

Reversing Underachievement: Can We Tap Unfulfilled Talents in Hong Kong?

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The issue of underachievement as unfulfilled talent is discussed through briefly reviewing the problems and difficulties in definition, and the etiological and contributing factors of individual, family and school as they apply to the Hong Kong setting. Two approaches, the TRIFOVAL model and the prism metaphor or creative productivity approach are introduced as promising leads in intervention for reversing underachievement. It is argued that educational research should focus on underachievement as a priority issue, as reversing underachievement may be our treatment of choice for helping the highly able (for “ba-jian) and the less able or at-risk (for “bu-di”).

Key words: underachievement; talent identification; talent development

Learning Strategies of Students in Physical Education Classes

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Interest to study students' use of strategies for learning stems from the assumption that students are active agents for learning, and as such, an understanding of their cognitive involvement could provide some insight into developing approaches to maximize learning and performance. In the learning of subject matters other than physical education, researchers had already begun to examine students' learning strategies as the mediator between teacher behavior and student achievement. However, in the subject matter of physical education, research is comparatively sparse. Therefore, in an attempt to fill the void, this study aimed to obtain a profile of learning strategies used by students in physical education classes.

The study involved two phases. The first phase involved the development of a paper-pencil instrument (LSinPE) to assess students' use of learning strategies in PE class. A correlation of 0.70 to 0.98 was obtained from the 16 behavioural items. The second phase involved administering the questionnaire to 320 students (13-14 year old) enrolled in PE classes. It was found that students enrolled in the more focused PE

class (8 hours/week) were able to apply deep strategy for consolidating learning than the regular class (2 hours/week). It was concluded that the selection of learning strategy (surface or deep) was hinged on the students' perceived value of the task to be learnt and that teachers should structure activities which can foster value clarification processes among students.

Key words: curriculum; deep strategies; perceived value

Does Training in Phonological Awareness Skills Improve Chinese Dyslexic Children's Reading Performance?

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This study investigated the effectiveness of phonological training in improving Chinese dyslexic children's reading performance. An Experimental Group of 15 Chinese dyslexic children in Hong Kong received five sessions of training in phonological awareness skills through computers while a comparable Control Group did not. The two groups received the same assessment before and after the training period. The results showed that the Experimental Group improved significantly in the performance on the phonological awareness tasks and the Chinese word reading task after training, but the Control Group did not. The authors suggested that training Chinese dyslexic children in phonological awareness skills might facilitate the children's acquisition of the orthography-phonology correspondence rules in Chinese. Therefore, Chinese dyslexic children can benefit from training in phonological skills as can their alphabetic counterparts.

Key words: Chinese dyslexic; phonological awareness; training programme

Teacher Effects on Student Motivation during Cooperative Learning: Activity Level, Intervention Level, and Case Study Analyses.

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In three cooperative learning studies, teacher interventions influenced student motivation, which in turn affected group outcomes. Forty students from five 9th grade classes were videotaped while solving an algebra problem together in groups of four. A teacher and a teaching assistant (TA) taught these classes and intervened 54 times. Controlling for past student achievement, higher student motivation increased cooperative problem solving success in the first study. In the second study, increased student autonomy and greater teacher responsiveness to students increased student motivation. Indicators of greater student autonomy included: student-initiated interventions, % of student talk and % of teacher/teaching assistant (T/TA) questions. Indicators of greater teacher responsiveness included % of T/TA support and % of T/TA criticism. Also, % of T/TA closed questions and % of T/TA compliments positively predicted student motivation. Finally, the case study discusses one intervention in detail, showing some conditions of use, exceptions to the above effects, and specifying how a compliment helped increase student motivation.

Key words: group work; classroom teaching; student motivation

The Hong Kong Primary English Syllabus and its Relevance for English Learning in a Context of Compulsory Schooling

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The last official English Language syllabus for primary schools in Hong Kong was published in 1981. This syllabus aimed to promote a more communicative approach to the teaching of English at the primary level, and did not concern itself with problems that arose as a result of the implementation of compulsory education in 1978. Since the early nineties, the quality of compulsory school in Hong Kong has caught the attention of the general public and the education sector, and there have been studies showing that some pupils begin to show serious problems in learning English from Primary Four. The current syllabus for Primary English was published in 1997, nineteen years after the introduction of compulsory schooling in Hong Kong. This paper reports and analysis of the current Primary English syllabus, with special

reference to its relevance for compulsory schooling. This analysis is based on a framework specially developed for analyzing compulsory school curricula. The paper concludes with a discussion of two issues which are deemed crucial to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language within a context of compulsory schooling.

Key words: second language curriculum; English language teaching; compulsory education

Career Education in the Netherlands: Learning by Experience and Values Simulation

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Career education can be more than counseling; it can be an educational activity that is part of the curriculum. An example of such a curriculum in the Netherlands is called "orientation on study and profession". In this curriculum students are given the opportunities to collect information about different professions and different subject-discipline studies. We were involved in developing these programs together with teachers and conducted evaluation research on the innovation and implementation of these programs. These programs aim to widen students' knowledge of labor and higher education and develop their personal and social skills. The development of values that enable students to perform in the labor system is highlighted in the second part of the article. In the last part, we discuss the teacher's role in developing students' labor values and labor identity.

Key words: career education; moral education; identity development

Cooperation CBI: The Effects of Heterogeneous versus Homogeneous Grouping, Student Ability and Learning Accountability on Achievement

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This study investigated the effects of cooperative group composition, student ability, and learning accountability on achievement during computer based instruction. A total of 94 students aged between 14 to 15 years were randomly assigned to heterogeneous and homogeneous dyads. Groups were also assigned as having group or individual accountability for mastery of lesson content. Cooperative dyads completed lessons on simple transformational geometry using a computer microworld. Students completed a posttest five days later. There was an interaction effect between group composition and students' ability. Low ability students performed better in heterogeneous than in homogeneous than in heterogeneous groups. No significant difference was found between individual and group accountability groups.

Key words: cooperative learning; computer-based instruction; mathematics achievement

教學研究範式再探

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教學研究範式這概念引起不少學者的關注，以此為題的論文最少有十六篇。黃顯華(1991)曾撰文整理教學研究範式的各種分類。本文建基於前文，主要的目的不在統整各人之看法，而在提供分析性的論述。全文分為四個部分：首先，作者對範式的定義提出看法；其次，簡單綜合了各學者對教學研究範式的分類；第三，分析各種分類的意見，並提出實證性教學研究範式和理解性教學研究範式；最後討論教學研究範式的發展。

關鍵詞：教學、研究、範式