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RESEARCH ON THE STIMULATION OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN SCHOOL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PUPILS AGED 4-12

Development of educational goals and learner  
objectives for the stimulation of social  
development: a procedural proposal (abstract)

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Insert Figure 1 about here  
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When the specific, social-cognitive stage-operations are viewed as educational goals of a more general level of abstraction, series of successively more concrete specifications can be carried out. The proposed procedure consists of the unfolding of five components of specification from these operational activities. In figure 1 the matrix resulting from the application of the first two specifications is graphically represented. In describing these specifications by means of such a matrix, it is possible to reach the level of intermediate and specific educational objectives (cf. Krathwohl, 1971) in a systematic way. The matrix is conceived as a longitudinal one because the three main levels of the development of perspective-coordination encompass an age-span of several years.

The following part of this paper will summarize several kinds of specifications as well as some functions and merits of this procedure.

Specification 1: Content aspects of the social-cognitive operations.

In the matrix (see fig. 1, spec. 1) a distinction is made between the following contents: (1) external features of self and the other(s), (2) (visual) percepts, (3) feelings and emotions, (4) thoughts and concepts, (5) intentions, (cf. Livesley & Bromley, 1973; Shantz, 1975) and (6) moral norms. These contents can be regarded as sub-perspectives of a total subjective perspective (cf. Oppenheimer, 1976), which can be further extended to, for instance, affections, prejudices, ideas of justice, friendship and interpersonal relations (Selman, 1975).

Specification 2: The complexity of the perspectives.

This component (see fig. 1, spec. 2) is subdivided in: (1) the number of perspectives to be differentiated (i.e. one's own from one other person's, or several other persons'), (2) extent of difference between two (or more) subjective perspectives. The latter extent will have to be expressed in some quantitative measure (cf. Buis, 1976). (3) The degree of familiarity with those persons whose perspectives are to be differentiated, determined and coordinated\*. Finally, (4) the level of abstraction present in a perspective (e.g. emphasis on visual percepts, perceptible expressions of feelings versus thoughts or concepts).

Specification 3: This specification refers to the structure of those social interactions in which a child can or should demonstrate the above listed social-cognitive skills or operations. In this context the relationship between types of social motives, possible combinations of social motives (cf. MacCrimmon & Messick, 1976) and the probability of

\* There is some empirical evidence that shows that the extent of relational proximity has a positive influence on the ability to take the perspective of others and subsequently on the stage-level performance of moral dilemmas (Gash, pp. 96, 106).

the performance of the intended social-cognitive operational activity needs to be spelled out (e.g. how far a social interaction in which the basic motive of competition predominates can be considered as a necessary, sufficient and/or facilitative condition of the occurrence of differentiating between intentions for instance).

Specification 4: concerns the specific cognitive prerequisites in order to achieve the above social-cognitive skills especially in reference to the various content area's of social cognition. For instance, mental rotation is referred to as a supposed prerequisite of the ability to place oneself in the visual perspective of the other.

Specification 5: consists of the determination of learning contents (e.g. stories in words or pictures with a variety of feelings, emotions, intentions etc.) and learning activities (e.g. comparison of the predicted against the real intention; representing one's own feelings and those of another person in a role playing game; imitation of the inferred emotional state of the other, etc). Moreover, in organizing and constructing series of learning activities and materials several criteria have to be taken into account, e.g. (1) the nearness versus the distance of learning contents (for instance an interpersonal problem), (2) the extent in which the child itself takes part in an interpersonal problem solving process (3) the specificity and transferability of the learning process involved. In order to prevent misunderstanding it has to be noted that both specification components (see fig. 1) and the subsequent specifications (i.e. spec. 3, 4 and 5) are not regarded as independent (dimensions) of the social-cognitive operations represented by the vertical axis in figure 1..

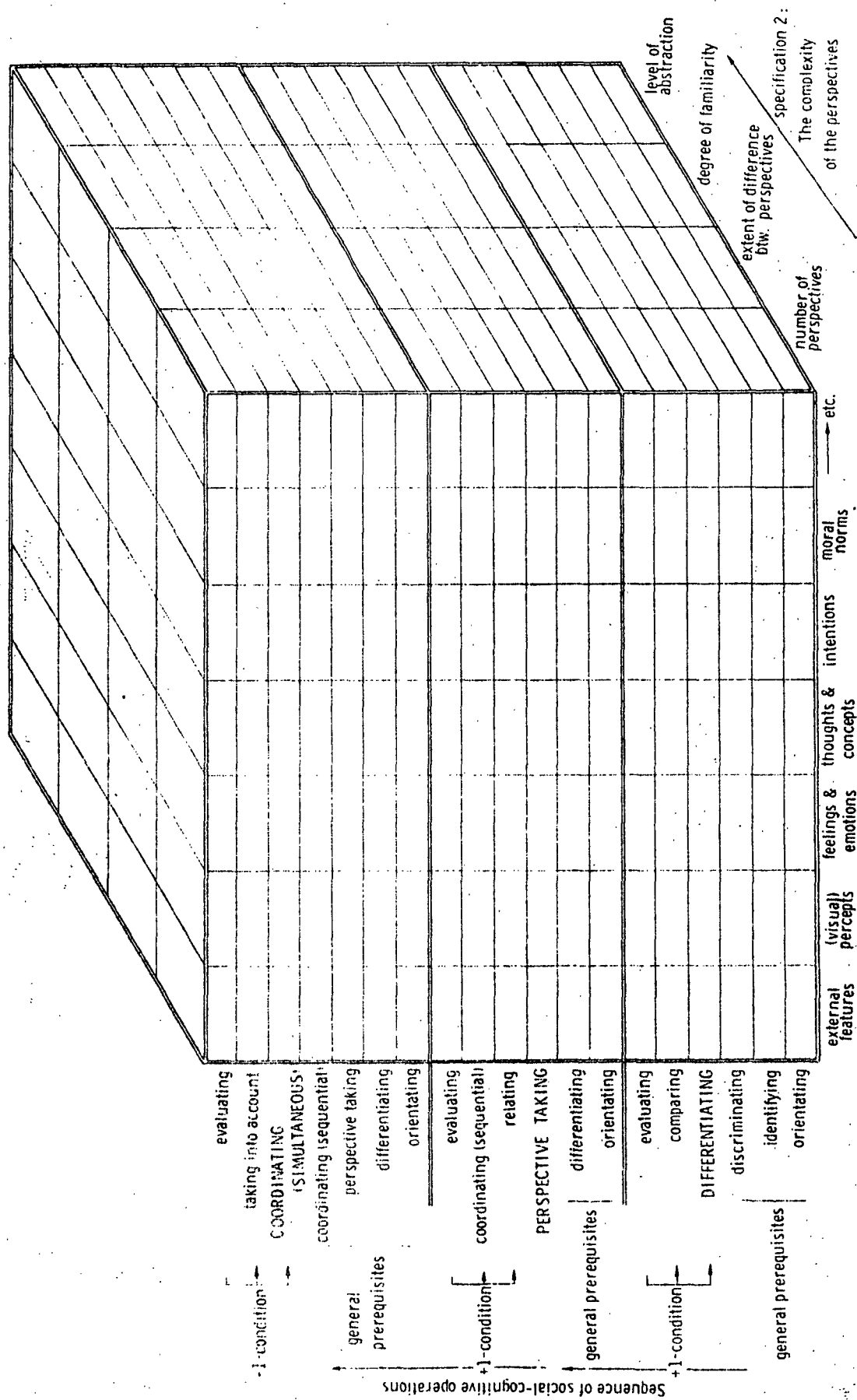
#### Merits of the matrix-procedure

With the assistance of the matrix, resulting from the procedure proposed, one can achieve the following goals:

- (a) the systematic generation of a coherent set of potential educational goals and learner objectives.
- (b) the forming of hypotheses concerning the classification and ordering of objectives, and developmental, and instructional processes.
- (c) the formulation of objectives in the specific area of interest (i.e., development of social-cognition).
- (d) the specification, in detail, of activities to be carried out by the research psychologist, the curriculum development team, and the evaluation team.

Especially in the latter sense the matrix-procedure may offer more insight into the delegation of tasks and responsibilities present in interdisciplinary endeavors as in the construction of a curriculum on the stimulation of social-cognitive development.

Figure 1 : LONGITUDINAL MATRIX OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES :DEVELOPMENT OF COORDINATION OF PERSPECTIVES



Specification 1 : Content aspects of social-cognitive operations