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INTEGRATING ANDRAGOGY WITH CURRENT RESEARCH
ON
TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

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The theoretical basis for andragogy and its implications for facilitators of adult learning appears to have been based largely on our social concepts of maturation and upon the principles posited by perceptual psychology. Little empirically-based research has been generated to either support the primary tenets of andragogy. This paper addresses this issue and relates an emerging definition and rajogh to current research on teaching effectiveness. Key findings in current research in the writers opinion support the practices commonly associated with Andragogy.

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Introduction

The process of maturation has caused some theorists to hypothesize significant differences between children and adults. Research, primarily in the area of Physiology, has confirmed many of these differences. In the areas of teaching and learning, however, few differences have been confirmed.

The introduction of the theory of Andragogy by Knowles (1970) and the four basic assumptions he presented as the foundation stones of this theory, has initiated an ongoing battle between those who advocate this theory and the adult education theorists who find little or no empirically - based reasons for supporting its claims. Some adult educators, in fact, have suggested dropping the term andragogy from the literature in adult education. Davensport (1987, p.19), for example, states "The author of this article certainly believes that adult educators could survive quite nicely without andragogy."

ANDRAGOGY VERSUS PEDAGOGY

Andragogy in the opinion of this writer, rather than an empirically - based theory of adult learning, is an example of visionary theorizing combining various assertions, concepts, and aims that reflect the conventional wisdom (shared feelings, beliefs, goals, etc.) of our society toward the degree of maturity commonly associated with adulthood. Through the process of socialization the basic assumptions about the adult learner posited by Knowles (1970) are instilled by the home, school, church and similar forces. The lessons taught by these forces are that as individuals grow and develop they are expected to become (1.) more self directing, (2) more experienced and resourceful, and (3.) more concerned about acquiring those skills, attitudes, and understandings required for maintaining and enhancing their occupational status.

Experienced facilitators of adult learning become less and less concerned with theory as they strive to create meaningful learning experiences for their clients. The distinctions between Andragogy and pedagogy become blurred as they hypothesize ways and means for assisting their students to achieve both common and individual learning objectives. Thus the solution to the andragogy - pedagogy debate advanced by Davenport (1987, p.19) in which pedagogy is defined as the "art and science of teaching and facilitating the learning of

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children," and andragogy is defined as the "art and science of teaching and facilitating the learning of adults," is worthy of acceptance since, as Davenport (1987) points out, "such definitions would be consistent with the beliefs and research results of many authors who claim that selection of learning approaches has little to do with other variables such as learning style, type of content, goals of instruction-learning, and even gender (Davenport and Davenport)".

FACILITATORS OF LEARNING

In the 1979 yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (Norman V. Overly, Chairperson and Editor), Mitchell reminds us that "the learner, whether child or adult, must work in an atmosphere in which there is safety both physically and psychologically, an environment in which a sense of self-esteem, achievement, economic security, and sharing of mutual respect exists." These factors plus those cited above constitute a large portion of what is known about learning that is generalizable to all learners and learning situations.

In addition to factors related to the climate within the learning environment, other preinstructional decisions that must be made by the facilitator of learning were identified by Berliner (1984) as "content decisions, time allocation decisions, pacing decisions, grouping decisions and decisions about activity structures." Each of these decisions, according to Berliner (1984) "... is known to affect the attitudes, behaviors, and achievements of students".

The facilitator of learning for either children or adults must demonstrate many personal characteristics known to enhance the effectiveness of the learning situation. One of the most comprehensive listing of these characteristics was compiled by the Teacher Education Conference Board of New York (Lightfoot, 1983). These characteristics do much to obscure the differences between pedagogy and andragogy.

1. Diligence in keeping oneself current and increasing one's mastery with respect to the body of knowledge and skill taught;
2. Commitment to continual personal growth through intellectual activity;
3. Awareness of societal expectations, institutional goals, and professional responsibilities;
4. Receptivity to advances in pedagogical practices;
5. Conscientiousness and proficiency in planning and preparation for teaching encounters, based on knowledge of the outcome to be sought and the most efficient means of achieving them;
6. Artistry in managing and performing instructional functions effectively;
7. Concern for students as individuals, based on mutual respect;
8. Dependability as participant in faculty planning and decision making;
9. Dedication to furthering the effectiveness of the teaching profession;
10. Generosity in contributing talents to community welfare and improvement.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING RESEARCH

Since roughly 1970 an ever expanding group of researchers have attempted to plan, develop, and implement a comprehensive program of research into many of the questions relative to effective teaching. In addition to initiating studies into seldom investigated areas of the teaching-learning process, these researchers have attempted to evaluate and

summarize past research findings in order to construct promising hypotheses as guides to new research efforts, Rosenshine (1976) in a discussion of what is known about teacher behaviors and student achievements, indicates the limits of our current knowledge-base by stating:

"Although recent studies represent methodological and conceptual expansion of previous work, research on observed teaching behavior is new, sparse, and not always consistent in results. What we have learned to date is offered more as hypotheses for future study than as validated variables for the training and evaluation of teachers. Although practitioners can easily amass a large number of questions on teaching methods for which they would like clear answers, at the rate we are going it will be years before many of these questions are even studied."

The hypotheses developed by Rosenshine and Furst (Rosenshine 1976) from their study of past research suggest eleven teaching variables related to student achievement. Few, if indeed any advocates of andragogy would disagree with these variables as sound guides to classroom practice. The hypotheses suggested by Rosenshine and Furst are:

1. Clarity (7) - The cognitive clarity of the teacher's presentation.
2. Variability (8) - The teacher's use of variety during the lesson such as using different instructional materials, tests, or varying the level of cognitive discourse.
3. Enthusiasm (6) - Degree of stimulation, originality, or vigor presented by the teacher in the classroom.
4. Task-oriented Behavior (7) - Degree to which the teacher is businesslike or achievement-oriented in presentation.
5. Student Opportunity to Learn Criterion Materials (4) - Relationship between the material covered in class and the criterion pupil performance. Rosenshine and Furst also identified six variables of secondary importance that suggest significant teacher behaviors in instruction.
6. Use of Student Ideas and General Indirectness (8) - Acknowledging, modifying, applying, comparing, and summarizing student statements.
7. Criticism (17) - A strong negative relationship between teacher criticism and student achievement. Criticism includes hostility, strong disapproval, or need to justify authority.
8. Use of Structuring Comments (Advanced Organizers) (4) - Teacher provides "cognitive scaffolding" for completed or planned lesson.
9. Types of Questions Asked (7) - Questions categorized into low cognitive and high cognitive. Questions appropriate to task and group.
10. Probing (3) - Teacher responses that encourage the student to elaborate on his or her question.
11. Level of Difficulty of Instruction (4) - Student perception of the level of difficulty.

Two of the most massive studies of the variables thought to enhance student learning and describe effective teaching are the Texas Teacher Effectiveness Project and the California Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study. The Texas study was conducted by Brophy and Evertson (Brophy 1977) concluded that teaching is a complex combination of many behaviors that facilitators of learning must master. In the final analysis, however, the researchers concluded that "there are no magical "keys" to successful teaching". Berliner (1976) was one of the key researchers in the California study. A major conclusion reached in the study was that "performance which correlates significantly with outcomes were different by subject matter and by grade levels" (MacDonald 1975).

Sherman, et al. (1987) in a discussion of what makes for good teaching, found five characteristics that have "consistently" been attributed to excellent instruction. These factors, are (1) enthusiasm, (2) clarity, (3) preparation/organization, (4) ability to stimulate, (5) knowledge (both content competence and love of subject matter).

Other researchers and theorists, especially, Hunter and Bloom, have emphasize an apprentice-type approach to teaching in which the learner is prepared for the new learning through cues or introductory statements, is assisted in establishing the learning objectives, is provided opportunities to participate or demonstrate the attachment of the objectives and is provided with feedback as the learner attempts to master the learning objectives.

HUMANISTIC TEACHING

In his discussion of the processes of teaching and learning in adult education (andragogy) Knowles was influenced by the works of perceptual psychologists such as Roger, Combs, Maslow, and Kelley. Belief that the individual is the source of personal purpose, motivation, direction, etc., enables one to posit a teaching-learning environment in which these factors are dominant in the work of the facilitator or the learning experience. Today another group of perceptual psychology advocates are impacting the dialogue on effective teaching. The two are Glasser (1986) and Purkey (1984). These writers stress the extreme importance of the interaction between the learner and the adult who seeks to facilitate the learning. This interaction must strive to increase the learners feelings of worth, dignity, capability, and belongingness. In addition, the learner must be empowered to take change of his/her own learning to an ever greater extent in the classroom. Students, in the opinion of Glasser and Purkey, must be invited and empowered if the process of learning is to be meaningful to them. Duke (1987) synthesized the work of Purkey and Novak in the area of motivational teaching as follows:

1. Developing Trust - Eliminates surprises, follow through on agreements, watch body language, and share feelings honestly.
2. Reaching Each Student - Avoid random patterns of interaction with students, set aside time to listen to individual students, encourage students to write messages to the teacher, and know something positive to say about each student.
3. Reading Situations - Attend carefully to what students say, and look beyond students' overt behavior.
4. Making Invitations Attractive - Don't say one thing while meaning another, don't rust students to respond, and make praise realistic.
5. Ensuring Delivery - Communicate invitations clearly, follow up to make sure students "receive" an invitation.
6. Negotiating - Inquire about rejected invitations, and generate alternative courses of action.
7. Handling Rejection - Don't take rejection personally.

While the theorists dedicated to empirically-based evidence may find problems with the approaches advocated by Glasser and Purkey, the fact remains that no research known to this writer refutes the basic tenets of teaching and learning advocated by the humanistic theories of Glasser or Purkey. The current research findings on teaching effectiveness must be treated in a very cautious manner. Most findings appear to be effective with certain types of learners, but are not universal prescriptions. In essence, the review of current research into the area of effective teaching appears to state that "...no single teacher behavior or set of behaviors will universally promote student achievement gains in all subjects" (Wiles and Bondi, 1986).

Conclusion

To leave this discussion of the integration of andragogy and current research into effective teaching in a negative posture would be a mistake. Many research findings have tended to lend credibility to the conventional wisdom commonly associated with andragogical principles. Enthusiasm, task-oriented behavior, cognitive scaffolding, feedback, expectations, empowerment, and invitational teaching are variables that are being considered

as research hypotheses to further our knowledge of effective teaching. Adult educators are encouraged to get "up to speed" in terms of current research findings while continuing to embrace the humanistic principles inherent in the theory of andragogy.

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