*Solution Manual for Infants and Toddlers Curriculum and Teaching 8th Edition Swim 113360787X 9781133607878*

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# *SECTION 1*

# INFANT AND TODDLER DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR PREPARATION

## ADULT LEARNERS AND SOCIO-CONSTRUCTIVISM

Traditional teacher-centered models of education in which knowledge is "transmitted" from teacher to learner are rapidly being replaced with student-centered models in which the emphasis is on guiding, coaching, and facilitating learners as they construct their understanding within a particular culture and community (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Brooks & Brooks, 2001).

This paradigm shift, originating from socio-constructivist theories, recognizes that learners, adults and children alike, construct their understanding of the world by linking new information gained from interactions with materials, texts, and other people to prior or existing knowledge in meaningful ways. In other words, "knowledge is acquired through an active process in which the individual continually structures and restructures experience through self-regulated mental activity" (Spigner-Littles & Anderson, 1999, p. 205). Because social interaction is a prerequisite to learning and cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978), teachers need to utilize instructional methods which involve more than one student and which build on past knowledge and experiences.

While all college students are considered adult learners, not all collegiate learners arrive with the same types or degrees of experiential histories and current involvements (e.g., families and jobs). Kasworm (2003, 2005, 2008) investigated how those past experiences and current involvements impacted learning. She discovered a bifurcation in their concept of types of knowledge: academic knowledge in the classroom focused on theory and rote memorization of facts while real-world knowledge had immediate application and life relevance. Some of the students in her sample felt that college programs and

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instructors contributed to this separation of knowledge and paradoxical beliefs about why they were attending college (Kasworm, 2003, 2005). Other students displayed the Inclusion Voice and integrated knowledge across both life worlds, unifying their cognitive and emotional worlds (Kasworm, 2008). Because adult learners tend to be highly motivated and predisposed toward learning (Spigner-Littles & Anderson, 1999), teacher educators must find ways to actively join these two types of knowledge for all learners.

Selecting instructional methods, techniques, and strategies should be done with great care and consideration. Many educators prefer an eclectic approach, selecting "principles and techniques from the many theoretical perspectives in much the same way we might select international dishes from a smorgasbord, choosing those we like best and ending up with a meal which represents no nationality exclusively and a design ...[with] no single theoretical base" (Bednar, Cunningham, Duffy, & Perry, 1995, p. 100). Problems arise when tools developed for the service of one theory are integrated within instructional systems designed for learning goals consistent with another theoretical perspective (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998). To promote optimal learning, teacher educators must be consistent in linking their theoretical perspective with their teaching methods. Doing this from a socio-constructivist position serves to minimize the bifurcation of knowledge discussed previously. In our work with pre-service and in-service teachers, we need to assist them with applying theory to real-life situations they encounter in educational settings with infants and toddlers. The following sections provide more specific details on how to support this bridging of theory and practice.

# CONSIDERATION OF KEY CONSTRUCTIVIST PRINCIPLES

Key components of socio-constructivist theories are applicable in early childhood and college classrooms as well as in- service trainings for experienced teachers. Because the primary purpose of this Instructional Manual is to assist you in developing a course that models how you want your students to teach, I will provide examples of how to apply these key components with pre-service and in-service teachers. Because these concepts are highly connected and interwoven, for ease of understanding, I have divided them into manageable parts.

## *Problem solving and problem posing*

In traditional classrooms, learners work to answer the questions designed by the teacher. In a constructivist classroom, in contrast, the learners help determine the problems to be solved through problem posing. Problem posing, then, involves the generation of new problems and questions to be explored. New questions do not arise from nowhere; they build from the foundation of other ideas (Branscombe, Castle, Dorsey, Surbeck, & Taylor, 2003). With adult learners, an instructor can facilitate problem posing by having students reflect on their readings and field experiences to note information or an experience which surprised them and to pose a question about this reaction. Infants and toddlers, however, problem pose in a very different manner: typically, they do so physically, rather than verbally. As such, one task you have is to assist pre- service and in-service teachers with understanding the importance of careful observation (and of records) to discern the problem being posed by the child.

Problem solving is closely related to problem posing and involves the broad aspects of inquiry and investigative activities which are typically associated with being a scientist: wondering, observing, describing, comparing, contrasting, exploring, classifying, predicting, verifying, reflecting, generalizing, and evaluating (Branscombe et al., 2003). People who engage in problem solving want to make meaning of their world. For pre-service and in-service teachers, this means coming to understand how very young children learn and how to facilitate the learning process (i.e., teach). It is no wonder, then, that instructors need to engage adult learners in these processes. Both problem posing and problem solving are apparent as students work to solve authentic tasks.

## *Active, authentic tasks*

According to Dirkx (2006) and NAEYC (n.d.), quality learning involves one's hands, mind, and feelings. In other words, it is insufficient for learners to have just their hands busy; they must also be engaged intellectually and emotionally. This brings to mind Loris Malaguzzi's mantra of "nothing without joy." Teachers should not plan an experience with the primary goal being to have "fun," but it can be a wonderful by-product for learners. In the college classroom, learners are internally motivated to be there because they have chosen teaching as their future profession. Use this motivation to engage them in active, authentic tasks that will build skills necessary for working in infant and toddler classrooms. For example, if you require that students plan and implement an experience during their field experience, then discussing what teachers need to consider when planning

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curriculum becomes authentic. They will have a strong "need to know" about the content and will have higher levels of interest and commitment.

A word of caution should be noted here. Giving adult learners a task that is designed for young children is not authentic. Having them pretend to be a toddler and explore clay is not realistic. Adults cannot sufficiently recall what it was like to be a toddler; so, they probably will be active only with their hands. However, having them represent one of their own ideas using clay should engage their hands, minds, and feelings. Joining this experience with a discussion about the challenges they experienced when working with clay; how and when to introduce tools to toddlers; how toddlers represent their ideas; and how toddlers use past experiences to inform their work with a new medium will move this authentic lesson from the personal realm to a professional application through the socio-cultural context of the classroom (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978). The discussion following the authentic clay experience fosters such a context but it also highlights the importance of the next component, choice.

## *Choice and decision-making*

According to Branscombe et al. (2003), there are two different types of choices that teachers can offer learners: limited and purposeful. Both types of choices have been found to relate to higher levels of intrinsic motivation and engagement (Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008). When giving limited choices, a teacher selects two or three viable options from which the child chooses. For example, at naptime, you offer a toddler the choices of lying quietly on the cot, having her back rubbed, or reading a book. Notice how the choices do not allow for the child to move around the room during nap. Limiting choices, then, assist teachers with providing for those things that are considered necessary to the appropriate care and education of very young children, while at the same time allowing the child to have power over their lives and, in the process, become more self-reliant and independent (Branscombe et al., 2003). A purposeful choice, on the other hand, "appeals to the child's spontaneous interest in a topic, a real need to know, or a means to accomplish a goal" (Branscombe et al., 2003, p. 127). Providing learning centers encourages purposeful choices. Toddlers, for example, can move freely between the areas to engage with materials and to complete tasks.

Deciding which type of choice to provide should be based on your knowledge of the age of the person as well as the individual characteristics of that person. In any case, however, the choices provided should be authentic. Asking children to choose blueberries or strawberries for snack when they have never tasted blueberries is not an authentic choice because it would not be an informed one.

Choice is always individual. In the previous example about clay, students could choose what to represent with that particular medium. In contrast, decision-making can be individual or group. The primary reason for engaging teachers and learners in decision-making is to foster intellectual autonomy (Branscombe et al., 2003). For example, decision-making is a valuable tool for motivating adult learners to intellectualize classroom practices by theoretically grounding it. To illustrate, I have students work in pairs to complete an assessment project in which they decide on a question related to the care and education of very young children. Then, they gather observation data during their field experiences. These data are analyzed using information in their textbooks and additional scholarly sources. Finally, they decide on a method for documenting the results of their project to others (e.g., teachers, families).

## *Dispositions*

In a democratic society, just as much emphasis should be placed on dispositions (e.g., Katz & Chard, 2000) or learning orientations (Carr, 2001; Claxton & Carr, 2004), defined as a collection of attributes such as being "*ready, willing* and *able* to engage profitably with learning" (Claxton & Carr, 2004, p. 87, emphasis in original), as is placed on knowledge acquisition. The development of the whole person, not merely academic outcomes, is the focus for educators. According to Armstrong (2006), when education is focused "primarily in terms of supporting, encouraging, and facilitating a student's growth as a whole human being, including his or her cognitive, emotional, social, ethical, creative, and spiritual unfoldment" (p. 39), we are taking a human development perspective on education. Even though dispositions and learning orientations are decisively hard to measure, they are important to consider because they impact the type and degree of learning that occurs (Carr, 2001; Claxton & Carr, 2004; Glassman & Whaley, 2000). In addition, focusing on dispositions affords the opportunity for teacher educators to critically examine their own values; creating a list of desired attributes of pre-service and in-service teachers necessarily reflects cultural perspectives (Delpit, 1995).

## *Documentation*

Because of the impact that Reggio-inspired practices are having on the teaching-learning process, more and more instructors are coming to understand the power of documentation for early childhood and college classrooms.

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Documentation, as defined by Forman and Fyfe (1998), is "any activity that renders a performance record with sufficient detail to help others understand the behavior recorded" (p. 241). A performance record can be visual (e.g., work samples, photographs depicting performance) or written (e.g., webbing of children's knowledge, children's dictation, or teacher observation notes). The goal for teachers is not merely to gather such documentation but to use it to understand and explain the learning which took place and to plan for future learning events (Project Zero, 2003).

Documenting the work of adult learners is in its infancy but demonstrates much promise. I have investigated the impact of documenting learning on college students' understanding of developmentally appropriate practice and believe that it did make a difference in how students constructed their beliefs and understanding (Swim, 2007). This strategy can add immensely to our ability to facilitate learning, create a caring community, and support reflective practices for adult learners.

## CREATING COMMUNITY

Forming a caring community of learners is as important for adult learners as it is for children. Research suggests that participating in a caring community provides a powerful source of support, encouragement, and learning for pre-service teachers (see Goldstein, 2002, for a review of literature). However, this can be an educational challenge for instructors for a variety of reasons, three of which are discussed here. First, while they come together because they share a common interest (e.g., the desire to teach very young children), college students typically work collectively for shorter periods of time due to the length of a semester. Adult learners also bring with them expectations for how an instructor should teach. If they expect you to "transmit knowledge" while they passively wait for it, their expectations about your behavior will be violated. Third, if they anticipate that you will demonstrate caring through "gentle smiles and warm hugs" (Goldstein, 2002), they might be unable to interpret your focus on challenging their intellectual growth.

While all of these pose decisive challenges to creating a caring community, they should be viewed as barriers that can be overcome through explicit communication. We need to explain our shift toward student-centered practices and the subsequent emphasis on learning. Classroom management experts (e.g., Gathercoal, 2004) cannot emphasize enough the importance of setting clear expectations for the instructor and learners at the beginning of the course. You will need to clearly articulate what the constructivist approach means to you, how you approach learning, and how you plan to demonstrate caring for your pre-service and in-service teachers. Goldstein (2002) provides a framework for a new model of caring in teacher preparation programs based on her "moral and intellectual relation" theory of caring. I have found this theory very useful in articulating my focus on intellectual growth to students.

While introductory activities (e.g., ice breakers) are helpful in starting the process of creating community, I find that immediately engaging them in collaborative activities is more beneficial. Adult learners want to "get down" to the business of learning.

## REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

A major component of the "business of learning" is coming to understand that knowledge alone is insufficient. Educators, at all levels, are compelled to foster "habits of minds" necessary to engage learners, such as investigating, inquiring, challenging, critiquing, questioning, and evaluating. When teachers engage in such cognitive tasks, they can improve their practices. In other words, engaging in cycles of introspection and action, based on actual experiences or observations can assist pre-service and in-service teachers with gaining deeper understandings, refining skills, and modifying dispositions. Schon (1990, 1995) writes about "reflection on action" and "reflection in action." Reflection on action entails thinking critically about one's action after they have occurred and affected others. For example, after a lesson, a teacher educator might inquire about the effectiveness of the video for challenging students' perceptions of orphanages and for raising questions for discussion about the appropriate care of infants. Reflection in action involves thinking about one's action during the event and how it affects others. For example, during a lesson, a teacher educator may question how analyzing photographs of toddlers at work is helping the students link with their prior representations of their image of the child. Because the students are not spontaneously verbalizing this connection, teacher educators will ask a question to force thinking about this link. NAEYC (n.d.), in their video series on developmentally appropriate practice, refers to such reflective practices as "on-line decision making" because it transpires in-time as behaviors and reactions are occurring for individuals, children, and/or adults. In summary, the goal of reflection is for teachers to think critically about their plans, decisions, actions, and effects on others in order to improve them immediately and/or in the future.

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## FIELD EXPERIENCES

When teaching a course about child and curriculum development it is essential that pre-service and in-service teachers have opportunities to observe young children and to see good models of caring and educating. This can be accomplished through guided observations, interviews with professionals in education and in related fields, and collaborations with teachers as the college students interact with children to plan, implement, and evaluate lesson plans. No matter the experience, the goal is to facilitate students' use of theory for analyzing observations of others' behaviors and their own behaviors.

When designing field experiences between pre-service teachers and very young children, we are compelled to consider a number of factors. First, how will you protect the health and safety of the children? Many states have licensing regulations which govern the use of volunteers in child care settings. Become familiar with the ones for your state and, when necessary, exceed them. For example, in some states, volunteers do not have to complete a physical, TB test, or criminal history check. These are all designed to insure that those working with children are safe and in good health. Since I believe that program personnel and families expect teacher education programs to collaborate in protecting their children, I would require this type of documentation.

Next, how will you address attachment issues for the children? Infants and toddlers experience separation and stranger anxiety between 8 and 30 months, typically. Teacher educators must be willing to discuss these topics directly with directors or principals. It may not be in the children's best interests to have field placements for two or three hours a week. This is not enough time for the children to become comfortable with the new adult. In addition, having six or seven days between visits means that the pre-service teachers are continually being viewed as a stranger by the children. To accommodate the developmental needs of the children, field experiences might need to be condensed, for example, into a five-week period during which the college students attend three days for six to nine hours a week.

Third, how will you plan meaningful experiences to assist the pre-service and in-service teachers with bridging theory and practice? Becoming a scholar-practitioner, or one who "engage[s] in the interplay between theory and practice" (Horn, 2002, p. 83), is a challenging task. It requires that college students merge academic knowledge and real-world knowledge (Kasworm, 2003). It also requires plenty of cognitive energy. Memorizing facts in a rote manner is certainly easier than coming to understand the complexity of an issue, recognizing it in practice, and learning to use it to guide decision-making as a teacher. Yet, this is the work that must be accomplished in order for teachers to promote optimal development of infants and toddlers, and to build meaningful reciprocal relationships with families.

Last, how will you help pre-service teachers learn to think critically about their observations without criticizing? Many adult learners struggle with this distinction because they may not have been expected to think critically in past educational settings. It becomes the responsibility of the teacher educator, then, to clarify the differences. This can be accomplished in a number of ways. To be consistent with a focus on linking theory to practice, when I see a student in a criticizing mode, I direct them back to specific observations, theory, and research. For example, when a student reports "the teacher does not plan curriculum for her group of young infants," I ask each member of the group to record two teacher-child-materials interactions they have witnessed. Then, I inquire about the purpose of the materials, why they were in the environment, and how the teacher decided to use those particular materials. This guides the discussion toward teachers being decision-makers and designers of environments that facilitate learning and development. Other times, when a student is describing a classroom event in a criticizing manner, I direct her and the group to generate other interpretations of the behavior from various perspectives (e.g., the director's, the teacher's, the family members', or the child's). Doing this requires the pre- service teachers to consider additional information that might have initially been overlooked.

## TREND TOWARD ONLINE EDUCATIONAL

More and more institutions of higher education are responding to the needs of adult learners by providing online educational experiences. Students express interest in this type of learning because of competing commitments, such as working full-time or having family obligations, and constraints such as lack of geographical proximity to campus. While students may want innovative methods of delivery, they still tend to express an overwhelming preference for external, teacher regulation and individual forms of learning (Raidal & Volet, 2009). These preferences conflict with what instructors

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deliver in high-quality courses, especially when the type of learning experiences designed from a constructivist perspective.

Instructors who use *Infants and Toddlers: Curriculum & Teaching* and who understand adult learning and development desire to create „deep learning" experiences that help students gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be an effective teacher of infants and toddlers. Ke and Xie (2009) found that adult learners expressed the highest level of satisfaction toward learning when in an integrated course. These courses provided the most opportunities for online interactions and collaborative knowledge construction; they set "online discussions as the heart of class participation" (p. 144). When those online discussions utilized open-ended questions that required the students to draw upon their past experiences to create different explanations of a vignette or scenario, they reported being more engaged in deep learning (Ke & Xie, 2009). Online learning should involve many collaborative components to assist students in constructing knowledge. It is no surprise that students differ in how much they are willing to risk a lower grade on a group assessment because it offsets the perceived benefits of working as a member of a group (Raidal & Volet, 2009). According to Smith (2011), "trust represents one of the most critical issues facing online collaborative groups" (p. 19). Students must come to learn that they can learn as much from each other as they can learn from the instructor. Yet, they have many fears about how their behavior may appear to others. For example, a student with many commitments outside of class may fear that missing deadlines will cause others to view her as a "slacker." This fear may cause her to behave in ways that might not support positive group interactions, such as criticizing a group member before he has the chance to criticize her. This discussion of fears might remind you of discussions of attachment in the textbook, as it well should. The history of trusting that a pre-service or in-service teacher has in other aspects of her life can very well influence her ability to participate meaningfully in online collaborations.

As mentioned previously, students should be provided vignettes or scenarios to assist in facilitating rich online collaborations. In addition, problem-based instructions and simulations can be particularly engaging to students. Such experiences encourage pre-service and in-service teachers to join their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to address an issue. While simulations may be newer in the field of education, many professions (e.g., nursing and aviation) have utilized them for decades. In some situations working in the field might cause harm to the student or someone else until a particular skill is mastered or knowledge and decision making can be applied appropriately (Rutherford-Hemming, 2012). Thus, simulations can be powerful learning opportunities to use before a pre-service teacher enters a field experience for the first time.

## ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Following socio-constructivist principles, pre-service and in-service teachers must be assessed in an authentic manner. In other words, the knowledge and skills gained through learning experiences in the lecture and field should be the basis of measuring performance in the course. Thus, assessments should occur as part of the natural flow of the class. If a course objective is, for example, for students to select materials, create environments, and build curriculum for infants and toddlers that reflects knowledge of best practices and individual rights, interests, diversity, and capabilities while actively engaging the children" (Swim, 2010), then they must demonstrate the knowledge and skills for doing this in an authentic manner. For the students in my course, this means planning a learning experience based on previous observational data, recording observations while implementing the experience, and reflecting on the children's learning as well as their own at the completion of the experience.

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Analyzing case studies or vignettes in light of course readings permits an instructor to understand how pre-service or in-service teachers are constructing, utilizing, and applying knowledge. As mentioned above, I often have students complete inquiry projects on topics of interest as another way to bridge theory and practice, to grant choice, and to provide an authentic measure of understanding. Section 2 provides additional suggestions on tools for facilitating learning, all of which could be used to authentically assess the learning of pre-service and in-service teachers.

## CONCLUSION

Joining theory and practice is important for teachers, regardless of the age of their students. It is our job as teacher educators to assist pre-service and in-service teachers in understanding constructivist theories and how those theories impact teaching strategies and methods. Brooks & Brooks (2001) provide twelve practices for helping students search for their own understanding rather than follow other people's logic and for moving all of us toward becoming constructivist teachers. Those are:

1. Encourage and accept student autonomy and initiative.
2. Use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative, interactive, and physical materials to pursue new understandings.
3. Use cognitive terminology such as "classify," "analyze," "predict," "create," "critique," "evaluate," and "represent."
4. Allow student responses to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies, and alter content. In other words, build an emergent curriculum based on your observations of the learners (Wien, 2008).
5. Inquire about students' understandings of concepts before sharing your own ideas and understandings of those concepts.
6. Encourage students to engage in dialogue, both with you and with class colleagues.
7. Encourage student inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encourage students to ask questions of each other.
8. Seek to elaborate students' initial responses.
9. Engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial understandings and then encourage dialogue.
10. Allow wait time after posing questions.
11. Provide time for students to construct relationships and create metaphors and other representations of their understanding.
12. Nurture students' natural curiosity through frequent use of the three-step learning cycle model (i.e., Step 1: open- ended opportunities for interacting with purposefully selected materials with the intent of generating questions and hypotheses; Step 2: mini-lessons to introduce new vocabulary or content that assists with framing information discovered in Step 1; and Step 3: new problems for applying concepts and gaining a fresh look at the concepts previously studied; Brooks & Brooks, 2001).

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