

EXPERIMENTATION WITH THE INSTRUMENTAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM OF REUVEN FEUERSTEIN

The "Work of the Guénange-Richemont Association" consists of two establishments situated in France, on both banks of the Moselle River between Metz and Thionville:

- the Educational Centre of Richemont for students between ten and fifteen years of age;
- the Professional Training Centre of Guénange for adolescents between fifteen and eighteen years of age.

Founded on May 28, 1891 at Guénange by the Abbé Thilmont, the establishment was confided to the Brothers of the Christian Schools in 1902. In 1968, the academic section was established at Richemont. Following a period of adjustment, the establishment became The House of Specialized Education for the Protection of Children and Troubled Youth.

The centre accepts boys who are social cases having trouble with their deportment and having difficulties adapting themselves to the family circle or in school or vocational circles.

The Establishment consists of a Boarding Department as well as a Vocational High School which, in a three or four year course, offers general education and vocational training which qualify students for the following trades:

- Printing;
- Mechanics-electrical, metalwork, and lathe work;
- Construction: Carpentry, painting, masonry.

For this purpose and for the training of the young men accepted, the school uses adapted pedagogical methods.

For the past two years, we have been experimenting with the Instrumental Enrichment programme of Professor Reuven Feuerstein, which is nothing other than the application of what the author calls "The experience of mediative apprenticeship". This mediation of the apprenticeship

experience is a type of human experience. It is provided by the parents and by the teachers in giving the students the necessary structures for adapting themselves to their environment. In fact, in the opinion of Professor Feuerstein, it is the lack of this mediative apprenticeship which impedes the transmission of cultural values to the child, as well as the habits and modes of conduct, thus leading to a cultural deficiency and making the child a "culturally deprived person". Thus with the Enrichment Method, thanks to the personal mediation given by the teacher, the child "who functions on a low level" is changed by a direct exposure to a substitute of the mediation of the apprenticeship experience, which is an intensive and systematic substitute.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

General Objective

To modify the cognitive structure of the subject "operating at a low level" in such a fashion as to render him sensitive to, and subject to, modification by direct exposure to the stimuli met with in the circumstances of daily life and in the formal situations of apprenticeship.

Through Specific Objects

The correction of cognitive function deficiencies. The acquisition of vocabulary, terms, concepts of operation and the relations concerning the programme. The formation of habits. The production of intrinsic motivation. The capacity to judge and reflect. To change his role from that of a passive reproducer of information to that of a creator of new information.

Population Envisioned

Age:

From ten years of age until adulthood for those culturally handicapped.

From eight years of age until adulthood for ordinary people with specific problems.

Nature of Material

An exercise note book and pencil. Each instrument is designed for a particular cognitive function but it may also be interchanged with others.

Nature of the Exercises

The absence of content in the sense that the content is not an end in itself, but only a vehicle

to directing attention towards the cognitive functions which ought to be corrected, developed, and enriched.

Nature of the Activity

Discovery, apprenticeship, and reproduced application in the diverse situations of relations, or regulations, of principles of operations of strategies and other foreseeable exigencies in a becoming cognitive functioning.

Scholastic Results

These do not enter into the process. Certain instruments are accessible to individuals who are entirely illiterate.

Scholastic Framework

This process complements the regular school programme. It complements the apprenticeship discipline of the basic school instruction and the mastery of such skills as those of reading and mathematics for those who are incapable of apprenticeship. There are materials for extra school activities to be administered outside of regular class time.

Nature of the Inter-action Among the Pupils

The definition of the shared problem. Participation in the divergent proposals for a solution. Group discussion for a subtle interpretation of the PEI activities and of general tasks and specific mutual help and interaction.

Interaction with the Teacher

Presentation of the task: an explanation of terms, presentation of an individual research project of processes and strategies. Production orientation of a capacity for judgement and reflection, teaching of a specific content whose elements are necessary for PEI: Production of motivation in re-enforcing initiatives of inter-

activities among students and the creation of a footbridge in the various areas and in life in general.

EFFECTS OF THE PROGRAMME

On the Teacher

The training and experience of PEI brings about changes in the teacher in the perception he has of the child, in his evaluation and in his attempts for making modifications: in his attitudes regarding the capabilities of the retarded subject, in his diminution of the use of the concrete for the benefit of the abstract, in the search for processes instead of results. Understanding the cognitive structure can make the teacher more aware of the aspects of indispensable education for the changing of structures or dimensions in understanding as well as in personality.

On the Child

The increased will to master school work. Increased motivation and assiduity in school work. An improvement in his self-image.

On Parents

In view of the children's success, the parents can modify the level of their initiatives in behalf of the child and can modify their image of the child.

Bibliographical References:

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FEUERSTEIN R., RAND Y., HOFFMAN M., and MILLER R., *Instrumental Enrichment*. University Park Press, Baltimore, 1980.

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