

Institute for Research on Teaching

The **Institute for Research on Teaching** was founded in 1976 at Michigan State University and has been the recipient of major federal grants. Funding for IRT projects is currently received from the U.S. Department of Education, Michigan State University, and other agencies and foundations. IRT scholars have conducted major research projects aimed at improving classroom teaching, including studies of classroom management strategies, student socialization, the diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties, and school policies. IRT researchers have also been examining the teaching of specific school subjects such as reading, writing, general mathematics, and science and are seeking to understand how factors inside as well as outside the classroom affect teachers. In addition to curriculum and instructional specialists in school subjects, from such diverse disciplines as educational psychology, anthropology, sociology, history, economics, and philosophy cooperate in conducting IRT research. By focusing on how teachers respond to enduring problems of practice and by collaborating with practitioners, IRT researchers strive to produce new understandings to improve teaching and teacher education.

Currently, IRT researchers are engaged in a number of programmatic efforts on teaching that build on past work and extend the study of teaching in new directions such as the teaching of subject matter disciplines in elementary school, teaching in developing countries, and teaching special populations. New modes of teacher collaboration with schools and teachers' organizations are also being explored. The Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement from 1987-92, is one of the IRT's major endeavors and emphasizes higher level thinking and problem solving in elementary teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. The focus is on what content should be taught, how teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources in the best way, and in what ways good teaching is subject-matter specific.

The IRT publishes research reports, occasional papers, conference proceedings, the Elementary Subjects Center Series, a newsletter for practitioners (IRT Communication Quarterly), and lists and catalogs of IRT publications. For more information, to receive a list or catalog, and/or to be placed on the IRT mailing list to receive the newsletter, please write to the Editor, Institute for Research on Teaching, 252 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1034.

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