public agency support; and (i) Home visit; and 10) Parent training. Inter-rater agreement of the instrument, after it was piloted on samples with characteristics of the intended participant pool from the U.S. and Ghana, respectively, yielded a 98% rate.

The survey was administered at about the same time in the two countries, but was done differently. Whereas the first author mailed the surveys to randomly-selected participants in the U.S., the second author gave the surveys to the Ghanaian participants during an in-service training session, and collected all of them back the next day. The return rates were 95% for the U.S. sample, and 100% for the sample from Ghanaian, respectively.

Results

- Participants from the U.S. and Ghana unanimously identified all of the issues on the survey as important in transitioning infants and toddlers with ASD to out-of-home programs, except for the use of assistive technology and parent training. Specifically, whereas all the participants from the USA considered assistive technology and parent training critical in transitioning young children with ASD to out-of-home settings, their Ghanaian counterparts did not consider them as important.
- Both groups of participants considered (a) Timing of planning and preparation; (b) Helping family to find resources; (c) Sharing information with family, and (d) Home visits, as the most critical issues in ensuring successful transition for preschoolers with ASD to out-of-home settings.
- Suggestions participants gave, which were also cited by Stoner et al. (2007) included: (a) Get a team early; (b) Set goals early; (c) Identify challenges from the onset; (d) Gather information about the child, his or her interests and preferences; and (e) Develop a relationship between sending and receiving agencies.

Discussion

This study has several limitations some of which were very difficult to address. First, the results could have been different if the sample sizes were the same and larger. Second, whereas participants from the U.S. did not have any direct personal contact with the researchers and other respondents, their Ghanaian counterparts met with one of the researchers at an in-service training session, and also could have sought opinions of other respondents at the in-service training before completing the survey. Third, it was difficult to measure how knowledge and skills levels of participants, as well as cultural and belief systems participants from the U.S. and Ghana, respectively, affected their responses.

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ATTITUDES OF PARENTS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Anke de Boer

Education systems have changed drastically in the last decades as educating children with disabilities in regular schools has become an important goal worldwide. In many countries inclusive education was initiated by parents of children with disabilities, in which parents' main motive to choose a regular school is driven by the social benefits inclusion might have for their child with disabilities. Research about the social participation of students with disabilities, however, showed that those students are less accepted by their peers, have fewer friendships and are less part of a network in the class compared to typically developing children in regular

education (Bramston, Bruggerman & Pretty, 2002; Kuhne & Wiener, 2000; Pijl, Frostad & Flem, 2008; Soresi & Nota, 2000).

Why these students experience difficulties in relation to their peers without disabilities is not quite clear. It seems likely that acceptance aspects, like attitudes of typical developing students play a role here. To understand students' attitudes it is important to know what attitudes parents hold towards inclusive education because parents' attitudes and behavior, influence the attitude and behavior of their children. This theory indicates that parents who do not support inclusive education might negatively influence the formation of their child's attitudes and behavior. Moreover, positive parental attitudes are important as it is likely that in a positive environment the implementation of inclusion is easier to accommodate. Hence, acquiring knowledge about parents' attitudes towards inclusive education, and factors relating to their attitude, what makes it possible to create an environment in which inclusion is supported.

Although research about attitudes of parents' indicates positive parental attitudes, both groups of parents – parents of children with disabilities and parents of children without disabilities - seem to hold concerns about the inclusion of students with special needs in regular schools. Because the results are inconsistent, the aim of this review study was to examine what attitudes parents hold towards inclusive education, by which factors their attitudes are influenced and if their attitudes affect the social participation of students with special needs.

Method

To search for relevant articles, a comprehensive search was performed using 'EBSCOhost Complete' in February 2009. This browser includes many databases, like ERIC, MEDLINE, PsycARTICLES, PsychINFO and SocINDEX. Moreover, 7 journals in the field of special needs education (*International Journal of Inclusive Education, European Journal of Special Needs Education, British Journal of Special Education, Exceptional children, British Journal of Educational Psychology, International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, International Journal of Special Education*) were hand searched for relevant articles. After the application of several selection criteria eleven studies were finally selected.

Results

Regarding the first aim of the study, the results showed that parents of children with disabilities hold more undecided attitudes than parents of typically developing children. The majority of the studies which examined attitudes of parents of disabled children did not show clear positive attitudes. Parents are undecided and often indicate that inclusion is not a good option for their child. Parents of typically developing children on the other hand showed more positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Those parents recognized that their children might experience social benefits of inclusive education, like accepting differences in people and developing sensitivity to others.

Regarding the second aim of the study it can be concluded that parents with a higher socio-economic status (SES), higher education level and experience with inclusive education show to hold more positive attitudes than parents with a low SES, lower education level and less

experience. In addition, it can be concluded that parents are least positive about the inclusion of children with behavior problems and cognitive disabilities.

The results of the study established that none of the selected studies showed what effects parental attitudes have on the social participation of students with special needs. Consequently the conclusion can be drawn that there is no evidence that attitudes of parents relate to this aspect of inclusive education.

Discussion

With this study we stress the importance of positive parental attitudes in the process of implementing inclusive education. Attitudes of parents towards inclusive education might play a considerable role in implementing of this educational change for, at least, two reasons. In the first place it seems reasonable to assume that in a positive environment the implementation of inclusion is easier to accommodate. Teachers and support staff may be influenced by positive parental attitudes, what might result in an environment which supports the inclusion of children with special needs in regular schools. Secondly, positive attitudes of parents are important because they influence the formation of their children's attitudes towards peers with disabilities. Hence, we underline that parents play a considerable role in their children's ideas about and interactions with peers.

Although this current review showed that several authors examined parents' attitudes towards inclusive education, we know of no research which established the effects of parents' attitudes on their children's attitudes towards disabled peers. On account of the afore mentioned theories about the influence of parents' attitudes on the formation of their children's attitudes, we stress the importance of future research focusing on this aspect.

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**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS, ASSISTIVE
TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION, AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN
THE CONTEXT OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

Elizabeth M. Dalton
Susan E. Roush

In the United States, consideration of assistive technology (AT) as a component of educational planning for students with disabilities has been federally mandated since the 1997 (US Department of Education, 2002). Federal law (U.S. Department of Education, 2007) also mandates rigorous scientific evidence to support educational practice; this is known as evidence-based practice (EBP). Regulatory elements, e.g. national or state AT standards and competencies, and professional development expectations, may be helpful in guiding educators in developing EBP. National technology standards for teachers in general education exist to guide educational technology implementation and professional development (Bitter, Thomas, Knezek, Friske, Taylor, & Wiebe, 1997). It is unclear what AT standards or competencies exist to guide educators or on what evidence they are based. Few studies document evidence-based standards in special education (Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005). Also, although there is a great deal of professional literature on AT from 1995-present, a comprehensive understanding of individual states' AT implementation with K-12 teachers and states' professional development expectations is lacking. Finally, the relationship between AT standards, its implementation, and the evidence supporting these standards to special education students' academic performance is not known. This information is vital in order to make effective evidence-based decisions regarding the role of AT in the U.S. educational system. The purposes of this study, therefore, were to (1) describe three regulatory elements related to AT: (a) AT standards/competencies, (b) rigor of evidence used to support these standards, and (c) implementation, and (2) determine the relationship between these three regulatory elements and reading and mathematics performance of special education students in the United States.

Literature Review

A literature review was undertaken to determine the types of evidence on which states could potentially be basing their standards/competencies. AT and educational technology (ET) literature documents from 1995 to 2008 (n=110) were reviewed for (a) type of standard and (b) nature and rigor of evidence. A literature analysis organized relevant studies, reports, and articles using a conceptual model based on types of curriculum standards (Sweeny, 1999) and rigor of evidence (Davies, 1999). Davies' continuum of evidence is based on the earlier work of Sackett and associates, who essentially defined the EBP hierarchy for the medical field (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes, & Richardson, 1996). This analysis revealed 81% ET and 80.5% AT literature based on survey or expert opinion evidence (not highly rigorous), with standards the primary focus of only 10% of AT literature.

Method

Data on the three regulatory elements, (a) AT standards or competencies, (b) rigor of evidence used to support these standards, and (c) implementation, were collected via telephone and email from the AT coordinators or designees from the State Departments of Education (K-12) in all 50 states plus Washington DC. The author-designed data collection tool was based on the works of Sweeny (1999) and Davies (1999), and was piloted for clarification and validity; survey response rate was 100%.

Descriptive statistics were calculated on the survey data. National reading and math performance of U.S. special education students was obtained via National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); 4th grade reading performance and 4th grade math performance scores were collected. Multiple regression analyses compared the regulatory elements as predictor variables with the 4th grade performance outcome variables.

Results

Eighty percent of states do not use terms “AT standards” or “AT competencies” officially in state education policy. Overall, nine states reported state-approved AT standards/competencies for teachers and five states used evidence to support their standards/competencies. Twelve percent of states reported having AT standards and twelve percent reported having AT competencies for teachers; some standards/competencies were integrated within other content standards/competencies, and some were independent. Only 4% of states with AT standards and 4% of states with AT competencies reported any supporting evidence. AT implementation instructions provided to teachers ranged from general education information (98%) to statewide testing (81%) to IEP development (81%). Concerning professional development in AT, 36% of states recommend it to teachers, but only 6% require it, 4% have state AT endorsement, and 2% have state AT certification.

Multiple regression was performed to test the relationship between the 4th grade reading scores of students with disabilities (dependent variable) and the three regulatory elements (independent variables). A second regression was performed with 4th grade math scores as the dependent variable. The analyses found no significant relationship between the three regulatory elements (AT standards/competencies, AT implementation, and level of evidence) and the dependent variable (student performance) in either reading ($F = .109; \alpha < .05$) or math ($F = .08; \alpha < .05$).

Discussion

This study was the first in the U.S. to describe the current status of AT standards/competencies at the state level and link those standards to supporting evidence from the literature. The paucity of both AT standards and supporting evidence suggests that the field is in its infancy in these areas, which is certainly a concern given the legal mandates of IDEA and No Child Left Behind. In contrast, the degree of AT implementation was extensive; however, this implementation appears to be occurring absent an evidence base, and without the benefit of unifying standards. Again, this is of concern for the profession. Finally, the lack of a relationship between these regulatory

elements and student achievement in math and reading is troubling. This latter finding, however, must be interpreted with caution as essentially the only predictor variable was AT implementation; also, the performance data used in this study may have been too gross a measure to reflect AT impact. Using more authentic measures of student performance may illustrate a relationship between AT implementation and student performance. Recommendations for further study include (a) educational technology standards and their relation to AT; (b) varied types of performance measures and types of disabilities in relation to AT; (c) universal design factors for AT and teaching standards; (d) impact of laws on educational practice and AT; and (e) current models of evidence-based practice (EBP) in education and their application in AT and the U.S. education system.

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THE BOY FACTOR: THE EFFECT OF SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLING ON THE OVER-REPRESENTATION OF BOYS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Kathy Piechura-Couture
Elizabeth Heins

Since the early 1990s numerous studies have concluded that there is an over-representation of males in special education. Coutinho & Oswald (2005) in their analysis of state variation in gender disproportionally in special education found that the male-to-female ratio hovers somewhere between 2.0:1 and 3.5:1 depending on the type of the disability, with subjective disabilities (emotionally/behaviorally disordered, learning disability, and ADHD) making up the higher ratio. Wehmeyer & Schwartz (2001) cite research that suggests there are three reasons for these disproportionate rates. The first explanation suggests there is gender bias relating to the referral, classification and placement processes. Second, boys are more active and more likely to act out or misbehave in classrooms or that early social learning may contribute to the overrepresentation. Third, there are biological factors because boys are vulnerable to some genetically determined disorders. However, another plausible explanation focuses on the developmental and biological differences between boys and girls.

In his article, “Six Degrees of Separation”, Sax outlines developmental and biological differences, which may impact the child’s classroom behavior and ability to learn. For example, there are fundamental differences how boys and girls see and hear. The retina for boys is wired for tracking movement, whereas a girls’ retina is wired for detail and color variation. Taking into account the tracking ability of males, the teacher should be the largest target in the classroom as other moving objects may catch the boys’ attention and pull them off-task. Additionally, girls are born with a more acute sense of hearing, particularly at the higher frequencies used for speech discrimination (Sax, 2006). The biologically predetermined differences in hearing can account for many boys looking like they are not paying attention or teachers having to “yell” at them all the time. With just these few differences one can see the educational implications that can promote success or failure in school classrooms and may also impact whether or not a child is referred for special education services.

The movement of many educators toward brain-based learning has prompted some schools to offer single-sex classrooms as a viable option under the No Child Left Behind legislation. The state of South Carolina alone has over 217 schools, which offer classes in the single sex format. This paper analyzes survey results from students, parents and teachers throughout South Carolina who have participated in K-12 single-sex classrooms. The data reveals that the majority of parents, teachers, and children believe that the single-sex format positively impacts boys’ behavior in school, their attitude toward school, their participation in school and their ability to complete class work and homework.

Three surveys were posted on the South Carolina Department of Education website in April and May 2008 (Chadwell, 2008). The link to the surveys was sent to schools with single- gender classes, and teachers were encouraged to ask their students and parents to complete the survey as well as complete their own survey. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement to different statements. There were seven levels of agreement: Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Roughly 2200 students, 178 parents and 181 teachers completed the surveys from 41 different elementary, middle, and high schools around the state. The number of students completing the survey at each school varied from 1 student to 294 students. Participation in all surveys was voluntary and identity was anonymous.

Fifty-nine percent of the boys report their behavior as improved while schooled in a single-sex classroom. Seventy percent report improvement in class participation and the completion of class work. Attitude in school is rated the lowest at fifty-seven percent reporting a positive impact with middle school children making up the majority of the respondents.

Fifty-six percent of the parents of boys schooled in single-sex classrooms report that their son's behavior improved while in the single-sex class. Thirty-three percent responded neutral suggesting that the son's behavior neither improved nor worsened as a result of the single-sex format. Only eleven percent disagreed that their son's behavior increased or improved. This suggests that only eleven percent of the parents believed that their son's behavior declined while in the single-sex classroom.

Teachers from South Carolina who taught in single-sex classrooms were asked similar questions relating to behavior and behavioral attitudes. The majority of the teachers reported that student behaviors in the single-sex classrooms increased the students' positive behavior, participation and attitude for school. Nineteen percent of the teachers reported worsening behavior in the single-sex classroom whereas 70% report improved behavior. Eighty-six percent of the teachers reported increased classroom participation and eighty percent reported improvement in the boys' attitude toward school.

Although not conclusive without further study the self-report data suggests that behavior is improved in single-sex classrooms. The Rosenthal effect alone may lessen the number of referrals to special education. The Rosenthal effect, or Pygmalion effect, refers to situations in which students perform better than other students simply because they expect to do so. An instructional program, or classroom design, that is deemed as positive by students, parents and teachers may succeed because they expect it to succeed. Slavin (2009) summarizes research on teacher expectations and found, that in general, students live up or down to their teachers' expectations. Further, students' expectations are just as high a predictor as those of their teachers. In order to positively impact behavioral outcomes, teachers must carefully shape instruction to meet the needs of their students (Monroe, 2006). Single-sex classrooms in which teachers have boy-friendly lessons that allow for greater physical movement, elevated noise levels and direct teacher talk have proven successful for many students. Boy-friendly classrooms, which cater to the developmental and behavioral differences of the male brain positively impacts learning in males. This coupled with improved behavior, in theory, should reduce the number of referrals to special education.

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INTERACTIONAL PROBLEMS IN CLASSROOMS. WHICH ARE THE RIGHT EDUCATIONAL VALUES?

Salvador Peiró i Gregòri

Several research works have been carried out for the purpose of studying the perception that teachers have about the undisciplined behavior of their students during the development of their classes, both in the context of primary education (Wheldall & Merrett, 1988) and in secondary education (Houghton, Wheldall, & Merrett, 1988). In Spain, del Rey & Marchesi (2005) identified emotional violence as the most recurrent behavior (27.3%). This type of violence includes, among other things, rejection and social isolation, insult and abuse, deceiving or ridiculing others, exclusion, and the manipulation of friendship relationships. Physical violence represents 7.8% and vandalism, 7.5%. Studies (e.g., Cerezo, 2001; Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpelä, Rantanen & Rimpelä, 2000; Sourander, Helstelä, Helenius & Piha, 2000) have served to verify the increase in cases of negative coexistence in classrooms. The Spanish ministerial report from INCE indicates that the most conflicting cases, which have multiplied in recent years, are

concentrated around 14-to-16-year-old students. In other words, the biggest relevance corresponds to the compulsory secondary level.

If Not All is Violence and Bullying, the Most Significant Issue is Discipline and Its Educational Value

Our research (Peiró, 2007) revealed that the problems for the current non-peaceful-coexistence situation at schools do not have so much to do with bullying or violence as with the fact that discrepancies and disruptions very often hinder the development of the educational actions required to cope with the teaching-learning process successfully. Likewise, the disciplinary problems within the educational environment are common in each area and subject that constitute the educational curriculum (Ishee, 2004), which ultimately has serious consequences for the teaching-learning process in terms of limiting the time available for students to learn (Fernández-Balboa, 1991).

There are other effects regarding the structural fulfillment of educational projects. For example, the *Comunidad Valenciana* (Valencian Autonomous Region) educational authorities state that secondary education headmasters dedicate 50% of their time to cases of vandalism (2004) and two thirds of their time to provide assistance in peaceful-coexistence-related problems (2006).

Similarly, the undisciplined behaviors of students often represent a source of professional stress, while simultaneously questioning the work performed by the teacher (Graham, 1992), generating distraction, concern and even abandonment of the profession (Esteve, 2005; Fernández-Balboa, 1991). This situation mainly affects beginner-teachers (Borko, Lalik, & Tomchin, 1987). Bad behavior can destabilize students as much as teachers (Esteve, 2006; Fernández-Balboa, 1991) and can easily lead to the emergence of feelings of disappointment among the teaching staff.

In short, without a positive climate it is impossible to achieve an effective and efficient teaching, which means that we have to fight for educational peaceful coexistence. Therefore, it becomes necessary to work on the connections between discipline, values and school peaceful coexistence.

Pro-social behaviors of students constitute one of the objectives that should be fulfilled within the educational environment (Muñoz, Carreras, & Braza, 2004). To that end, discipline needs to be regarded as one of the most important and difficult pedagogic aspects on which to focus (Kiridis, 1999) since, without a positive climate, teaching will prove ineffective. In this sense, the most significant indicator of success in teaching is disciplined behavior in the classroom. Nowadays, both the general public and the collectivity of teachers have a distorted vision about what discipline really is, along with a wrong conception of the reasons for the lack of discipline in the educational context (Dreikurs *et al.*, 1982).

The problems spread to the overall promotion of personality, which covers self-regulation, interpersonal relationships based on social skills, team work, decision-making, etc. Here, self-awareness turns out to be basic for making mature trials. This presupposes to put in practice critical trial skills.

Criticality promotes within the individual attitudes and capacities (e.g., readiness to be interrogated, to question facts, to value explanations and valuations), when it comes to accept or to reject alternatives related to participation in the democratic process. But this depends on the values around which criticality has been built and on the person's ability to use the aforementioned attitudes and capacities properly in order to become a good citizen. In other words, attention must be paid to the attitudes linked with citizenship values.

The exercise of citizenship means becoming actively involved in the problems that affect the city. The city is a social, cultural, economic and political peaceful-coexistence space which does not exclude anybody. A citizen is a person who consciously participates in everything that happens there. Democratic societies need citizens who not only look reflexively at the big topics arising inside their societies and can 'manufacture' their own opinion but also are aware, active members of those societies who know their rights and duties (Marco, 2002).

These are social competences but, within the context of the educational system, we would call them 'pedagogic' because they promote growing levels of good citizenship. Such skills can be looked at from a twofold perspective: (a) Formal: to be informed, to communicate, to advance, to invent, to negotiate, to decide, to imagine, to cooperate, to evaluate, to assume risks, to face complexity, to analyze necessities, to carry out projects, etc.; and (b) Axiological: courtesy, affability, cordiality and the corresponding gratitude, indulgence: before the defects of others; kindness: to judge and treat others and their acts with fineness; respect: to look at others valuing the positive things, all of which shapes a pro-social element called 'tolerance', which is our main concern. Nevertheless, if the teacher wants to achieve a school climate that can greatly favor good citizenship, it would be necessary to introduce another two human habits: friendship and affection (Pieper, 1974).

With everyone's help, we need to insert the aspects that relate the formal developments with the individual's deepest personality and are condensed in social and civic behavior. Those that we can mention now allow sharing the information, the axis being dialogue, which implies: to give advice, to keep a constructive attitude, to defend and justify one's own point of view, to make an effort to understand others, to respect the truth, to ensure mutual respect, to look for alternatives acceptable for both parties, etc.

But teaching peace is not identical to enjoying a positive peaceful climate, which is a way to establish some positive human relationships and to practice tolerance. Achieving this aim requires some more human conditions, though. I have in mind the capacity to show an understanding attitude, along with generosity, patience, etc. toward others. In my opinion, the preceding figure provides an intuitive outline of the interdependence of human and democratic habits that exist in real life. Consequently, if, as we have always said, the school prepares us for citizenship, it will be necessary to integrate both axiological dimensions into the curricula.

Human beings behave in accordance with their beliefs and following their social group of reference. Therefore, if individuals see this as nothing but a product, they will most probably ignore both their own dignity and that of others. Going on like this could lead to exclude the fundamental values that not only constitute human nature but have also given consistency to the communities inside which one lives. A cultural waste is taking place as a result of the dynamics

of civilization, which makes us 'forget' certain values. There is an urgent need to compensate that by proposing a new, more responsive approach (Unesco, 1999a) that highlights the programs focused on promoting a culture of peace (Unesco, 1999b) as I have already explained, values are the key to deal with macro and micro crises if we follow this line of thinking.

Regarding disciplinary problems, we must reflect on how the axiological dimension is summed up in school institutions. It becomes necessary at this stage to mention the research I carried out between 2003 and 2005, which compares the attitudes of normal students with those of students who show behaviors that can be described as conflicting, undisciplined, etc. For this work, we used a questionnaire that integrates human and social values and applied a Likert-scale to value the interviewees' choices. What really matters is not the attitudes as such but whether there is a difference regarding those attitudes between one group of students and the other. The absence of a certain level in the values can also cause a negative climate.

Calculating differences for the accumulated mean and adding up the results of 2003, 2004 and 2005 taking as a reference the scale on the Likert questionnaire, we summed up the differences between normal, ideal students and the homologous 'problematic' ones. We have performed similar studies in other places (e.g., the state of Zacatecas in Mexico, the city of Buenos Aires in Argentina).

It can be inferred from all the above that the attitudes toward the integration of human and social values define the peaceful climate of educational centers. However, it is necessary to underline that the data obtained reveal that these attitudes are not generated firstly in the school. We must focus on the families. In any case, this statement does not mean that the staff working in educational centers has to be left doing nothing. The pedagogic question lies in knowing what teachers should do and how they should do it seeking to integrate values. More precisely, the questions might be: what kind of relationship exists between peaceful-coexistence achievements and what is the teacher's projection as a motivator in relation to human relationships? This leads us back to teaching's disciplinarian models.

Conclusions

- It is not necessary to be exclusively centered on negative behaviors; this is a reactionary measure. We should optimize the disciplinary climate in classrooms because it is impossible to achieve an effective and efficient teaching without a positive climate. This means appealing to peaceful coexistence within the educational environment, for which it becomes necessary to refer to the links between discipline, value and peaceful coexistence in schools.
- If the educational institution does not promote peaceful-coexistence attitudes and values, it fails both to improve the pro-social climate at school and to prepare students for their future civic life.
- Exercising citizenship means acquiring social skills, for which students need not only formal processes but also axiological habits which include human and democratic attitudes. All this should be integrated deep inside the student's personality.

- These values can be studied with the aim of verifying the ideas that have been put forward above. Case studies can help to explain the situation, pointing out marked differences between the attitudes of 'normal' students and those shown by 'problematic' students, which reflect immaturity and lack of pro-social behaviors.
- One of the reasons is the lack of the criticality which one needs so badly before adopting a specific behavior. This happens because students' values are not clear yet, which makes education for citizenship suffer. The interaction between students and teachers must be structured around the civic competences that form part of the education for citizenship syllabus.

Recommendation

One of the reasons for failure in peaceful coexistence is the confusion regarding the theoretical notions of value and the actions which are performed in accordance with those values (knowing what tolerance is not the same as being tolerant). The same holds true for what was said in the previous paragraph about the political aspect and more precisely, about teaching only constitutional values. Experience and common sense tell us that global values are hollow without previous human values.

As these aspects concern the family and informal educational institutions more directly, we should try to involve parents more deeply into the educational process.

Focusing the development of the curriculum on a culture of peace makes it easier to integrate values and procedures and to provide them for students and teachers as reference groups in life, thus favoring interdisciplinary teaching and flexible learning for different groups of students.

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