An Investigation of Five Methods of Inter-Class Grouping in the Elementary School

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AN INVESTIGATION OF FIVE METHODS OF INTER-CLASS GROUPING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Jack D. Henderson
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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

I. INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of knowledge throughout civilization has been one of the main goals of man. With progression of time and man's gain of knowledge, educational procedures and methods have developed to better provide for the pursuit of this knowledge. Throughout time there has been no absolute answer for the procedures of gaining knowledge. Since there is no absolute answer for the procedures of gaining knowledge and inasmuch as man is expected to be better educated today than ever before, the procedures are constantly changing. With more and more children attending school today these changes must be carefully thought out and instituted with the underlying thought of what will be best for the child as well as for civilization.

II. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this paper will be to research five (5) methods of elementary school inter-class grouping, which can make available a climate for learning.
These five methods are:

1. Graded Elementary School
2. Dual-Progress Plan
3. Departmentalization
4. Non-graded Organization
5. Team Teaching

The research will evaluate each of the five preceding methods as they are affected by:

1. Teacher planning time
2. Class size
3. In-service training
4. Intra-class grouping
5. Background of pupils
6. Pupil progress
7. Class time - scheduling
8. Size and facilities of the elementary school
9. Reporting to parents
10. Curriculum development

**Importance of the Study**

The research that will be completed in this paper will be of use to those people who are planning a career in teaching and also to those who have already been teaching for some time. It will give a clearer picture of five methods of inter-class grouping. These five, by no
means, are the only ways to group children within a school but they are the five most widely used today.

Although an individual teacher may not be able to choose a particular method under which to teach, he should be familiar with a variety of grouping procedures. This would enable him to be of considerable help to the administration whenever there might arise a need for a change in grouping practices within the school district.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Departmentalization**

Those schools which are strictly subject matter centered are defined as using the process of departmentalization. The children would move from room to room for each subject.

**Dual-Progress**

This denotes schools where the instructional program has been divided into cultural imperatives (language arts, social studies, some aspects of science, health and physical education) and cultural electives (some areas of mathematics, science, music, art and foreign language).

**Graded Schools**

Graded schools are elementary schools that have been divided into distinct grade levels as from kindergarten.
through grade six.

**Heterogeneous Grouping**

Heterogeneous grouping are groups that have many unlike qualities or a group possessed of different characteristics.

**Homogeneous Grouping**

Homogeneous grouping are groups that have many similarities or elements of a like nature.

**Inter-class Grouping**

Inter-class grouping denotes grouping of students within a school.

**Intra-class Grouping**

This denotes the grouping of students within an individual classroom.

**Knowledge**

Knowledge is defined as a state of understanding or clear perception of truth.

**Non-graded**

Non-graded denotes elementary schools that have done away with grades as such and have resorted to levels or subject matter proficiency for placement of pupils (21:86).
Team Teaching

Two or more teachers are given the responsibility, working together, for a significant part of the instruction of the same group of students (26:54-55).

IV. ORGANIZATION OF PAPER

The second chapter of this paper will review the literature pertaining to the five methods of grouping as to organization and to the merits of each. The third chapter will deal with the review of literature using the criteria as set forth in the statement of the problem. The final section will present the summaries and conclusions formed during this research.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: ORGANIZATION AND THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF FIVE METHODS OF INTER-CLASS GROUPING

Education today is one of the largest industries in the United States. When we consider there are over 125,000 schools, attended by more than 50,000,000 young people, being taught by more than 2,000,000 teachers, using combined monies of $35 billions, it indeed reaches the proportions of a major industry (18:55-56).

Educational research has not been able to keep up with the times since we have had such rapid advancement in some fields. There must be an orderly means of shedding outworn educational practices, out-moded educational structures and creating new and better relationships for experimentation and innovation. These things cannot be accomplished by a crash program but only through a well thought out process of experimentation and there is really no place this can be carried on except within the schools themselves (18:55-56).

This chapter then will explore five of the most common methods of inter-class grouping, from the more traditional graded system of the elementary school to
one of the newer methods such as team teaching.

Groups and grouping have always been a factor of importance to the human race. Whether it was conscious effort at grouping is not the important thing but just the thought of seeing one human being in the same light as another; such as to say all people with a certain color hair will have the same characteristics would form a group. We unconsciously group people using many different criteria such as sex, height, weight, amount of money earned, eye color, hair color and other ways too numerous to mention. One person could be classed in more than one of these groups. It would only follow, then, that eventually methods of grouping would extend into the field of education.

It would appear only natural for the early schools of colonial times to copy the patterns of education developed in the English schools of that time. There appears to be very little system of grouping as we now think of it. These early schools were very heterogenous in make up. The main criteria for any grouping, at that time, would have been based on sex, in that very few girls were given any type of formal education. The basic purpose of these early schools, usually referred to as common schools, were to teach the children to read,
write, and cipher (24:31-38). These common schools began with the rudiments but had no definite end-points.

Some of the students advanced from or transferred from the common school to the Latin school or academy after the mastery of the rudiments. Many of the students dropped out of gaining a more formal education after the rudiments of the common school had been achieved. The reasons behind these drop outs are many fold but the two most important would have been the thinking of the people of that time and the costs involved.

Many felt that to be able to read, write, and cipher was enough to take over the small family business or to farm. Those who went on to a higher degree of education usually came from families of professional people. The second reason for drop outs would have been the cost of sending the children to school. This would not only refer to money paid for the education itself but for the need then to hire someone to help in the store or on the farm.

As the population increased and expanded westward across the United States, other organizations of schools started taking shape. Because of this population spread the district school came into being. This type of school was run on an individual basis. Generally the work consisted of individual study of such books as the
students had in their possession and the tasks set up by the teacher in writing and ciphering. This form of organization was usually in a rural setting, mainly because of the population spread, and represented the extreme in heterogeneous grouping (24:31-38).

By the early 19th Century, with the advance of industry and technology, there arose what is known as the monitorial system. The need of this type of school was felt by many well-to-do citizens of many of the larger cities for those children who they felt were neglected.

There were two main advantages of the monitorial system as seen by its sponsors. First, it did introduce a certain measure of order and system into the common school and set up a careful gradation of school experiences. Second, it was based on the use of children as teachers. One teacher was responsible for many children. By using brighter children as monitors it was felt that larger numbers of students could be given an education at a much lower cost.

Other forms of organization had been tried and discarded but by 1860 the commonly called graded school was the major method of grouping children. Departmentalization was reintroduced in the early 1900's.(20:25).
Later the Dual-Progress Plan, non-graded and team teaching methods were introduced as new methods of grouping children. It is difficult to put starting dates on these methods because some may have been in operation under different names and some of them may have once been popular and faded from the scene only to be reintroduced years later.

The need for grouping is very evident in that: (1) there are more pupils than teachers; (2) the objectives of education will be better served; and (3) groups would be more practical to suit the nature and interest of the children (20:166).

For clarification it is necessary to limit the exploration of grouping to the five most common methods of use in modern elementary school programs.

I. THE GRADED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The graded plan of elementary schools was started in 1848 in the Quincy Grammar School, Boston, Massachusetts. The plan was originally conceived to eliminate much of the chaos in schools up to that time because of a lack of any general type of organization (21:84). Up to this time very little had been done to classify pupils and group them for instructional purposes. Pupils of various ages and abilities had been placed in a single room under the direction of one teacher.
The graded method urged the elimination of one teacher with as many as six grades within one room. Its ideal would have been to have one teacher to a class and this class would represent one grade level.

With the graded method in operation there was a designation of minimum essentials or standards for each grade. The proponents of the graded system believed that specific subject matter and skills could be predetermined and graded in a sequential fashion. This had, in effect, created a sort of lock-step organization. Everything to be taught had to be in its proper place and grade level. It left very little to the imagination or individuality of the teacher.

By 1860 this method was very well accepted and by 1870 the organization was complete to graded classes, graded content, graded textbooks and even graded teachers that meshed together in a school mechanism that has undergone very little redesigning to the present (15:222).

As any new method or plan this one had its advantages and disadvantages. They may be stated briefly:

Advantages

1. An expanded curriculum could be provided for the greatly increased numbers of children.

2. Held professional promise in increased opportunities for specialization in training and self-improvement of teachers.
3. Represented necessary foundation for improvements in the quality of the child's school activities and experiences.

Disadvantages

1. Graded school, with expanded subject matter, retained old weakness of mechanical memorization.

2. Course of study, graded textbooks, annual stints to be mastered, passing grades, final examinations were intensified.

3. Difficulty securing grouping of pupils on a basis of annual promotion that would suit both ends and the middle range of pupil ability (24:31-38).

Nonpromotion of students had been greatly used to force an adherence to the grade requirements. As the rate of nonpromotion increased it had a tendency to raise the cost of education. More importantly however, large numbers of over age children were necessarily mixed with the younger children and this created problems in curriculum and instruction. This problem is still with us but has been partly alleviated through the concept of social promotion rather than a strict adherence to the grade requirements.

II. DUAL-PROGRESS PLAN

A plan that has developed from, and in fact uses as a base, the graded system of schools is the Dual-Progress Plan.
The instructional program of this type of school would be divided into two parts, that of the cultural imperatives and that of the cultural electives. The cultural imperatives would consist of those skills and knowledge essential to everyone for life. They would include language arts, social studies, some aspects of science, health, and physical education. These subject areas would basically be in a graded plan with sections in each grade based on ability. Pupils would move through this plan a year at a time (21:87).

The cultural electives part of the program would be an ungraded situation which would allow the child to move in these areas at his own rate. He would be expected to be interested and master all areas as he progressed. The subjects included would be certain areas of mathematics, science, music, art, and foreign language. Under this program, mastery of these subjects would not be considered vital to the growth of the child (21:88).

During the first two grades of the elementary school, the child would be given the basic tools for further instruction in that they would learn to read, write, and understand some numbers. They would also, ideally, be transformed into sufficiently social beings so teachers can deal with them in groups and to show them that being
together is an advantage rather than a forced condition or distraction (16:35).

From the third grade on, the homeroom teacher would be responsible for registration and counseling. He would also teach reading and social studies. The other half of the day the pupils would be assigned to special teachers for the remaining subject areas in the cultural imperative group, as well as those subjects in the cultural elective group. These special teachers could work on a longitudinal basis with more than one grade level, through the elementary grades and thus be able to judge special aptitudes and the child's growth throughout those grades (28:351).

Advantages

1. Plan designed to end concept of average pupils doing average work.
2. Gives pupil special help in subject areas.
3. Encourages child to work up to ability in special fields.

Disadvantages

1. Excessive departmentalization and specialization at too early an age.
2. Difficult to place child in proper stream of progress.
3. Causes confusion and frustration for young children to be with so many different teachers.
The grade placement of each child would be based upon work in the cultural imperatives and would be determined by the homeroom teacher but this would still allow the child to be free to pursue any specialty according to his aptitude (28:352).

III. DEPARTMENTALIZATION

Departmentalization is designed for schools which are oriented strictly to subject matter. They originally had their beginnings in the reading and writing schools of early New England. These schools each had its own master or head teacher, rooms, set of studies and a corp of assistants (20:25). Both of these schools may have shared the same building and the same pupils but they pursued their own programs, seldom taking into consideration the program of the other. The pupils usually attended both of these schools, a half day at a time (21:76).

By the 1850's, this system was slowly disappearing but in the early 1900's it made a reappearance. It appears to have very limited support at the elementary level today, particularly those schools organized as six year schools. Its main strength lies in the range of junior and senior high.
Even though departmentalization is not strongly supported by the elementary school, the advocates of this system still voice a great many advantages:

**Advantages**

1. Since only one subject is being taught in the room, all the necessary equipment is available.

2. One subject does not get slighted while another has too much time.

3. Since a teacher might teach the same subject to the same pupils for years in a sequential development, he could lay out the entire program as a complete whole.

4. Responsibility of teaching certain subject fixed to that particular teacher.

5. As soon as required proficiency is reached, the child can be promoted (19:468-485).

6. Teachers become specialists since there is a reduction in the number of subjects he has to teach.

7. Moving from class to class breaks up the usual schoolroom monotony and affords outlet for physical energy.

8. Decrease in the number of failures.

9. Makes possible introduction of vocational work without disrupting program or time of regular teachers (5:151-162).

People who oppose this program in the elementary school list the following disadvantages or criticisms:

**Disadvantages**

1. Too much work is liable to be demanded of pupils, when teachers each think his subject is most important.
2. Discipline is more difficult.
3. Teachers become narrow in their thinking.
4. School organization made more difficult.
5. Personal influence of teacher is lessened.
6. No time for study, all recitation (19:468-485).
7. Not an effective method for weak or lazy pupils.
8. Hard to coordinate work properly, supervision by principal more difficult (4:1-2).
9. General confusion in life of pupils through contact with different teachers.
10. Individual attention toward students is lacking (23:214-216).

The arguments of both the advocates and opposing forces of this program could easily be changed to fit the other by a deletion or addition of a few words. However, it has generally been agreed that this program is best suited for the junior and senior high age person and is fast disappearing from the elementary schools of the United States.
IV. NON-GRADED SCHOOLS

The non-graded elementary school idea started as an organizational change as early as the 1920's but its major development did not take place until the 1940's (13:9-12).

The basic philosophy behind this plan is one that values each child as a person in his own right (13:9-12). It also emphasizes the concept of the continuous progress of each individual at his own rate.

When we think back to the graded school, we see it as a flight of stairs, each step being another grade. A certain amount of graded work has to be accomplished before each child can go on to the next step. These steps proved to be too difficult for many pupils. These pupils were forced to stay where they were and repeat the work for that step.

The non-graded school can be looked at in the same light except in this situation the stairs have changed to an inclined plane on which each child ascends at his own rate (21:84-87). This does not mean that there is no set program and the child does random work, it only shows that the steps of the stairs have been smoothed out or the height of each step has been lowered for
easier access by the child. This lowering of the steps does not mean that the standards of achievement are lowered but they are put into a form that each child can achieve on an individual basis rather than on a group basis.

The conventional grades, as we now know them, would be replaced by a series of levels; determined generally by reading attainment (11:171). This could also be thought of as placing the conventional grades into units, such as work usually done in grades one through three in one unit and the work done in grades four through six in another unit (10:295). Each of these units then would be given a number of progress levels. Eight to ten levels per unit is most widely used.

The children would advance by "work levels" composed of tasks suited to individual readiness instead of by "grade levels." This would allow a variation in the amount of time used for moving through a unit. In this way it may take a child four years to complete the unit set up for the primary grades. Through this type of organization, the grades as such would be done away with and the word primary or intermediate would be substituted along with the name of the teacher for a particular room.

Throughout the program the emphasis is for creating the best possible placement for the individual child. To
serve this purpose pupils may be reclassified any time and even moved to another teacher, if advisable, during the year. This step is not taken lightly. Even though reading progress is a dominant factor of such a move, the principal and teachers involved should have a conference to analyze the emotional, social, and general academic effects of the proposed transfer (12:73).

A deeper concern for the long development of basic concepts, skills and values must replace the concern for mastering specific graded chunks of subject matter (10:295). This proves the greatest deterrent of the non-graded plan for it is generally built on the same curriculum as the graded school (21:84-87).

A constant appraisal of the children's progress at frequent intervals is essential to proper placement of that child in the continuous-progress system. This would indicate a much greater emphasis and use of standardized tests (10:295). In this regard, careful evaluation of these tests as an instrument must be given.

As in all new plans of organization there will be advantages and disadvantages or criticisms put forth by the opposing forces. The advantages are listed as follows:
Advantages

1. Tensions in children are reduced as the stresses of competition are lessened.

2. Student starts each year or term where he left off at the end of the preceding term (31:144-145).

3. Increased teacher awareness of pupil individuality.

4. Increased parental understanding of the school, its organization, its purposes and its problems.

5. More teamwork on the part of faculty members (10:296).

6. Happier and more interested children because fear of annual or semi-annual nonpromotion is eliminated (12:71).


Those who oppose this type of organization give the following reasons:

Disadvantages

1. Grade standards are lowered or done away with.

2. Child allowed to plan too much of his own program.

3. Teachers not able to cope with all these groups.

4. Parents not informed.

5. Subject matter is not given enough emphasis.

6. Grades as levels should be retained.

7. Promotion is automatic for all.

It should be stated here that to start a new program of a non-graded character is far from an easy matter. You
cannot just change the name and expect the program to be put into effect. Those who are involved and affected by the new curriculum structure must be educated to its acceptance. The teaching staff is the key to the success in any venture of this kind. They must be sold and enthusiastic about the new idea before they can sell the parents or the public as a whole. There must also be solid and unanimous support at the administrative level (12:174-176).

The beginnings of such a plan should be gradual and carefully planned. It should be implemented one unit at a time, beginning with kindergarten or first grade and extending into higher levels as the children involved advance upward. As Goodlad stated:

All members of a school community (primary teachers, intermediate and upper grade teachers, parents, etc.) must understand and believe the philosophy of a continuous learning program for every child... Speed in establishment of the program is secondary to building a common philosophy and understanding (12:71).
V. TEAM TEACHING

Team teaching is a very misunderstood term. It could begin with the definition of Dean (3:5), "A way of organizing the instructional program," to Arnold, who stated:

Team teaching is any form of cooperative enterprise among people in a school which brings to the classroom resources in communication, of stimulation, of planning, or of knowledge beyond the scope of the individual teacher on his own (1:407-409).

It appears that Shaplin would give the most penetrating definition of team teaching when he says:

Team teaching is an effort to improve instruction by the reorganization of personnel in teaching. Two or more teachers are given responsibility, working together, for all, or a significant part of the instruction of the same group of children (26:54).

The label team teaching has been given to many programs that do not fit Shaplin's definition. Some of these programs may fit part of the definition such as to the first sentence; "Team teaching is an effort to improve instruction by the reorganization of personnel in teaching."

When we look back, we find that any reorganization of personnel would basically be an effort to improve instruction whether this happened in a graded situation or in a departmental situation. To properly fit the term "team teaching" to a program, we must become more specific as
Shaplin's definition indicates. Yet team teaching should not be too rigidly defined because it is continually changing with further research and implementation of the program.

The teaching team would consist of one to seven or more teachers jointly responsible for the instruction of fifty to two-hundred twenty-five or more pupils in one or more grade or age levels. Where the team is composed of many teachers there may be developed within the team a hierarchy such as team leader, senior teacher, teachers, and aides (2:Ch.2). These different positions would be held responsible for different areas within the team depending upon ability and experience. This type of hierarchy would permit supervision of junior members of the team by senior or leadership personnel. It would allow for a genuine in-service education for the less experienced.

In many cases of the hierarchy of authority there would be definite monetary advantages. Those of the team designated as teachers would probably be on the district wide salary scale. The senior teachers would be on the same base scale but would be given more money than those designated as teachers because of their increased responsibility. The team leader would get a higher compensation above that scale because of his increased
responsibility over and above that of the senior teacher. The aides that would assist the team could be composed of non-professional people in education and would do those chores needed to help the team function, such as typing, dittoing materials, filing and keeping of records. They would most likely be on an hourly wage scale.

Each member of the team may specialize in a different curriculum area. He would then help all other members of the team plan, teach, and evaluate in the area of his specialty. This would tend to emphasize the effective utilization of the strengths of each member of the team and would further emphasize the team, rather than the individual teacher.

As in the non-graded school, the school with team teaching promotes non-gradedness within the school and the theory of continuous pupil progress is an underlying factor of most team teaching programs (2:Ch.2).

With the teaching team functioning properly, there would be a greater flexibility in scheduling for pupils and for teachers. This flexibility would also emphasize varying class sizes for varying periods of time depending upon the instructional objectives, context, techniques, and pupil needs. Much of this flexibility would necessarily depend on the type of building used for this program. If the same
building is used for team teaching that was used for the traditional graded program it would have a tendency to restrict varying class sizes and the ease of flexible scheduling. The advantages for such a program are as follows:

**Advantages**

1. Provides for flexibility and efficiency in use of time, space, materials and teaching talents.

2. Provides opportunities for frequent contact and interchange between teachers.

3. Superior teachers can be a greater influence because they contact greater numbers of pupils.

4. Flexible scheduling allows more time for teacher planning.

5. Attracts greater number of superior teachers as it provides opportunity of advancement within the teaching ranks.

6. With a master teacher or teachers within a team, it would provide a natural training ground for young teachers.

7. Absence of one member of the team does not disrupt the class.

The disadvantages may be set forth as follows:

Disadvantages

1. Built upon questionable notion that the teacher is primarily a pronouncer and interpreter of information.

2. Teams have difficulty finding adequate time for planning and evaluating. Requires more time for both of these functions than does conventional planning.

3. Communications between and within teams may be difficult and strained.

4. Adequate personnel may be difficult to locate and train.

5. Teacher has contact with too many pupils to know them well.

6. Identification with many teachers is difficult for the child, particularly the younger child.

7. Require drastic modification of normal school schedule and would prove confusing to the children.

8. Few buildings can be readily modified to house team teaching (21:78-82).

As team teaching is a comparatively new method in the grouping of children it has not as yet demonstrated any measured superiority over any other type of organization (21:82). The success of team teaching depends greatly upon the following three criteria:

1. The ability of the team leader.

2. Harmony and cooperation within the team.

3. The support given by the school administration and the parents (14:58).
It is critical in the early stages of team teaching programs to demonstrate clearly and honestly that pupils do at least as well as they would in a conventional program (2:Ch.10).

Thus we have explored the five most common methods of inter-class grouping. Even after looking at the basic structure of these groups and some of the advantages and disadvantages put forth by the proponents and opponents of each program, we would not be able to say that any one method will be the absolute answer of successful grouping within a school.

We must then explore each of these five groups in more depth. This will be carried on in Chapter III.
CHAPTER III

CLOSER EXAMINATION OF FIVE METHODS OF INTER-CLASS GROUPING

It would be naive of us to say that we are going to change our school to fit a new method of inter-class grouping and that it would miraculously happen. Many criteria would affect the instigation of any new grouping method. The ten following criteria were selected because they appear to be among the most commonly used to evaluate grouping of children and our school systems by either professional teachers or lay people.

These ten criteria will be applied to each of the five methods of inter-class grouping explored in Chapter II:

1. Teacher planning time
2. Class size
3. In-service training
4. Intra-class grouping
5. Background of pupils
6. Pupil progress
7. Class time - scheduling
8. Size and facilities of the school
9. Reporting to parents
10. Curriculum development
I. THE GRADED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Teacher Planning Time

Since the teacher is required to teach all subjects to the same group of children in the same room for the full school day, he, the teacher, would have very little if any time to do advance planning. The only period any planning could be accomplished would be those periods when a specialist might come into the room to teach a subject such as music, art or physical education. Even during these periods there might be little opportunity for planning because of the necessity of the classroom teacher staying in the room while the specialist teaches.

Most planning for teachers in this situation would have to come during after school periods, evenings, or weekends. Very few teachers in the graded elementary school are allowed free planning time away from the responsibility of their class.

Class Size

Class sizes for the graded elementary school have varied over the years. In some cases there have been as many as forty-five or more children in a class. In more recent times this has been lowered to thirty pupils and
recent trends place the load, in some rooms, as low as twenty.

Much of the overloading of pupils within a class was caused by the scarcity of teachers and by sudden population growth in certain areas of the United States. This overloading of pupils also came during a time when very little was being done with the idea of individual differences and was further based upon the idea that all children could learn the same material, in the same way, at the same time and at the same rate.

Although classes of forty-five would be difficult to handle in a graded classroom there have been studies made that show, "class size was not, in itself, a significant factor in achievement" (15:427).

In-service Training

This type of training would be invaluable for the new teacher and to bring new ideas to those who have taught for many years. In the graded system the in-service training is usually limited to weekly staff meetings and a short workshop preceding the opening of school each year. These could hardly be classed as in-service training because they would not go into the depth required to stimulate thinking about new methods or content.
Since the graded system would depend on graded materials and "graded" teachers, in many cases, many of these people feel that in-service training is an indication that they are not doing an adequate job. For many in the graded system feel that to look at a new graded textbook would indicate a form of in-service training but to be effective the in-service idea must have a goal and the proper depth of the subject to bring about a change or better understanding.

**Intra-class Grouping**

Up until recently very little had been done in the way of grouping children within a given classroom for subject matter. Each child was expected to do the same work, at the same rate of speed and at the same time. Very little thought was given to individual differences.

Now, however, with the ideas of a self-contained classroom and individual differences many teachers will group their children according to ability. Mainly this is done in the field of reading while the other subjects are still taught on a full class basis.
Background of Pupils

The background of the pupils in a graded system could cause the individual much difficulty. If that child was foreign born and tried to adapt to the requirements of the graded room, he would be faced with many impossible hurdles to overcome.

Inasmuch as this system is based upon things learned at a previous grade level, the foreign born child would suffer because he did not have the proper background of material, yet he was being placed with his own age group.

The economic background of the children of this system would come to bear mainly through a lack of materials furnished by the home and the possible lack of interest and understanding of the school system as a whole by many of these parents.

Pupil Progress

The progress of pupils in the graded system would be determined by covering a predetermined amount of subject matter over a set time or grade level.

If this particular subject matter was not covered, in the opinion of the teacher, then the child was faced with the threat of not being promoted to the next grade (17:84-87).
It has been shown by research that nonpromotion does not result in improved educational accomplishments, in fact there is a tendency for the nonpromoted to regress. The nonpromoted is less accepted by his peers, he is more often reported for disciplinary action and he is less likely to continue his schooling (6:80).

It has also been shown that the cost of schools has risen with excessive cases of nonpromotion.

**Class Time - Scheduling**

In the graded elementary school the time the class devotes to any particular subject would depend very much upon the requirements that must be met to advance to the next grade.

The administration might indicate to teachers of the same grade level that they will all be teaching the same thing at the same time, otherwise the scheduling would be left up to the individual teacher unless specialists in music, art, or physical education were being utilized. If this were the case the scheduling of these classes would have to be worked out between the teacher and the specialist.
Size and Facilities of the Elementary School

Until the end of World War II the basic plan of the school was a series of equal-size classrooms, lining each side of a long narrow corridor (27:Ch.7). The actual size of the building would be determined by the size of the town or district that building needed to serve.

The special facilities needed for such a building in the graded system were very few. Basically the only thing special that might have been needed was an indoor play area and the possible addition of a room or rooms to house the specialists that might be used within the school.

Reporting to Parents

Traditionally the reports to parents of children in the graded school would have been done by the use of a report card. These cards were either marked with a letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) or a number grade (100, 90, 80, 70, etc.). They were a very impersonal type of reporting and caused much confusion because of the misinterpretation of the marks.

Many of the graded schools of today now have parent-teacher conferences as well as report cards. This gives the teacher and the parent a chance to not only know each other, but to better discuss the progress of each child with fewer misunderstandings.
Curriculum Development

The curriculum development within the graded school is done mostly on a committee basis without proper time to prepare or research the materials to be used or discussed. Consequently, most of the materials developed are inferior in quality. This committee usually does not have the authority to implement these curriculum changes even if they are good (27:Ch.3).

II. DUAL-PROGRESS PLAN

Teacher Planning Time

The homeroom teacher who is responsible for the teaching of the cultural imperatives (language arts, social studies, some science, health and physical education) would have very little free planning time within the school day. She would be responsible for two classes of children, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, thus keeping her school day filled to capacity. It would also be her duty to act as a counselor to these children when needed (6:103).

The teachers responsible for the cultural electives (mathematics, science, music, art, and foreign language) would have time during the day for planning in most cases because they would be specializing in a particular subject area.
Class Size

Class size within a dual progress school would compare favorably to that of the graded elementary school inasmuch as part of the dual progress program is based upon the graded system (30:4).

In-service Training

There would be a great need for a good in-service training program so that teachers may keep abreast of new developments and the need for all teachers to realize what the others are doing in their particular field. The danger of experts in cultural electives isolating themselves could be averted to a great extent by a constructive in-service program (16:35).

Intra-class Grouping

Grouping within the class of the cultural imperatives would be as important as in the graded school to take advantage of individual differences. In these areas all the children are confronted with standards that must be met (28:351).

In the specialized subjects or cultural electives, little grouping would be used as the main concentration would be upon the performance of the above-average and gifted children (28:352).
Background of Pupils

The background of the pupils would have more of a meaning in the cultural electives because these are subjects that the pupils have shown a greater interest and they may proceed at their own rate in a much more ungraded system (21:88).

Again, as in the graded system, we may have problems with the foreign born and the low economic group in both the cultural imperatives and cultural electives.

Pupil Progress

Inasmuch as the dual progress plan is based upon a graded program (cultural imperatives) and an ungraded program (cultural electives) each child must have frequent reappraisal of his progress and abilities (16:35).

Class Time and Scheduling

A very exact scheduling system has to be worked out so that the morning cultural imperatives classes can step into the rooms for the cultural electives classes in the afternoon and vica versa with very little confusion. Since the electives would be on such a timed schedule the time devoted to the imperatives would also be governed to a certain extent by the clock.
Size of the Elementary School and Facilities

The size of the school might determine how extensively the dual progress plan will be put into effect. Each child should have not less than three different classrooms for his use and in larger schools he may have as many as six rooms. This would be in addition to the gymnasium which would be advisable in either case. Another room may be needed if the school believes in starting a foreign language program in the fourth and fifth grades (30:8).

The special facilities needed for science, music and art would thus be available in these special rooms and would not have to be taken from room to room.

Reporting to Parents

Grade standings of the pupils in this program would be determined by the home room teacher or those teachers who teach the cultural imperatives (28:352). These grade standings would be passed along to the parents in the form of grade cards and usually with at least one parent-teacher conference.

Further study had indicated that the grade card system has not been functioning properly and that too many misunderstandings were developing (29:100). A new system is being devised in which the report to the parents would list observed strengths and weaknesses of the student as
well as his interest in health and physical education. In the last two areas the teacher would suggest nutritional or medical attention, where indicated (29:101).

The teacher's records along with the counselor's records will form a basis for a series of parent conferences, either individually or in groups thus doing away with the graded report card (29:99-101).

Curriculum Development

The development of curriculum in the cultural imperatives would follow closely the development in the traditional graded school. Here again revision of the curriculum or new developments would probably be slow in coming about because of the committee approach unless a group of curriculum specialists were called together to form the new curriculum.

The cultural electives would be in for more rapid change particularly in the area of science because of rapid developments of new ideas and concepts.

III. DEPARTMENTALIZATION

Teacher Planning Time

Because of the nature of departmentalization, where the teacher would move from room to room or the children would move from room to room, there could easily be a time
during the school day scheduled for future planning by the teacher (20:25).

**Class Size**

The class size of this type of school could be of varying sizes, depending upon the subject being taught. The teacher in each department would have a long term contact with most of the pupils, as much as 2½ years in certain departments (5:151-162). He would also come into contact with most of the pupils in the school during the course of teaching his specialty (19:477).

**In-service Training**

In-service training in this system would be devoted mainly to meetings involving only those people working in a particular department. These periodic meetings would be vital to the continuing progress and improvement of instruction in a departmental situation. This would afford some time for general discussions of the subject area and also concentrated discussions of changes or new aspects of the subject.

**Intra-class Grouping**

Very little attempt is made to group the children within the individual rooms under this system.
Background of Pupils

Inasmuch as departmentalization is subject matter centered the system would take little account of the background of the pupils. This would be particularly good for those students whose parents are interested or working in a specialized field. When parents show an interest in certain areas, this would tend to give added interest value for the child.

Pupil Progress

There would be a distinct necessity of covering a set amount of material during the school year within any one subject area. With the need to cover a set amount of material and the child required to become proficient in that material, non-promotion would be used extensively.

Since departmentalization is subject matter centered the teachers are interested in the child's advancement as soon as the required proficiency is reached (19:476).

Class Time - Scheduling

With departmentalization in effect, each subject would have the proper distribution of time for that subject. No subject would be slighted through the course of a school day (19:473).
This system would require a schedule to be implemented that depended upon set periods and with great concern to the clock. Little if any variation in class periods could be allowed under this program.

Size of the Elementary School and Facilities

The teacher responsible for each subject or department would have all of the equipment needed to carry on his program right in his room. These things would always be at hand and he would not have to collect them together at the beginning of a period from other sources. The materials thus gathered or purchased for one room would serve the whole school instead of having much of the materials duplicated for many rooms of the same level (19:472-473).

The size of the school itself would depend upon the areas to be served but would not have an undue influence upon the departmental program. There would be very little variation in the size of the rooms in such a system.

Reporting to Parents

The usual method of reporting to parents in departmentalization is via the use of the report card. A letter grade (A,B,C,D,F) would indicate the child's placement.
Curriculum Development

Curriculum of the departmental organization would follow a subject matter centered program. There would be graded materials for each subject at the proper grade level. To improve or change the curriculum would be the responsibility of curriculum specialists or a committee of the teachers involved, usually departmentally. This development could come about by grade level committees but would probably not be as effective.

IV. NON-GRADED SCHOOL

Teacher Planning Time

Very little teacher planning time during the school day could be allowed because of the emphasis of this system on individual differences and continuous pupil progress.

There would also be some problems in meeting with other teachers of a particular unit (primary or intermediate) to plan the work of that unit so there would be a steady progression of ideas and objectives (10:296).

Class Size

The size of each class assigned to a particular room of the unit should be kept at a minimum to facilitate the best results of working with the individual. If teachers'
aides were available some time could be used for teacher planning.

In-service Training

In-service training should accompany any continuous-progress plan for it to function properly (10:296). This must be done to keep the teachers who are working in this plan up to the latest developments in new curriculum and new methods of testing which would be vital to this form of organization. Even before the non-graded system could be adopted in a school district, much in-service training for parents as well as teachers would have to be accomplished to guarantee the acceptance and proper functioning of the system (10:296).

Intra-class Grouping

Grouping of children within each room of the unit would be very complete. Inasmuch as the basis is individual differences, groups could be made up of from one person to the whole class. This would depend upon the concept, skill, or attitude studied.

Grouping within each room of the unit might also depend upon other rooms of that same unit. A very close working arrangement with all rooms of the unit is necessary to accomplish the desired results of a continuous-progress program.
Background of Pupils

The background of the pupils would have less adverse affect in this system than the previous systems because of the nature of the individuality of such a program.

Pupil Progress

Progress of the pupil would be much more fluid than in any system so far discussed. Inasmuch as each child's progress would be based upon his own rate of accomplishment, he could advance more quickly through a unit than others in the same unit.

The pupil could, if advisable, be reclassified and moved from one room of the unit to another room of the unit during the year. This would depend upon the performance of the individual. This movement could only be accomplished by frequent appraisals of the pupil's progress by the use of standardized tests (3:144).

Class Time - Scheduling

The use of class time for any one subject area would be left up to the discretion of the teacher and would depend a great deal on the interest shown by the group or groups she may be working with.
The scheduling of certain subjects to correspond with that same subject being taught within another room of the same unit would not present a problem, since all teachers of the unit would be working closely together.

**Size of the Elementary School and Facilities**

The actual size of the school would have little to do with the operation of this system. However, if this system were to be adopted within a small school there might not be the specialists available that usually are present in a larger school or district. This hurdle could be overcome by using the special competencies of other members of the teaching unit. The scheduling of these people would not be too difficult to surmount.

**Reporting to Parents**

A combination of parent-teacher conferences and report cards would be used to report the progress of the child to the parents. The parent-teacher conference would be the most important aspect of this reporting. Parents must be kept well-informed for this type of organization to succeed because it is a different departure of schooling from which they are probably familiar.
Curriculum Development

Since most textbooks and other materials now in use are of the graded type, there have been problems with the use of this material in a non-graded situation. The curriculum must be organized on vertical sequential lines more than along horizontal graded lines (10:295).

One way curriculum improvement can come into being is by the work and effort of those people who believe in and are enthusiastic about the non-graded school.

V. TEAM TEACHING

Teacher Planning Time

One of the primary reasons behind team teaching in the elementary school was to free the individual teacher for more planning time within the school day. This was thought to come about through the use of large-group instruction. However, this has not as yet proven the case. Since the lessons require a great deal of time to prepare and in many cases the need of other members of the team to work on the planning, it now appears that planning will require as much time, if not more, as within the self-contained classroom (27:Ch.5).

Teacher planning during the school day should improve as the team improves.
The key word to teacher planning under this system would be cooperation. Without close cooperation between team members, with respect to planning, the system of team teaching would undoubtedly fail.

Class Size

Class size within a team teaching situation would depend to some extent upon the facilities available. These facilities will be discussed at a later point in this chapter.

Most individual classes should be kept to the average twenty-five or thirty because much of the instruction of the pupils will still take place in groups of this size. Some large group instruction would be provided by team teaching. The use of small size classes, individual instruction, and tutorial methods can be achieved only in the best organized teams which have focused directly on these problems (27:Ch.1).

In-service Training

A well organized team teaching situation would provide an excellent in-service education, particularly for the junior or new members of the team. This type of organization would permit closer supervision of the junior members by the leadership personnel of the team. It would also give
the junior members opportunities to observe outstanding teachers adjusting their program as the teaching-learning situation develops (2:Ch.2).

Team teaching would also offer the experienced teacher opportunities to investigate more deeply his own field of special interest and a chance to work more closely with a group of fellow professionals.

Intra-class Grouping

Intra-class grouping within the room or rooms involved in team teaching could be quite extensive. This could range from one child, to small groups, to traditional class group size, to large groups of a hundred or more. It would depend greatly upon the objectives of any particular lesson or subject and how the team decided that these objectives might best be met. These groups may either be homogeneous or heterogeneous, whichever is most desirable for that particular subject or project with regrouping when necessary (2:89).

Team teaching would provide a very flexible grouping situation but the grouping would only succeed if the team had planned appropriate activities to attain the goals previously set forth. Again, close cooperation among team members is vital.
Background of Pupils

The background of the pupils would not be as important in this method of grouping as some previously mentioned because with the team working together, they would take the background into consideration when planning work for the individuals and small groups. In fact, the person who might have problems could be better dealt with in this situation.

Again, the home influence would affect many children in special interest fields and would have an affect upon these areas within the class.

Pupil Progress

Since the non-graded system was the direct forerunner of team teaching, they are both based upon the theory of continuous pupil progress at varying rates of speed (27:Ch.2).

This system would do away with the rigid system of grades and nonpromotion so prevalent in the graded structure. Team teaching would make provision for a wide range of individual differences.

Class Time - Scheduling

Teachers' schedules must be closely correlated so that the working relationship can function within the normal structure of the school day (27:Ch.1). Only through close
cooperation and understanding of all team members could this scheduling be effective.

The class time allowed for each subject or project would have a direct bearing on the scheduling throughout the day. Many areas of work, during a particular time, may require longer periods than the standard class length or they could require less. This flexibility would have to be left up to the decision of the team as a whole and would reflect the objectives or goals of that particular subject or project.

Size of the Elementary School and Facilities

Schools for team teaching must have rooms to accommodate groups of various sizes. It must also be a "fluid" school because of the constantly changing make up of the groups. These schools should provide a place for teachers to work, both in small groups or in private. If these conditions are to be met, the school would need to provide space for lab work and for individualized study for the pupils (27:Ch.7).

The best possible facilities would be those buildings that were constructed with team teaching definitely in mind. Much difficulty for the team teaching program may arise when a traditional graded type building is being used. Here there would be much less chance for fluid
movement of children from group to group. Even less chance of providing for individual differences.

**Reporting to Parents**

Since team teaching is a fairly new system, many parents are probably not aware of its many advantages for their child. To overcome this, the parents must be thoroughly informed on the theories basic to team teaching.

The best possible way to report to the parents is through the use of parent-teacher conferences. These are usually carried on by each member of the team who is responsible for a group of children with the aid of any of the other members of the team when necessary. Written reports during the year will also be used to keep the parents informed. There might even be a use for small groups of parents to meet to discuss general problems.

Report cards may be used at the end of the year, but each subject will usually be broken into different areas within that subject and then be marked satisfactory (S), needs improvement (N), or unsatisfactory (U) (2:Ch.6).

Grade placement usually reflects age and social maturity rather than academic achievement and progress (27:Ch.3).
Curriculum Development

The teams involved in team teaching should have a large say in developing new curriculum and in the appropriate methods for teaching the new materials (27:Ch.4). If the team is allowed some control and authority over new curriculum, then the materials developed should prove more usable.

Members of the curriculum committee should include teachers with specialized knowledge and skills in the areas to be developed. They should also be given responsibilities to plan the curriculum work and oversee the work of others in carrying out the objectives of the new curriculum. Curriculum leaders from different groups should work together to develop new materials (27:Ch.3).

In this chapter we have investigated five methods of inter-class grouping that prevail predominately throughout the United States today. As can be seen, we do not really have a clear line drawn to divide one type of grouping from another. Each one, as it developed, used things that were felt to be essential from some other grouping situation.
It seems reasonable to conclude that the best grouping procedures will differ from school to school based on such factors as:

1. Competence and maturity of the staff
2. Nature of the physical plant
3. School size
4. Class size
5. Local curriculum or design of instruction
6. The desire of a teacher or group of teachers to make a particular plan work effectively (25:313-319)
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The following concluding remarks are based upon the research that was carried out within this paper. The writer will utilize the same ten criteria that were used in Chapter III to evaluate each of the five methods of inter-class grouping.

Teacher Planning Time

Three of the methods investigated, graded, dual-progress and non-graded, would allow the teacher very little free time during the normal school day to do any advanced or detailed planning.

Because of the scheduling of classes or groups within departmentalization and the team teaching situation, there could be time allocated for teacher planning.

Class Size

All five methods surveyed indicated that class size should be kept to a minimum. The term "minimum" was not defined to a point of numbers of children within the classroom, however it can be assumed that a desirable number would not exceed twenty-five to thirty students per room.
In-service Training

There is a great need for in-service training for teachers with all five methods of grouping investigated, but it seems absolutely essential for the success of the dual-progress plan, non-graded, and team teaching. The type of training for these groupings could range from a specific area to the general development of a particular program. In-service training for the departmentalization grouping would be geared at a certain department within the educational system, such as the science teachers, math teachers, etc.

The graded school would generally rely upon grade level meetings in that all teachers of a certain grade level would come together to discuss and become informed about new methods and materials for their particular grade.

Intra-class Grouping

Very little is done within the departmentalization system to set up intra-class groups and until quite recently, little was done within the graded schools. This is not to say that grouping within these two situations are not desirable, but very little has been done to set up the necessary groups.

The dual-progress plan would use limited intra-class grouping, mainly in imperatives but much less within the
electives portion of the program. This would probably be true because those people in the electives have shown a particular talent or interest in those fields of study.

The use of intra-class grouping for the non-graded organization and for team teaching would be extremely extensive. Since these two methods stress individual differences, they would make wide use of grouping within the classroom to achieve their objectives.

**Background of Pupils**

The foreign born child or recent arrivals to our country would be most affected by the graded school, dual-progress plan and the departmentalization methods of grouping, since all or part of these programs are based upon previously learned materials. These same people would fit in well in the non-graded organization or the team teaching situation because these two methods put more emphasis on individual differences. The same basic pattern would be true for those from culturally deprived homes or those from low income homes.

**Pupil Progress**

The progress of the pupil through the graded, dual-progress and departmentalization plans would depend upon covering a set amount of material during the school year.
Nonpromotion would be used as a threat for completing the work.

Since the non-graded and team teaching plans are based upon individual differences, the progress of the students would be much more fluid and based upon the child's own rate of growth or mastery of the material.

Class Time - Scheduling

In most graded schools there is a prescribed amount of subject matter to be covered in the course of the year but it is left up to the individual teacher as to when and how much time should be spent in each subject area.

The dual-progress and departmentalization plans would have to be scheduled strictly by the clock because of the movement from room to room.

Scheduling of class time within the non-graded and team teaching situations would be much more flexible and need not conform to certain specific times. Basically, there would have to be agreement between the teachers of the team and the specialists used in the non-graded plan.

Size of the Elementary School and Facilities

The size of the elementary school might well determine the use of the departmentalization system of grouping in that some of these rooms would have to be fitted out with special materials for certain subject areas. This system would be
used best in larger schools. The same reasons might also be applied to the dual-progress plan, where the size of the school would determine to what extent this plan would be implemented.

In the graded schools, the size of the school would usually only determine the class size. It also might limit the use of specialists. The non-graded school might have the same problems but could easily utilize the talents of other members of the unit.

The actual size of the school would affect the team teaching situation very slightly. The best results of team teaching will be gained where this method was in mind when the school was constructed. Because of the intra-class grouping patterns in team teaching there should be facilities available to combine two or more classes with very little confusion and effort.

**Reporting to Parents**

Grade cards or report cards appear to be the main means of reporting to parents of the graded and the departmentalization methods of inter-class grouping. Recently the graded system has been using a combination of grade cards and parent-teacher conferences, while departmentalization has relied mainly upon the grade cards.
Parent-teacher conferences play a much more important role in the dual progress plan, the non-graded, and the team teaching situations. This might be explained as necessary because the parents need to have a better understanding of exactly what is going on in these methods. The parents must be kept well informed about the theories and changes from grouping methods because they are quite a departure from what most parents may be familiar.

Even though the conference situation is used more extensively in the last three methods of grouping, the grade card is still used for some of the reporting to parents.

**Curriculum Development**

All methods of inter-class grouping and intra-class grouping still have to depend mainly upon the traditional graded material even though some materials have been developed recently for the non-graded and team teaching situations.

This graded material would usually fit very well within the graded and departmentalized situations with little need to worry, except to buy new books when there were major revisions.
In the graded school it had been the responsibility of the administration to develop the curriculum and pass it down to the teaching staff but now the teachers are working more closely with the administration to develop new areas of the curriculum and the adoption of new textbooks.

The same situation will run true with the dual-progress plan and departmentalization. More and more curriculum development is being done by the local teachers working in small groups in association with the administration.

Since the material for the non-graded and team teaching programs are still based upon graded materials, much work will be done by members of the unit or teaching team to adapt this material into the programs of these two grouping patterns. Much opportunity for developing new curriculum is available within these last two methods of grouping. It would take a close working relationship between the teachers and the administration.

The development of the methods of inter-class and intra-class grouping has been one of constant change. Each grouping method may refer to itself as being new but when one really starts to investigate, we find that some part of the method may be new but that other parts have been
borrowed from those previously developed. This however, is a basis for research in that we use facts already known and proceed to the unknown.

The major goals of the individual schools or school districts will influence or dictate the type of inter-class grouping system that is to be used. If the major goal of a district was that of academic achievement then ability groupings would prevail, but if the emotional and social growth of the students were being considered, less emphasis would be placed upon homogeneous mental ability (8:7-9).

There seems to be very little chance of all schools or school districts in the United States agreeing upon one method of inter-class grouping that would be the absolute answer for the procedures of gaining knowledge. The important thing to keep in mind is that whatever type of grouping employed, it should be made on the basis of the program to be carried out and the pupils to be served (22:336-338).
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