

Book Reviews

Review Coordinators: Charles W. Beegle, Associate Professor of Education, University of Virginia, Charlottesville; James B. Boyer, Professor and Institute Director, Urban Education Institute, Kansas State University, Manhattan; Wilma S. Longstreet, Professor of Education, University of Michigan, Flint; and Edna Mitchell, Head, Department of Teacher Education, Mills College, Oakland, California.

Instructional Development Learning System. *Workbooks, cassettes, and slides.* Columbia, Maryland: Educational Systems for the Future, 1974. —Reviewed by Charlene Rothkopf, Media Coordinator, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Washington, D. C.

There often seems to be a wide gap between theory and practice. The *Instructional Development Learning System* by Educational Systems for the Future seems to widen this gap even more.

Educational Systems for the Future is a company established by Peter J. Esseff, based on his work in educational technology. Applicable for teachers, curriculum developers, and supervisory personnel, his systems approach to learning is capsulized in this workbook(s) and slide/tape format. *Instructional Development Learning System* consists of seven self-instructional workbooks including "Behavioral Task Analysis," "Criterion Test Items," "Learning Hierarchies and Modules," "Selecting Instructional Strategies," "Selecting Media and Materials," "Developing Instructional Materials," and "Validating Instructional Materials." These may be purchased individually. Also included in this package is an accompanying set of six cassette tapes and sets of slides. It is necessary to indicate whether audible or inaudible cues are desired. The workbooks and corresponding slide/tapes can be ordered by writing to Educational Systems for the Future, Wilde Lake Village Green, 10451 Twin Rivers Road, Suite 205, Columbia, Maryland 21044.

All of the workbooks are written in basic language and large print, apparently aimed at a diverse audience not only in educa-



tion, but in government and industry as well. Does this style, however, backfire? Could potential users of this product, after a cursory glance through the materials, be turned-off by the large print? Granted, the content of these workbooks is written clearly, and the user can be assured of mastering the content after one or two readings. Whether you accept all that is written, however, is another question.

It is difficult to argue with the belief that normal curves and normative testing are not meeting the needs of many students; but can one totally accept the trend toward criterion-referenced tests and behavioral task analyses? Dr. Esseff guarantees that 90 percent

of the learners achieve 90 percent of the objectives if his system is used properly. Yet can all behavior be observable, measurable, and criterion-referenced? Thus, we get back to the continual behaviorist/humanist debate. There are opportunities for student feedback in Esseff's system; he provides questionnaires in the validation segment. However, these questionnaires ask primarily for opinions about the technical qualities of the program, and avoid the issue of whether the student is enjoying what he is doing.

A serious defect in *Instructional Development Learning System* is the type of visuals used. Although the copyright date is 1974, the illustrations for the workbook and the slides seem straight out of a 1950's text. The figures are predominantly male, and all of the people are Caucasian. The mode of dress and hair style is also dated. This is not to say that the illustrations are not cleverly conceived, but that the artist's style needs to be updated.

A positive aspect of this kit is the inclusion of an envelope with several 3x5 cards enclosed which are designed for use with the unit on Learning Hierarchy Construction. These involve the user and provide an effective hands-on experience for learning.

The disparity between theory and practice, then, is apparent after the reading of the workbooks and the viewing of the slides are

completed. Dr. Esseff gives a convincing argument for his system, but is it necessary for one to design and produce a total instructional program by following Dr. Esseff's system to the letter? How can one be sure that the criterion-referenced test that is designed is a good one? Are the validation techniques realistic for a classroom teacher, who then must compile the results and then revise, correct, or change completely the instructional package?

The most effective use of this system seems to be in obtaining the services of Educational Systems for the Future on a consulting basis. ESF conducts workshops and creates instructional programs for various government- and industry-related fields. However, for those groups that need help in developing individualized instructional programs, simply ordering *Instructional Development Learning System* does not seem to be the answer.

Strategies in Humanistic Education. *Tim Timmerman and Jim Ballard.* Amherst, Massachusetts: Mandala, 1975. 145 pp.—Reviewed by Jo Mancuso, Chairman for Health and Physical Education, Lyons Township High School, La Grange, Illinois.

Timmerman and Ballard have produced a good, quick reference book on the application of

humanistic processes to learning for the teacher who already possesses a working knowledge of the basic concepts of humanistic education, values education, and teaching strategies.

In addition to presenting a "how to" section, the authors give illustrative examples of activities that encourage creativity and versatility in and of themselves. This action-oriented book is grounded on theoretical constructs and reflects creativity on the part of the authors. Evidenced also in the activity section is the authors' ability to stimulate thought relative to approaches to learning and teaching.

The text is easily read, well organized, and structured with experiential-oriented ideas for ready use. Written in simple language, the book is neither theoretical nor conceptually presented. The book appears to be a mixture of content to be assimilated (content that is called activities but in reality concerns values) and processes of assimilating strategies for teaching-learning. Some confusion results in the "how to" section in which teaching/learning processes, such as role playing and discussing, are mixed with what appears to be content to be taught/learned.

The authors do not differentiate between humanistic approaches to education and humanistic education. Both are treated as process and/or activity constructs rather than content. One would not have to read very far to recognize that neither the title

of the book nor the introductory remarks truly represent what is contained within. The content of the book more appropriately reflects application of humanistic strategies in education rather than the strategies themselves.

Both the book and the excellent current bibliography it provides constitute a viable resource tool for the teacher of values education/values clarification, humanistic psychology, and teaching methodology, as well as for the clinical supervisor of preservice teachers.

Reviewers



Charlene Rothkopf



Jo Mancuso

Future ASCD Annual Conferences

1978	March 4-8	San Francisco	Civic Center
1979	March 3-7	Detroit	Cobo Hall
1980	March 29-April 2	Atlanta	Georgia World Congress Center
1981	March 7-11	St. Louis	Congress Center

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