

SELECTED FOR REVIEW

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Four Problems in Teaching English: A Critique of Research. J. Stephen Sherwin. Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1969. 209 pp.

Improving English Instruction. Royal J. Morsey. Second Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969. 388 pp.

—Reviewed by RUTHELLEN CREWS, Associate Professor of Education, University of Florida, Gainesville.

It has long been suspected and often been reported that the benefits transferable from studying Latin to mastering English are meager and that the understanding derived from studying traditional diagramming often provides a distorted picture of English sentence structure. Sherwin's astute interpretation of the significant as well as the not-so-significant research which deals with these two problems in English language instruction clearly supports these contentions. Furthermore, he describes and evaluates the methods used to research a number of knotty problems dealing with difficulties in learning to spell. The results of these studies are sometimes surprising, sometimes satisfying, sometimes not so clear.

A fourth problem in language instruction with which Sherwin deals is one that continues to hold a prominent spot in language research. That is, do linguistically oriented grammar programs offer more to increase skill in writing than traditional grammar programs? Sherwin reports:

... research still overwhelmingly supports the contention that instruction in formal grammar is an ineffective and inefficient way to help students achieve proficiency in writing. . . . What linguistics can contribute to the teaching of writing is a story just now beginning to unfold. . . . So far, the experimental evidence supports the view that linguistics is about as effective as traditional grammar in improving writing (p. 168).

Sherwin concludes his critique of research as one might expect—he makes a plea for improved techniques for educational research and other behavioral investigation.

Morsey's *Improving English Instruction* seems to begin where Sherwin's book ends. Morsey strongly urges high school English teachers to check in their own classrooms the validity of research done by others and to develop research projects of their own. He identifies a long list of specific action-type research problems for the English class and describes methods whereby such problems can be tested. The rigorous researcher might question the degree of scholarly endeavor required for carrying out some of his suggested problems.

Each chapter in the book includes two useful sections: "Assumptions About . . ." and "Ideas To Test." These sections provide opportunities for the reader to apply the theories presented by thinking, talking, and doing.

Of special interest are the chapters dealing with ways to help the student understand the nature of language. Morsey's description of the new grammar, limited as it is, provides

a clear introduction for the teacher-in-training and the teacher-in-service both in its theoretical background and in its specific suggestions for implementation. Much to-do has been made lately about teaching semantic principles in the high school English class, but little in the way of direction has been available to the teacher who is a beginner in this aspect of language study. Morsey's treatment of semantics and his ideas for helping students apply the semantic principles that he describes are highly practical. All in all, the book is thorough in its presentations, and it contains a wealth of resource material.

The innovative high school English teacher desiring to break away from the traditional prescriptive English curriculum will find support from Sherwin's critique of research and direction from Morsey's practical suggestions for instruction so that a more relevant English language curriculum will result. □

Language and Learning Disorders of the Pre-Academic Child. *Tina E. Bangs.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968. 408 pp.

Clinical Speech in the Schools. *Rolland J. Van Hattum, editor.* Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1969. 381 pp.

—Reviewed by MARYANNE HALL, Associate Professor of Education, Department of Early Childhood-Elementary Education, University of Maryland, College Park.

"Age six is too late." So states Tina E. Bangs in *Language and Learning Disorders of the Pre-Academic Child*. Herein lies the major thrust of the book as the author discusses in detail the identification, assessment, and instruction of young children with communication problems. The treatment of both diagnosis and instruction in one book is extremely valuable, as the theme of developing instruction based on diagnosis is clearly shown.

The material on assessment is detailed, but implementation of the suggestions would require a trained diagnostician. The superficial treatment in the communication chapter detracts from the total book. The chapter

on learning modalities seems over-generalized because of the amount of material covered. The numerous anecdotes about individual children, however, are insightfully written and do add to the impact of the author's message.

The author's point that language-deficient children have similar needs regardless of classifications such as dyslexic, brain injured, or some other specific learning disability is well made. Bangs urges that labels be given minimal attention and that instead the focus be on descriptions of children's performance, with a statement of both strengths and deficiencies. After assessment, each child's problem should be clearly communicated to teachers and parents, with definite recommendations for instruction.

A curriculum guide of approximately 140 pages is included. This collection of activities is divided into four levels: under three years, beginning level (age 3-4), pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten. While the guide does present a comprehensive collection of activities with clear emphasis on the use of these activities to promote language development, some practices can be questioned as too stilted and structured for young children.

The author does present a book which fulfills its purpose of giving information for those who are interested in improving language and learning skills of preschool children.

Clinical Speech in the Schools is concerned with descriptions of the organization and management of clinical speech programs in elementary and secondary schools. After the basic overview, the text is divided into two parts: the role of the speech clinician and the professional planning of the speech clinician. This reviewer found the second part much more specific and informative than the first. The material on the speech clinician as a professional person, member of the educational team, consultant, counselor, and researcher seemed so general as to be of limited value.

The treatment of the areas of program scheduling, case finding, case selection, and case load is enlightening and gives practical suggestions. The authors favor a flexible

approach, as alternative procedures are suggested for different school situations. A strong case is made for correlation of the work of the speech clinician with other school personnel. A value of the book is the clear explanation of speech programs to educators other than speech clinicians.

Both books are concerned with assessment, identification, and program development for the child with communication disorders. The first is devoted to the total language development of the preschool child, while the second is concerned with speech programs from kindergarten through high school. Both books stress the function of parents, and Bangs gives specific teaching suggestions for parents. Both texts present valuable forms in the appendixes which should be of use to persons who are involved in organizing or conducting similar programs for identification, assessment, and instruction. □

The Planning of Change. Warren G. Bennis, Kenneth D. Benne, and Robert Chin, editors. Second Edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969. 627 pp.

—Reviewed by MARVIN D. KELLY, University Fellow, School of Education, Indiana State University, Terre Haute.

There have been times in man's history when change seemed nonexistent—times when individuals and roles, societies and institutions, cultures and values seemed immutable. The present is not such a time. Change and tendency toward change we have and in full measure. The evidence is obvious and overwhelming.

Consequently, the debate no longer centers upon whether or not change will occur. It will! Now the question of concern is, "How will it occur?" Shall we opt for a natural-law nonintervention ideology at one extreme or for a radically styled intervention ideology at the other extreme? The editors of *The Planning of Change* say we should settle for neither. For Bennis, social psychologist; Benne, human relations expert and educator; and Chin, psychologist, the answer lies in "a

method which self-consciously and experimentally employs social technology to help solve the problems of men and societies." Toward this end, they have brought together some of the most recent insightful writing on the application of our accumulated social science knowledge to the process of change. In so doing, they have made a valuable contribution toward what needs to be known about the implementation of change.

The present volume is a revision of the original 1961 version. In many ways, however, it is a new book and a better one. In keeping with the topic, change, approximately nine-tenths of this volume of readings is new. There is more writing by the editors themselves, which serves to give the book increased unity. The heavy emphasis on small group theory and research which characterized the first edition has been decreased in favor of treating a broader range of human systems toward which change is directed. Perhaps the most significant modification is the addition of a new section on the value and goal dilemmas posed by planned change.

Structurally the book is divided into four parts. Part One is concerned with "The Evolution of Planned Change." The readings in this section focus upon the historical development of current ideas about the changing of human systems. Part Two, "The Elements of Planned Change," is devoted to the application of scientific knowledge, to collaboration and conflict, to theories of change and influence, and to systems in change. "The Dynamics of Planned Change" are treated in Part Three. Strategies, instrumentation, and resistance are the concerns of the writings in this section. Part Four, "Some Value Dilemmas of the Change Agent," presents articles dealing with the ethical-value questions raised in using scientific knowledge to change human systems.

The lack of integration which often afflicts books of readings is minimized in this volume. This is no poorly conceived and hastily put together hodgepodge of articles. The book is well structured and the readings have been chosen for their pertinence to the major themes with which the editors have chosen to deal. It does not do, of course, what

a textbook treatment might do for such a new field as the planning of change; that is, the theoretical and practical implications are not finely drawn. The editors indicate, however, that they may collaborate on such a text. It would be a useful companion to this volume.

Educational systems have often been justly criticized as inept in the planning and implementation of change. Aside from the regrettable tendency on the part of educational systems to be static and change resistant, efforts toward change have too often failed in degree if not absolutely. Perhaps this lack of success can be attributed to insufficient knowledge. Perhaps we do not know much about how to change human systems.

If such be the case, then what we need in education is a great deal more sophistication about change. One form this could take would be the addition of change specialists to staffs—people specifically trained in the processes of change. Such specialists could be used profitably in many areas of the educational enterprise. For example, this kind of expertise seems particularly relevant to the perennial problems of curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation. Curriculum change specialization would be an amplification of one of the roles played by the curriculum supervisor.

Increased facility to deal with the issue of change, whatever form it may take, will not develop accidentally. It will develop as educators, particularly those in leadership positions, become students of change. *The Planning of Change* is a good place to begin or to continue such an inquiry. □

The Most Probable World. Stuart Chase.
New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968.
239 pp.

—Reviewed by WARD WELDON, Consultant and Lecturer, Dissemination Project, College of Education, University of Illinois, Champaign.

"Daddy, tell me a scary story, the one about the world when I grow up."

Modern writing about the future has its

scary moments and Stuart Chase's latest book is no exception. Future-writing was once called Utopian in honor of that happy island described by Sir Thomas More, but terror of the future by more recent authors has led to the coining of a new word: Dystopia. Well-known examples of fear-inspired Dystopian literature are George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. To these writers, the future might be a nice place to visit in books but you wouldn't want to live there.

The Most Probable World is not entirely pessimistic in its view of the future. The dust jacket promises "a challenging view of the achievements, hazards, and forces shaping the 21st Century." The hazards include a drastic oversupply of the three B's—babies, bulldozers, and bombs. Bright spots are cheaper energy sources, effective government-business cooperation, and world government strong enough to make nuclear disarmament politically acceptable. Most of the book is a solid, both-feet-on-the-ground discussion of the future effects of the 10 present trends which Chase calls jointly the Technological Imperative. His optimism shows when Chase reprimands philosopher Jacques Ellul and physicist Max Born for seeing no way to make our technological future livable.

Nevertheless, the trends of the Technological Imperative make the future *à la Chase* a fear-inspiring spectacle. The human race is destroying its home by pollution and wasteful exploitation of resources. Population growth is rapid enough to prove Malthus correct and reduce most of mankind to a subsistence standard of living. Nationalism and the proliferation of nuclear weapons may break down orderly international affairs and lead to diplomacy by blackmail or to nuclear explosions. Automation may deny most humans the opportunity to earn dignity through useful work.

Chase argues that mankind can survive the hazards and reap the benefits of 21st century living by winning what Toynbee called "the struggle to save ourselves from ourselves." Chase sees this struggle primarily in educational terms, with much of the battle for the future to be fought in classrooms.

Earthshaking changes in our school systems are proposed in the final chapter, "No Path but Knowledge." Future leaders should be well educated generalists as well as highly trained specialists. The general portion of their schooling should eradicate loyalty to cults or ideologies. "It is cardinal," writes Chase, "that our candidate not be handicapped by a rigid ideology." First place in Chase's curriculum goes to cultural anthropology as "perhaps the best solvent for rigid ideologies and dogmas." Other subjects to be studied are communication theory, biology, international law, the new economics, social psychology, human history since Sumeria, and history of science and technology since Galileo.

In addition to curriculum for future political leaders, one other major suggestion for the improvement of the future is offered, a supranational agency to screen technological innovations before they are allowed to go into mass production.

Chase places the main burden of preventing social disaster on new educational procedures but fails to discuss the question of how to get schools to change. When Ebenezer Scrooge saw the vision of Christmas Future, that was enough to make him change his ways, thereby preventing the vision from becoming reality. It will, however, require more than a glimpse of an unpleasant future to change our educational system.

Schools are conservative institutions, organized more for the transmission of past

culture than for preparing students to live in a future radically different from the past. Schools tend to lag rather than lead the rest of the society in adjusting to new conditions. Chase asks schools to chart an imaginative course through the hazards of the Technological Imperative. This may be asking too much.

The hope that the right kind of education will solve all social problems regardless of conditions outside the schools is mere romanticism. This approach to education creates unrealistic expectations and leads to a situation in which the school system disappoints its backers and becomes a whipping boy.

Schools, industry, commerce, government, homes, and churches all act upon and interact with each other. Each institution must contribute to the effort to create a livable future; no single segment of our society should be expected to reform and rehabilitate all other segments. Those who propose school reforms as a single panacea for social ills suffer from the illusion that all learning occurs in school.

Although Chase's proposals are inadequate to the complicated problems he describes, we should thank him for putting educational purposes in a futuristic context. Curriculum change is one of several strategies needed for winning the struggle for the future. Efforts to make our schools up-to-date and more receptive to new methods are more important and more urgent than most of us imagine. □

Changing Supervision for Changing Times

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