THE IMPACT OF DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT ON EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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Abstract: This paper discusses the training and use of Dynamic Assessment by educational psychologists in the United Kingdom in recent years. Models of dynamic assessment which are being taught and their impact on educational services are discussed in relation to current educational psychology practises. Educational psychologists in the UK operate in a context of inclusive educational legislation and awareness of the need for culture fair assessment procedures in an increasingly multi ethnic society. With the growth of trans-European inclusion practises and European wide agreements on training, qualifications and applications of educational psychological services, models of training in Dynamic Assessment in the UK, may be relevant to other European countries, particularly those who, like the UK, have a national curriculum framework for setting standards in educational achievements during the school years. Future directions in which training and use of Dynamic Assessment might develop, are proposed as part of a wider use of cognitive education.

Introduction

Assessment of children’s performance at different stages throughout the school years is a common feature of school systems everywhere. Typically, school testing is carried out in order to record levels of achievement in school subjects and test results are used frequently to compare children’s performance to each other within the school and between schools, both locally and nationally. In the UK, there is a structure for educational assessment at 4 stages (known as Key Stages), which are implemented within the national curriculum from the ages of 3 – 16 years. Such testing at successive stages culminates in national examinations at age 16, and at advanced level, 18 years, which is required for University entrance.

Aside from these routine mainstream school assessments, other more specialised assessments are carried out when children are identified as having learning or developmental difficulties. Some of these assessments, which may include tests of intelligence or ability, can be administered by teaching staff, but administration and interpretation of some tests is restricted and can only be done by qualified psychologists. Amongst such restricted tests are some well known standardised

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