

Determining Teacher Effectiveness

IN an issue devoted to teacher growth, it seems appropriate to look at current research efforts in the evaluation of teacher behavior. The past few years have seen a tremendous increase in attempts to analyze, by means of classroom observational methods, the interaction between teachers and pupils. Before we can discuss growth, clearer base-lines are needed. Just what do teachers do in a classroom? At first glance, this seems to be a silly question. Why, they *teach*, of course! Yes, but how?

Major efforts to answer this question all utilize some form of observation combined with a category system for classifying behavior. Essentially, time sampling procedures, in which an observer codes the behavior while observing, are used. The category systems are derived essentially from social psychological theories and small group research. They are "field theory" approaches which focus upon the present-time behavior of the teacher, and its interaction with the present-time behavior of the child.

The particular coding system depends upon the researcher. Since all these systems are in their infancy, it is not yet possible to predict which one will become the more accepted way. Results must be interpreted in keeping with the system used. This means that our ability to generalize is impaired by the lack of

common categories, definitions and procedures used by those exploring this area. Perhaps the best summary of the difficulty was made by A. S. Barr in his review of the Wisconsin studies, when he wrote, "While these studies (of teacher effectiveness using factor-analytical procedures) make some contribution to the structuring of teaching ability, it seems reasonably apparent that the structure secured is quite clearly tied to the research design, the data-gathering devices employed, the teachers studied, the value system, and the vocabulary of the particular investigator." (Barr, 1961; 137).

Educational Leadership readers are already somewhat acquainted with two such approaches (Flanders, 1961; and Hughes, 1962). Flanders' work at Minnesota was concerned with analyzing the verbal influence pattern of the teacher. His categories, derived from Bales' work (1950), were ten in number. Four categories were assigned to indirect influence by the teacher, three to direct influence, two to pupil talk, and one to noise. Note that all categories, except the tenth, are exclusively "talk" categories.

Another system, that of Withall and his colleagues at Wisconsin, grew out of the same origins, and bears a family resemblance to that of Flanders. However, this approach includes nonverbal be-

havior as well as talk, and its fourteen categories are not derived from any concept of influence. They are more closely related to Bales' original list, and to the group dynamics notions of the functional roles of group members.

The Withall type observer has to make judgments as to the intent of the behavior in order to categorize his response. In the Flanders scheme, he is instructed to pay attention to the *act*, not the *intent*. Both systems require a certain measure of observer judgment.

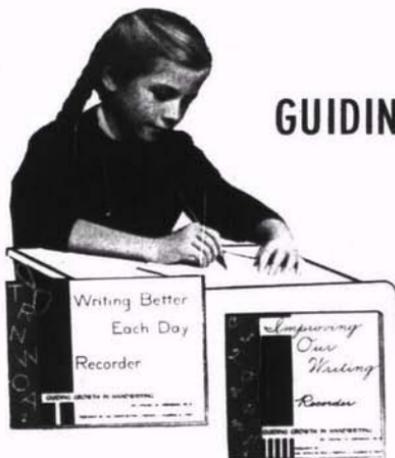
In order to decrease the amount of observer judgement, Medley and Mitzel (1958) developed the OSCAR, which is a check sheet, using both pupil and teacher verbal and nonverbal behavior. Factor analysis of their results indicated that both types of behavior by both pupils and teachers could be combined into a measure of emotional climate. Their recorders checked such items as

"teacher yells" in contrast to the Withall category of "shows negative feeling" or a Flanders coding into "criticizing or justifying authority."

In spite of the differences, all these approaches and others like them show that: (a) it is feasible to measure classroom behavior in a scientific manner; (b) it is possible to analyze and interpret results and make predictions; and (c) it is possible to isolate teacher behaviors which affect the behavior, attitudes and learning of youngsters.

Two additional examples, using other category schemes, illustrate the preceding generalizations. A Stanford University study (Spaulding, 1962) used, among others, the major categories of manifest approval, disapproval, publicity of communication, and sequential reinforcement of pupil responses. Teacher behavior was correlated with achievement and self-concept reports of elemen-

NOW—learning to write is
EASIER, MORE FUN
MORE REWARDING



GUIDING GROWTH IN HANDWRITING

Learning to write can be fun for your pupils. And it is—with this new version of the nationally popular Zaner-Bloser system of handwriting.

The result of years of research and classroom teaching, GUIDING GROWTH IN HANDWRITING is based on the concept of handwriting as a communication art. It starts with manuscript writing in the lower grades, and progresses easily and naturally to cursive writing. Attractively illustrated throughout, it coordinates writing technique, forms of written expression and content areas. It correlates writing with language arts, social studies, health, science and other subjects. It allows

for transition from manuscript to cursive in either Grade 2 or Grade 3. It provides two professional Reference Manuals for teachers—and a separate pre-writing book for kindergarten.

Easy for teachers, easy for students, GUIDING GROWTH IN HANDWRITING is the new, easy, practical way to teaching and learning better penmanship.

Write for FREE full-color brochure

Zaner-Bloser
612 N. Park St., Columbus, Ohio
Dept. EL

tary children. Spaulding reports that his findings "suggest that pupil gains in reading are facilitated by teachers who are attentive to the needs of pupils as they read or work independently, making themselves readily available to the pupils by observing them and being responsive to their bids for assistance, as well as keeping themselves informed on pupil progress." (Spaulding, 1962; 6)

Staines' (1958) study in Australia revealed differential patterns among teachers in the number and kind of references they made to the pupils' self. Some often referred to pupils' personal attributes, both favorably and unfavorably. Others rarely did so. He found that when a teacher taught with the self-picture of children in mind, and made self-references in class, the children increased on two self dimensions, those of certainty and of differentiation. Teacher behavior was clearly related to pupils' self-report.

We need to continue to use the diversity of approaches now available, and build our data on both behavior and effects. We probably need to develop observational schemes growing out of other theoretical positions than those now being used.

In terms of teacher growth, we have made a good beginning in identifying some of the variables of teacher behavior in the classroom which affect pupil learning. We know some positive behaviors of teachers. We also have Flanders' discouraging comment on junior high school teachers: "Most teachers dominated more than they realized, achieved more compliance than seemed necessary to coordinate activities, and established levels of dependence that stimulated some students to aggressive counter-dependent acts." (Flanders, 1961; 180)

With
CUISENAIRE® RODS

learning mathematics
becomes an exciting process of discovery!

Cuisenaire rods and texts help teachers and pupils learn the essential concepts of mathematics rapidly and thoroughly. These colorful and attractive materials are used in all grades.

Cuisenaire rods are ideal for learning all school arithmetic concepts, as well as fundamental ideas of algebra and geometry. Written work is used at all stages. Approved for NDEA purchase.

For free, illustrated information write to:

**CUISENAIRE COMPANY
OF AMERICA, INC.**

235 East 50 Street, New York 22, N. Y.

Still to be accomplished is a greater understanding of the interaction of certain teacher behaviors on certain types of pupils in certain subjects. McKeachie (1962), in reviewing research on college teaching effectiveness, isolates as the four main variables: (a) the course objectives, (b) the instructor, (c) the student, and (d) the subject matter. The studies described above have focused on only two of these.

In addition, Medley and Mitzel, in a symposium at the 1961 American Psychological Association meeting, presented a scheme which assumes that: some teacher behaviors have the same effect on most pupils when exhibited by most teachers; some teacher behaviors are useful only to some teachers; some behaviors affect only some pupils; some are contingent upon the classroom situation; and some are useful by some teachers sometimes with some pupils.

In order to educate teachers to assist pupils, we need to know which behaviors are which. As we learn this, teaching, supervision, and teacher education will become more of a science and less of an art.

References

- R. F. Bales. *Interaction Process Analysis*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1950.
- A. S. Barr. "Teacher Effectiveness and Its Correlates." *Journal of Experimental Education* 30: 134-56; 1961.
- N. A. Flanders. "Analyzing Teacher Behavior." *Educational Leadership* 19: 173-75; 178-80; 200; 1961.
- N. A. Flanders. "Interaction Analysis in the Classroom." Minneapolis: College of Education, University of Minnesota, 1960.
- M. M. Hughes. "What Is Teaching? One Viewpoint." *Educational Leadership* 19: 251-59; 1962.
- W. J. McKeachie. "Current Research on Teacher Effectiveness." *Improving College and University Teaching* 10: 15-19; 1962.
- Donald M. Medley and Harold E. Mitzel. "A Technique for Measuring Classroom Behavior." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 49: 86-92; 1958.
- J. M. Newell, W. W. Lewis and J. Withall. "Use of a Communication Model to Study Classroom Interactions." *American Educational Research Association*, 1961. Mimeographed paper.
- J. Staines. "The Self Picture as a Factor in the Classroom." *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 28: 97-111; 1958.
- R. L. Spaulding. "Some Correlates of Classroom Teaching Behavior in Elementary Schools." *American Educational Research Association*, 1962. Mimeographed paper.
- J. Withall. "Observing and Recording Behavior." *Review of Educational Research* 30: 496-512; 1960.
- IRA J. GORDON, *Professor of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville.*

Teacher as a Person

(Continued from page 103)

Another means of gaining knowledge of the materials to be taught is the personal adventure into that material. Many teachers are required to teach many subjects. Whether the teacher is a specialist in one subject, or a teacher of many subjects, his knowledge and understanding must span broad areas. He should clearly see and utilize the interrelationship between subjects. New vistas can be opened to the teacher by adventuring into art, music, dramatics, history, foreign languages—by drawing and painting, by singing or by playing an instrument, by acting in a play or helping with production, by delving into history, by learning to speak a new language—in short, by being, himself, an inquisitive, ever-learning person.

By these adventures one does gain in one's knowledge. Of just as much importance, though, are one's experiences with the learning process, becoming aware of its frustrations, its challenges and its rewards. Knowledge of the learning process can be gained through the writings of psychologists and educators. A real understanding of the process can best be gained by experiencing it.

This very experience is probably the key to developing the personal qualities of a teacher. He becomes first a person: meeting new challenges, moving into new experiences, learning through a desire to know in order to live more effectively. He then becomes a true example to youngsters; a worthy leader of their classroom group, and a functioning member of the community in which he lives.

Copyright © 1962 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.