


Programmed learning in Central African contexts



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Abstract

The general history of the development of the programmed learning movement does not need to be rehearsed in full in a publication of this nature. The pioneering work of Sidney L. Pressey in the 1920's drew attention to the possibilities of devices which could afford assistance to the teacher by providing self correction. The work of B. F. Skinner at Harvard, culminating in the publication of his article, "The Science of Learning and the Art of Teaching", in 1954, marked the intrusion of operant conditioning into the classroom. The contribution made by Norman A. Crowder towards the establishment of intrinsic programming, particularly for use in machines, must also be noted. Since 1954, programmed learning as a teaching technique has become the subject of experimental work in most Western countries. Whilst the United States led the way in the early years, educationists in Russia, Great Britain, Western Germany, Australia and many other parts of the world have wished to test the claim made for programmed learning that it is the technique which best applies the basic principles of psychology in the classroom. In Great Britain, for example, research of some kind in the field of programmed learning is proceeding at almost every University. The Government has recognised the potential of the technique by making a considerable grant for the establishment of a Documentation Centre at Birmingham University.

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