



# International Association for Cognitive Education and Psychology

Volume 1, Number 1 **THE (NEW) THINKING TEACHER** August, 2017

## From the President

I am happy to greet you in the first issue of the reincarnated *The Thinking Teacher*, the publication that was initiated in 1982, terminated (now we can say, temporarily) in 1999. In addition to having all the typical features of an ordinary newsletter, *The Thinking Teacher* will fulfill another important function. The relative emphasis on research interests and applied interests in IACEP has become somewhat unbalanced in recent years, with applications getting less attention than they deserve in our conferences and publications. The original intent was for IACEP to be a hospitable association of both practitioners and researchers, and over the years we have enjoyed the participation of many who have a solid footing in both camps. An important goal of *The Thinking Teacher* is to help restore that ideal balance. Each issue of this publication will carry at least one substantive article devoted to matters of interest to practitioners—teachers, school psychologists, speech/language therapists, and other educational personnel. In this issue, you will find an introductory article by Carl Haywood, founder of IACEP, from which you will learn about Teachers as Mediators, reprinted from the original *Thinking Teacher*.  
Yuriy V. Karpov, President, IACEP

## IACEP NEWS

### IACEP Revitalized

IACEP has been in decline in recent years. A series of near-fatal blows came this year when elections were not announced at the prescribed time, the president-elect declared that he would not succeed to the office of president (due to happen in July 2017), the organization did not have a treasurer, and the international conference that had been announced for Geneva in July was cancelled. The executive committee went to work, taking essential steps that have now put the association back on track and given it new direction.

First, the executive committee authorized a special election. The following took office in July:

President: Yuriy V. Karpov, Touro College, USA

Immediate Past President: Adina Shamir (in lieu of Marco Hessels, who resigned), Bar Ilan University, Israel

Secretary: Joanne Hardman, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Treasurer: Carol Robinson Zañartu, San Diego State University, USA

Membership Secretary: Sigal Eden, Bar Ilan University, Israel

Vice President, Asia/Pacific Rim: Bee Leng Chua, National Institute of Education, Singapore

Vice President, Europe: Lenka Krejcova, Charles University, Czech Republic

Vice President, North America: Nathalie Myara, University of Montreal, Canada

Vice President, South America: Fernando Gonzalez, Diego Portales University, Chile

Vice President, Middle East: Alex Kozulin, Achva Academic College, Israel

Vice President, Africa: William P. Wahl, University of the Free State, South Africa

The executive committee now consists of these officers plus the permanent member (Carl Haywood, Vanderbilt University, USA) and the editor of the *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology* (David Tzuriel, Bar Ilan University, Israel).

### President Appoints Membership Task Force

President Karpov announced the creation of a membership task force charged with building the association's membership over the next two years. Headed by membership secretary Sigal Eden, permanent executive committee member Carl Haywood and the editor of JCEP David Tzuriel, the task force is further composed of all of the vice presidents, representing every geographic region in which IACEP has members. In announcing the creation of the task force, Yuriy asked for a renewed emphasis on applications of cognitive theory, cognitive education, and cognitive assessment. He stressed the importance of teachers and other schools personnel in promoting effective

learning, as well as his determination to renew IACEP as a hospitable association for practitioners as well as academic/research professionals. The task force is to present a two-year plan by the end of September. It is likely that each vice president will be asked to establish a membership goal for his/her region and a plan for achieving the goal in two years.

Although there is now an official task force for building membership, all members of IACEP are asked to tell their friends and colleagues about the association and invite them to join. [Click here](#) for downloadable membership application.

### Conference in Mexico, January 28-31, 2018

The 16<sup>th</sup> international conference of IACEP will be held in Guadalajara, Mexico, January 28-31, 2018. This replaces the conference that had been planned for July, 2017 in Geneva, which was cancelled; thus, it is the regular biennial international conference. Information about the conference can be found at [www.iacep.org/conference](http://www.iacep.org/conference), where one can (a) register for the conference ([click](#)), (b) see information on the keynote speakers ([click](#)), (c) find out about the two pre-conference professional workshops ([click](#)), (d) submit program proposals online ([click](#)), and get other information.

This conference, whose theme is **Culture and Cognition**, will be the first of IACEP's international conferences to be held in Central or South America, although there have been regional conferences in Chile and Puerto Rico. This conference is co-sponsored by [Encuentro Internacional de Educación y Pensamiento/ University of Puerto Rico](#), the [University of Presov, Slovak Republic](#), and [ITESO, Jesuit University of Guadalajara](#).

Keynote addresses are to be given by IACEP's president, Yuriy V. Karpov, of Touro College, New York City, Iveta Kovalcikova, of University of

Presov, Slovak Republic, and Angel Villarini Jusino, of the University of Puerto Rico. [Click here](#) for more information.

Program submissions are invited in the categories of symposia, individual papers, posters, and mini-workshops. Click here to learn about these categories and to submit program proposals online. **Note: Deadline for submission of abstracts of proposed presentation is OCTOBER 15, 2017.** That is also the last date to qualify for the early bird conference registration fee.

### **Preconference Workshops Scheduled**

Two professional workshops have been scheduled to take place just prior to the upcoming international conference in Guadalajara, as has been the frequent custom.

David Tzuriel will lead a 2-day workshop on **Dynamic Assessment of Learning Potential** on Friday, January 26 and Sunday, January 28 in Guadalajara (precise location to be announced).

[Click here](#) for more information and the workshop schedule.

Carl Haywood will lead a 3-day workshop on **Cognitive Early Education with emphasis on Bright Start: Cognitive Curriculum for Young Children**, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, January 26, 27, and 28, also in Guadalajara (location to be announced). [Click here](#) for more information and a workshop description.

Fees for these professional workshops are in addition to the conference registration fees. They can be paid online together with conference registration.



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## **TEACHERS AS MEDIATORS**

[Reprinted with permission and minor revision from *The Thinking Teacher*, 1985, 2(5), 7-8

Carl Haywood

Vanderbilt University

I am often asked, "What is different about cognitive education?" Many things are different, including questions of what to teach, the teaching methods, the children's participation, use of materials, and the goals of teaching. The single most important and distinguishing characteristic of teachers in a cognitive curriculum is the teaching style, that is to say, there is a different and critically important role for teachers.

In a cognitive classroom the teacher's

primary role is that of mediator. That means that the teacher serves as a kind of catalyst, bringing about a cognitively important reaction between children and events in their experience. Helping children to understand the *generalized* meaning of their experiences, of new learning, of relationships is an important aspect of mediational teaching. The goal is to extract from every encounter the children have with content materials the maximum learning of

generalizable principles and strategies of perceiving the world, of thinking systematically, clearly, and effectively, of learning, and of problem solving. The goal of generalizability means that mediational teachers are constantly on the lookout for opportunities to demonstrate the broader applicability of principles and strategies that the children might have had to use for the solving of immediate problems. In other words, the teachers are trying to make the children more efficient at *learning how to learn* by getting the children to generalize the processes they have used beyond the problems they are working on at the moment. Even when mediational teachers are teaching specific content, for example, counting, they teach it in such a way that the children will understand its applicability to other contexts. Thus, counting is taught as a *cognitive strategy*, a way of finding out how many of anything one has, rather than as a procedure for its own sake.

In pursuit of their cognitive goals, mediational teachers do several things differently than do other teachers. First, they *examine any interaction with children* to determine to what extent they are meeting the criteria of mediated learning experiences prescribed by Feuerstein. Second, they use particular methods more or less frequently than do other teachers.

Mediational teachers try to *elicit evidence of thinking* from the children. This means that they ask many questions. In addition, they ask questions of a different kind: questions directed to process rather than to answers. How to find the solution is at least as important as identifying the solution itself. Third, mediational teachers *accept to*

*the fullest extent possible the answers given* by the children, and then take the children a step beyond those answers; i.e., they may often say, "Yes, there are those things and you could do it that way. Let's try to think of another way to do it!"

Fourth, mediational teachers *challenge answers*, requiring justification and explanation of process. They often say things such as, "Yes, that's right, but how did you know it was right?" "Why is this one better than that one?" "What would be wrong with this one?" Correct answers are as likely to be challenged as are incorrect answers.

Fifth, mediational teachers *teach inductively* by asking children to form generalities from successive examples, objects, or events. They then teach the value and uses of rules (not in the behavior-control sense) and the economy and efficiency of generalizing rules. They also teach deductively by requiring assessment of the applicability of these rules to specific situations ("We learned that all the green balls go in the green box. Is this a green ball? Should it go into the blue box, the green box, or the red box? Why?")

Mediational teachers *work to enhance the children's metacognitive functioning*. That is to say, they try to make the children aware of their own thinking processes. Often, they ask children to think how they themselves do things, to reflect on and analyze their own processes and strategies. Then, they typically ask the children both to plan systematic approaches to problem solving and to *summarize* their cognitive processes and strategies after they have

learned something or solved a problem.

Finally, mediational teachers emphasize the order, structure, and predictability of the universe. "But," you might protest, "their world is very often not orderly, structured, and predictable." Of course, you would be correct. What they must learn is the necessity to impose order and structure on the events of their daily lives, using their intellectual resources (cognitive functions!) to do so, by organizing events to make them more understandable and manageable: comparing, analyzing, classifying, seriating, performing the cognitive tasks that they develop in a cognitive classroom.

Can anybody do all of that? Certainly not, not all the time with all children in every interaction! Total mediation is a goal to be approached, probably never to be reached. There are simply too many interactions, and too many potential opportunities to mediate, in any classroom with any group of children for teachers to be able to take advantage of all of them. What we must constantly ask ourselves is whether we are being as sensitive as possible to opportunities to mediate generalized meaning to the children, and whether we are actually using (and constantly refining) all of the available strategies for doing so.



## THE THINKING TEACHER



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Editorial Board: Sigal Eden, Carl Haywood, Bee Leng, Chua, W. P. Wahl