IACESA 2107
22-24 February 2017

The teaching of thinking: Co-constructing and re-defining pathways to make an impact

Mary Grosser
IACESA President (2015-2017)
Teaching for thinking has been regarded as an important outcome and ideal of education since the early days of Plato, Socrates and Aristotle.

Renaissance, Middle Ages: reasoning, critiquing.
Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

- identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking;
- work effectively as individuals and with others as members of a team;
- organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively;
- collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information;
- communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes;
- use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others; and
- demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation (Department of Basic Education, 2011).
Classroom realities
Plato’s Allegory of the Cave
Classrooms as caves

- Thinking is stifled
- Learners are passive
- Illusions of reality
- Understanding the world/information through the teacher’s eyes
- Closed-minded approach
- Facts, rules, norms and ethics that were formulated by previous generations, are not questioned or critiqued
- Partial knowledge
- Limited points of view
- Inability to know and understand
Creating pathways out of the cave

Sub-theme 1

Thinking critically about the hidden mechanisms that make cognitive education interventions work.

- What works for whom and under what circumstances’?
- Optimal stakeholder involvement
- Changing attitudes towards acknowledging that teaching learners how to think should

- High Performance Learning
- Philosophy for Children
- Social learning
- Strategies to develop problem-solving and reasoning
- The role of self-efficacy
- The Learning Power Approach
- The importance of classroom climate
- Well developed cognitive and language skills
- Prioritising values
- The role of mediated learning
Creating pathways out of the cave

Sub-theme 2:

Thinking critically about informal and non-formal learning opportunities to advance cognitive education.

✓ Using and creating learning opportunities out of the classroom (at home too), to advance cognitive education.
✓ What types of informal and non-formal learning opportunities would ensure that thinking is optimally developed?
✓ The important role of parents

- Learning everything everywhere
- The role of Technology
- Learning through play
- Sensory processing
- The role of mediated learning
- The flipped classroom
Thinking critically about the purpose and process of assessment for thinking.

✓ How to align the teaching of thinking with the assessment of thinking.

✓ Mediated assessment practices
Thinking critically about optimal health and well-being (physical, social, emotional health)

- Introducing critical thinking from a very young age, so that it becomes a way of life.
- The role and importance of nutrition and the link to cognitive functioning could be explored.

✓ The Art and Science of Critical Thinking
✓ Chronic disease and critical thinking
✓ University of the 3rd Age
Creating pathways out of the cave

This comprehensive text brings the field of critical thinking into the 21st century and directly into the classroom for teachers. It is rare to find a book like this in education that brings theory, research, and practice together in one place for both novice and veteran teachers who are influencing students' thinking every day. Unfortunately, much of the efforts in education around the world are focused on memorizing and testing content knowledge rather than concurrently building explicit thinking abilities. The authors establish clear definitions, universal processes, and culturally specific applications that show how the development of cognitive, critical, and creative thinking is at the heart of teaching and lifelong learning. It is important to note that models of student-centered thinking, such as Habits of Mind (dispositions), Six Hats (metacognition), Bloom’s Taxonomy (orders of thinking), and Thinking Maps (cognitive processes) are offered as practical tools supporting teachers and all students across all kinds of schools.

David Hyrle

David Hyrle is an independent researcher, author, and consultant focused on literacy, thinking-process instruction, and whole-school change. He is the developer of the Thinking Maps language and is presently co-director of Designs for Thinking, a consulting and research group based in New England. He is the Founder of the Thinking Foundation and Co-Director of Thinking Schools International.

A welcomed and comprehensive text on critical thinking with classroom application in mind. The text succeeds in exploring the theoretical underpinnings of critical thinking in a reader-friendly manner and illustrating how critical thinking can be developed on different educational levels by considering a variety of strategies.

Professor Kobus Lombard

Kobus Lombard is an Associate Professor at the School of Education Science at North-West University, Vaal Campus, as well as Sub-Program Leader, Assessment in the Research Focus Area, Self-Directed Learning, North-West University. His interest centers on teacher education and development, which includes the following fields of specialization: teaching, learning, assessment, and reflection. He has supervised a number of Masters and Doctorate students and has delivered several papers at national and international conferences. In addition to co-authoring various chapters in books, he has also published widely in national and international accredited journals.

Estelle Bretteville eloquently frames the disparate ideals of conventional medicine versus disciplines truly focused on enhancing wellness and health-span. She presents a platform from which the reader can pursue a critical assessment of a vast array of decisions and opportunities that will manifest health benefit, or consequence.

Dr. David Perlmutter, MD, FACP,
Board-certified Neurologist and Fellow, American College of Nutrition
Author, #1 New York Times bestseller, Grain Brain, and The Grain Brain Whole Life Plan and

MARY GROSSER, PhD
Editor
NOVA
Creating pathways out of the cave

This conference hopes to advocate for:

A multi-dimensional approach to the teaching and assessing of thinking:

• Formal, informal and non-formal learning contexts
• All role players in education
• Academic and life skill approach
• Logical left-brain thinking and creative right-brain thinking
2015 Conference

Personalize Thinking and Learning in the Conceptual Age.

The importance of critical thinking as a cornerstone for 21st century learning/conceptual age
2017 Conference

The teaching of thinking: Co-constructing and re-defining pathways to make an impact

Prioritising milestones that would promote and scale cognitive education in Southern Africa
A final word

✓ Acquiring good thinking is a lifelong journey – not picked up in a module or course.

✓ Good thinking requires practice with close guidance and feedback

✓ Needs to be the primary interest of people living in a society – not confined to a classroom
A final word

May the 2017 conference be an inspiration to us all to rigorously pursue not only the development of our own critical thinking abilities but also the critical thinking abilities of our students in academic and real life contexts.
Some arrangements

- Structuring of the programme and sessions: set the scene for the round table discussions.

- Changes to the programme: Thursday, 23 February 11h50-12h20: Prof. Friedrich Linderkamp (University of Wuppertal, Germany) replaced Dr Erna Du Toit. Class climate from the perspective of students from different school types with migration background and special educational needs.

- The AGM – Thursday, 23 February 2016. All IACESA members to please attend-Atlantic 2. All conference delegates are members.

- Keeping to time frames.

- Round table discussions – delegate input; identifying future milestones.
Some arrangements

✓ Please sign the CPD register at the registration desk.

✓ Breakaway venue on 23 February (Courtyard 1) – no need to sign up for the breakaway.

✓ 200MB of complimentary Wi-Fi per guest is offered. Once this has been reached guests may purchase internet vouchers.

✓ Chair changes: Thursday, 15:30-17:05: Atlantic 2: Chair: Mr Francois Minnie
   Friday, 12:30-15:30: Atlantic 2: Chair: Prof. Mirna Nel
Some arrangements

- Cocktail function: Wednesday, 22 February at 18h00: Atlantic 1, Lagoon Beach Hotel
- Book launch: Developing Critical Thinking: A Multi-dimensional approach in the context of South Africa
  Included if attending full conference.
Deborah Eyre

Professor Deborah Eyre is the founder of High Performance Learning. A global educational leader, researcher, writer and influencer focused on helping good schools become world class, she is a widely published author and is internationally known for her expertise in how the most able people think and learn. Her new book High Performance Learning: How to Become a World Class School was published in January 2016. A former academic researching into advanced cognitive performance, Deborah’s career has included a variety of senior education posts both globally and in the UK as well as advising governments and educational foundations in UK, Hong Kong, South Africa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, USA and Singapore. From 2010-2014 she was Global Education Director for Nord Anglia Education and prior to that served as Director of the UK government’s innovative National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY), based at the University of Warwick. Deborah is a Board member of the Council of British International Schools (COBIS), a Trustee of the Swan Multi-Academy Trust, a Freeman of the City of London Worshipful Company of Educators and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.