

Diversity in deaf education

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Abstrak

Education of the deaf has a proud heritage with regard to scholarship and professional education. This is exemplified by the longevity of the International Congress on Education of the Deaf, which was first held in 1878. Just as it was at the time of the first International Congress, diversity continues to be the norm within the population of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) learners on many different levels. Given that diversity, the logic for the resolutions made at the 1880 Congress in Milan, which sought to proscribe the use of sign language in education of the deaf, is questioned. It is argued that then, as now, differentiated educational responses were required to accommodate the diverse characteristics of the population of DHH learners. Current research examining the factors associated with the variance in developmental outcomes for DHH learners is reviewed. It is concluded that professionals involved in the identification and education of DHH children should be no less skeptical today about suggestions that there should, or could, be any One True Path to seek language, communication, and educational outcomes for all deaf children.