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In recent years, different teaching strategies for different handicapping conditions have been suggested (Green, 1976; Ogletree, 1977; Consilia, 1976; Hofmeister and LeFevre, 1977). These teaching strategies have ranged from large group to small group to one-to-one instruction. Whole class activities have been designed to teach concepts as well as to provide practical life experiences through students' interactions with each other and the environment. A brief discussion on the different teaching techniques follows.

Green (1976) suggests the use of court sessions as a base for lessons in social studies or science. Students can acquire interview skills through classroom practice sessions. In addition, the students' self-confidence and communication skills are developed by adopting the role of the teacher in reviewing previously presented material with the class. Guest speakers and films also are suggested as a means of bringing everyday life experiences into the classroom and increasing the students' social and vocational awareness.

Ogletree (1977) recommends using concrete objects to develop children's vocabulary: verbally labeling each object on picture flashcards. These flashcards are used on one-to-one drills, for team competitions, classification exercises, and creation of an awareness of how the picture objects are used. Further, the new words are abstracted for use in riddle solutions, in teacher-read stories, and in the composition of class songs and poetry. The words reappear in

language experience stories and learning games as basic sight words (Ogletree, 1977). Glynn, Wotherspoon and Harbridge (1976) and Finkel and Zimmerman (1976) echo the importance of the teaching technique of repetition and review for the mentally handicapped in both language and mathematics instruction.

Readings on the educational management of the learning disabled child center around one-to-one activities during which the new material is presented by the teacher, explanations, illustrations, and actual demonstrations. Drill and review are conducted at the teacher-pupil level as well as in small group discussions or with the entire class. Novelty is stressed as a critical factor in motivating the failure-oriented learning disabled child.

Advocates of the drill/review method of acquiring mastery of new concepts offer very systematic approaches to the actual teaching of these skills to learning disabled children. Consilia (1976) outlines an individually based sixteen-step technique for teaching spelling with ample provision for individual and small group review at each level. According to Hofmeister and LeFevre (1977) telling time may be taught through a sequence of eight tasks each requiring complete mastery before the next is begun.

In sharp contrast to such organized procedures for learning is the "Waterlearning" approach recommended by Hackett and Lawrence (1976). The medium of water is offered as an opportunity for children to develop self-confidence while learning that five sponges + seven sponges = twelve sponges, and that six ladlesful of water will fill one bleach bottle. In addition, numbers can be matched or categorized. Children discover body awareness and mathematical concepts as they play in or with water. Abbott (1976) describes how reinforcement of newly acquired language skills can be obtained through the creative use of newspapers. Guest speakers may be invited to discuss topics and ideas which students have first met through newsprint. Froemke (1976) offers a collection of songs through which the learning disabled child,

singly or with his classmates, can experience both laterality and directionality, or improve auditory, visual, verbal, memory and gross motor skills.

Strategies for teaching the emotionally disturbed child are built essentially around teacher-pupil interaction, as with the learning disabled child. Systematic teaching is stressed. Finkel and Zimmerman (1976) offer a four-step approach in teaching time to the emotionally disturbed or mentally handicapped child. This technique employs demonstrations, illustrations, and reviews at each stage to "anchor" the new concepts in the child's mind. The "ball-stick-bird" method of teaching reading, initially used with severely retarded individuals, was tested with a group of emotionally disturbed children in a study by Shapiro, Davis, Lieman and Mantarion (1976). In this experiment mastery of a book was not a prerequisite for advancing to the next level. Avoidance of failure was the key issue. Ogletree (1975) reports that a group of emotionally maladjusted boys, ages seven to ten, was taught to read by using the language experience format to present instruction, to provide frequent review of new material, and to motivate participation by every member of the group as they composed a class book about "Batman." Their successful experience was further reinforced when 100 copies of the finished product were made and given to these students to sell or to distribute among their friends.

Roberts (1975) stressed the importance of creating an atmosphere of security and acceptance for the emotionally disturbed child in the classroom. Self-confidence is promoted by listening to the child, either in person or via individual telephones or tape recordings. Participation in group discussions is voluntary on the child's part. Instructions are to be given a few at a time and then reinforced by reviewing them with the child. Consistency and structure of activities and teacher actions and reactions are emphasized. A variety of educational strategies are discouraged.

## Method

In an effort to identify and categorize common teaching strategies used in the educational programming of exceptional children, observations were conducted in thirteen special education settings. Five graduate students enrolled in a special education practicum observed and recorded teaching strategies employed by thirteen teachers in the following situations: one kindergarten; four learning disabilities (LD) resource rooms; one LD self-contained class; three self-contained classes for the emotionally handicapped (EH); one self-contained class for the emotionally handicapped/trainable mentally retarded (TMR); two trainable mentally retarded day school settings; and one gifted program.

Each graduate student spent an average of twenty-five clock hours of observation at each site. An average of three students observed each setting and each observer rated his observations independently.

A questionnaire was developed which asked the observers to note whether the teachers worked with their students on a one-to-one basis, in small groups, and/or in large groups. In classes in which the one-to-one teaching strategy was used, the practicum students looked for such methods as drills, explanations, descriptions, illustrations, listening, demonstrations, review, and physical shaping. Within the small group settings they observed whether discussion was used on a "calling by name," a "calling on volunteers who raised their hands," or a "letting anyone answer" basis, whether listening, describing, illustrating, lecturing, or reviewing were employed by the teacher, or whether such techniques as discovery, parallel talking, dramatization, and role-playing were features of the learning process. Large group instruction within the classroom was analyzed for use of discussion, using the same basis of analysis used for small groups, including demonstrations, review, and lectures. When observed, novel methods such as films, guest speakers, and the use of radio or television programs were also noted.

Student observation questionnaires were tabulated from five to eleven schools per student. Each of the thirteen class settings was observed by one to five students. Each observer spent from five to eight days per site recording the strategies and classroom organization utilized in each class.

## Results and Discussion

One-to-one teaching strategies were reported for each of the thirteen classes in the study. Small groups were observed in all of the settings except two of the four LD resource rooms. Nine class settings used large group instruction. However, the two LD resource rooms which used no small group methods and one EH and one EH/TMR self-contained class did not utilize large group activities. One-to-one instruction was the primary method reported for all four LD resource rooms. Individual and small group teaching were observed in the kindergarten class, in the self-contained LD setting, in two of the three EH self-contained classrooms, and in the EH/TMR self-contained setting. Both TMR day schools as well as one EH self-contained class used a balance of individual as well as small and large groups. In the gifted classes two observers reported one-to-one instruction, two noted small group teaching, and four observed large group activities.

On a one-to-one instructional basis all thirteen teachers observed explained the material and directions and listened to their students. In all but one TMR setting the teachers employed descriptions, illustrations, and demonstrations. Drills were observed at the kindergarten level, in all LD resource rooms, and in all EH and EH/TMR self-contained settings, plus one of the two TMR day classes. Review methods were not observed in the kindergarten or TMR classes. Neither the students in the gifted program nor those in one TMR setting were given drill or review. Physical shaping was observed more than once in the kindergarten, the EH/TMR program, and one TMR day school.

Small group activities were observed primarily in the kindergarten, the self-contained LD class, all three EH self-contained classrooms, the EH/TMR program, both TMR day schools, and the gifted program. All these classes used group discussions. One kindergarten, one TMR, one gifted, and three EH self-contained teachers conducted discussions by calling students by name, by calling on students who raised their hands, and by letting anyone answer. The LD self-contained and EH/TMR teachers did not use the "let anyone answer" format which was the only discussion method used by one TMR teacher. All nine teachers listened to their students, as did two LD resource instructors who used limited small group techniques. Descriptions and illustrations were used by eight of the nine teachers in the different settings. Review was observed in all but the two TMR small group situations. Lecture was used with only the kindergarten, the LD self-contained setting, and two of the three classes for the EH. Parallel talking was observed in the EH/TMR school as well as in one TMR class. Dramatization was observed with the gifted only, and role play was noted in just one TMR setting.

Based on the results of this observation, it appears that large group instruction was the least preferred teaching strategy in all but the gifted program. However, the following classes used some form of large group activity: the kindergarten, two EH self-contained, both TMR day schools, and the gifted class. Discussion was observed in all settings. Descriptions and demonstrations were also used in most of these classes. Review was again conspicuously absent in the TMR settings, although it was used with the gifted and the regular kindergarten, as well as with some LD and EH students. The teacher lectured to the entire class in one EH class and in the gifted program. Films were used in the kindergarten, one EH self-contained class, and one TMR/EH day school. Guest speakers visited a TMR and a gifted class.

From this observational study the least variety of teaching strategies observed was in the LD resource rooms. This could be a function of their make-up.

Are students in resource rooms at a given time so diverse in their disabilities that group instructional activities are not feasible? How much busy work does a child do in the resource room while awaiting his turn for one-to-one instruction?

Although drill and review for the mentally handicapped are heavily stressed in the literature, little or none was actually observed in this study. Guest speakers and films have also been recommended in the literature concerning educational strategies for the mentally handicapped as part of their socialization training. In this observation, speakers were noted in both the TMR, gifted, and kindergarten children. It would seem like the LD child, as well as any child with regular class placement, could benefit from more contact with the real world outside the school. Role-playing was recommended in one journal article for the mentally retarded and was observed in one TMR class in this study. This method could also be used with EH and LD children.

It was observed that all the EH classes used small and/or large group discussions in which students were specifically called on by name. Controversy exists in the literature over the use of these strategies. One article advises against forced participation in group discussions while another recommends contribution from every member of the group in a class project. The teachers of all three EH classes, plus the EH/TMR classes observed in this study were remarkably uniform in their teaching strategies. The use of discovery was used by two of three EH self-contained classes.

Recommendations for instruction of EH children in journal articles are basically for one-to-one teaching (Glynn, et al., 1976; Hurst, 1977; Finkel, et al., 1976). As this study indicates, actual practice does not reflect this recommendation. All classes observed used individual and small group instruction equally and one even used large group activities.

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