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## IARLD UPDATES

A Newsletter of the INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY FOR RESEARCH IN LEARNING DISABILITIES  
Winter Issue Vol. 8 (2) 2006-2007

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*James Chapman*

***Greetings and Welcome to 2007!*** “Point-of-difference” is a concept that many organizations seek to highlight. Competitive national and international influences often require that we emphasize the unique characteristics that make an organization, a university, or a programme particularly attractive and appealing.

The International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities (*IARLD*) has a “point of difference” that is easy to represent. The *IARLD* is a unique organization for the reasons captured by the words in the name. The *IARLD* is indeed “international”: people from many countries throughout the world belong as members or fellows. The international nature of our organization is a significant strength because it facilitates the flow of understandings and contacts in regard to LD. I am amazed at the number of emails from members seeking information about aspects of LD in other countries. I am seldom unable to point an inquirer to an *IARLD* member in another country. This strong international flavour provides members with the opportunity to consider how researchers in other countries address aspects of learning disabilities. Such a cross-flow of information can only strengthen local and national research programmes.

The *IARLD* is an “academy”: it is focused on scholarship to guide the research process. This focus is important for academics as well as for practitioners, as it emphasizes the importance of systematic knowledge and theory development through the use of research methodologies that are subject to peer review and scrutiny.

The notion of “research” is central to the *IARLD*. The focus on research sets the activity of the *IARLD* aside from organisations that embrace a range of interests beyond research. The research emphasis of the Academy provides an important focal point for researchers who work to contribute to the development of theory, and ultimately practice and policy in the LD field. The annual Academy conferences provide great opportunities to showcase research on the various aspects of LD from many countries. A large number of the most prominent international LD researchers belong to the *IARLD*. In addition, many prominent national researchers and emerging researchers from across the world also belong to the *IARLD*. Bringing LD researchers together is a key goal of the Academy. For emerging researchers, many of whom are graduate students, the opportunity to meet and talk with leading researchers in the context of the Academy, often has a significant impact on their work and on the contribution they can make to the LD field. Most experienced and leading researchers understand the importance of contributing to the ongoing development of the field by being available to meet and discuss research issues with those in earlier phases of their research career. The *IARLD*, because of its small and more intimate nature, is a perfect organisation for facilitating interactions between beginning and experienced researchers.

Clearly, the *IARLD* is focused on “learning disabilities”. The LD concept is a broad one, and one well known for the variations in definition and views on etiology, characteristics, diagnosis, identification, and intervention. Given the

diversity of views about LD, the Academy is a perfect organisation to host members who hold a range of perspectives regarding the nature of LD, and whose research reflects that diversity. Such diversity, I believe, provides for robust debate and for consideration of new possibilities and new perspectives.

An important characteristic of the *IARLD* is its dynamic nature. This Academy is not a static organization but one that is continually being renewed as new members participate in various aspects of the Academy.

The major activities of the Academy are the publications (*Thalamus*; the *IARLD Updates*) and the annual conference. All three provide information and points of contact. In 2006, the very successful conference was held in Boulder, Colorado. This year, the conference is being hosted by Academy members in Slovenia, in the city of Bled. I strongly encourage Academy members and fellows to attend the Bled Conference in July, which is being held a few days before the SSSR conference, which is being held in Prague.

The *IARLD* conference provides a unique opportunity for researchers from around the world to present research, and to participate in in-depth discussions about learning disabilities.

Finally, I encourage all to actively recruit new members and fellows. In particular, encouraging graduate students working in the LD field to join the *IARLD* is good for the Academy as well as for the academic and professional careers of the students. The points of difference that characterize the Academy provide very strong "selling" points!! In closing, I wish all of you the very best for a rewarding and enjoyable 2007.

**VISIT THE *IARLD* WEBSITE**  
**WWW.IARLD.NET**

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Membership:**

*Marshall Raskind, Christa van Kraayenoord, & Henry Reiff*

Nominations needed! We had a great conference and it was certainly enlivened by our new Student Members, Members, and Fellows! We had hoped that after the conference existing members of *IARLD* would be enthusiastic about introducing new people to our organization but our email boxes have remained empty of any nominations. We depend on new members to sustain the *IARLD* and lead the organization in the future. Please take some time to consider worthy people and nominate them when appropriate.

### **Send nominations to:**

[[mraskind@schwablearning.org](mailto:mraskind@schwablearning.org)] Fellows  
[[c.vankraayenoord@uq.edu.au](mailto:c.vankraayenoord@uq.edu.au)] Members  
[[hreiff@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:hreiff@mcdaniel.edu)] Student Members

Since the last newsletter, one distinguished scholar has been accepted as *IARLD* Fellow. In addition, we are pleased to announce the names of seven new Members and one Student Member. Their names and affiliations appear below.

*Kate Garnett*, Hunter College (Fellow); *Rasa Barkauskiene*, Mykolas Romeris University; *Kevin Chung*, University of Hong Kong; *Gad Elbeheri*, Centre for Child Evaluation & Teaching; *Tali Heiman*, The Open University; *Rhonda Martinussen*, University of Toronto; *Robert Mulligan*, Point Pleasant Beach School District; *Kristin Powell*, Western Institute for Neurodevelopmental Studies and Interventions (Members); *Wei-Pau Lu*, University of Virginia (Student Member).

### **Treasurer's Report: Lynda J. Katz**

The balance in the checking account as of October was \$16,357.14. In addition to the monies in the checking account, there are two CD's with balances totaling \$23,360.12. Billings for 2006-2007 dues will be sent out shortly.

## LD AROUND THE WORLD

### LEARNING DISABILITIES IN THE ARAB WORLD

Dr. Gad Elbeheri

Centre for Child Evaluation & Teaching, Kuwait

“Education is a basic human need and a prerequisite for the achievement of development” and “entitlement to literacy is considered a basic human right and so reflects the central role of reading and writing in all societies”<sup>1</sup> (Working Party of the Division of Educational and Child Psychology of the British Psychological Society, 1999: 16). The importance of learning to read specifically, and of literacy and education generally, is recognised by almost all the countries of the world and appropriate literacy development for all has become “a global concern as countries attempt to reduce their level of illiteracy” (Firman, 2000; page 57), prompting the UN to call the current decade we live in the decade of literacy. An appreciation of the importance of literacy and reading has led to a number of measures being adopted by leading figures in various countries; such as the *Reading For All* programme in Egypt, the *Pan-Africa Reading For All* programme adopted by the International Development in Africa Committee, the *Education For All* programme adopted by UNESCO Educational regional headquarters in Lebanon, the *Reading for All* and *No Child Left Behind* initiatives in the United States or the *Every Child Matters* in the UK.



While the percentage of Arabic speaking illiterates has decreased from 60 percent in the 1970s to 40 percent today, more than 67 million Arabs entered the twenty-first century without being able to read or write<sup>2</sup>. If current efforts continue, 28 per cent of the region's population will still be illiterate in 2015<sup>3</sup>. It is well understood that there is no development without literacy and that high illiteracy rates hinder economic and social development. Learning disabilities (LD) are major obstacles to literacy

and numeracy and learning disabled individuals need empowerment to be able to overcome the many challenges associated with their learning disabilities.

On the academic level, learning difficulties is a well-documented field of study and research in the Arab World (Shehata 1981, Morsi and Abu Elazayem 1983, Al Molla 1987, Othman 1990) with various active and diverse academic programmes on offer in Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Gulf countries. The academic output of such programmes, although advanced in some countries in the Arab World, is probably not as advanced as its counterparts in European and American programmes currently available on LD.

Arab researchers can enroll to attend post-graduate courses, diplomas, MAs or even a PhDs on any of the topics related to learning disabilities although there seems to be a tendency towards studies of assessment tools. Debates concerning the definitional issues of LD as well as identification and intervention seem to be the re-occurring themes in the Arabic literature on LD, but perhaps with less critical depth or offer of an alternative solution to the *status quo*. It is however encouraging that some Arab and in particular Gulf countries enroll their students to study topics related to LD in either America or the UK who usually tend to go back to their countries and transfer knowledge they acquired to their respective environments. Those researchers tend to publish mainly in English in peer-reviewed journals. There are various examples of such few good researchers around the Arab World.

On the advocacy level, the situation is far better. There are many non-governmental organisations, charities, trusts and non-profit entities dedicated to LD. The number seems to increase, for obvious reasons, amongst wealthier Arab countries. Such organisations can mainly be classified into two types: those who believe that various LD types should be dealt with under one organisation such as the Egyptian Learning Disabilities Association or those who believe that knowledge of individual types of LD (such as Dyslexia for example) are so advanced that they merit a solely dedicated

organisation such as the Kuwait Dyslexia Association. They all share, however, one common element, that most of them have been established either by, or according to, the wishes of a disaffected parent who, being unhappy with the current system and the way it dealt with his/her child, decided to do something about it and took matters into his/her own hands. The picture of an angry parent pulling behind a reluctant government body that is prodding along at the back is all very vivid here in the Arab World as it generally is in the West generally.

On the commercial level, the situation is dangerous in poorer countries but slightly less so in wealthier surroundings. As countries progress towards increased awareness of LD, and as the relationship between development, literacy and learning disabilities (in addition to the humanitarian dimension notably amongst comorbidity cases of LD and physical disabilities) becomes apparent, the commercial sector becomes more aware of the potential expansion in such a market and start providing services in form of LD centres, LD schools or LD service providers in various shapes and forms. This has been given a considerable boost in countries where the government guarantees funding for such centres (in Kuwait for example, when in 1996, a law was introduced guaranteeing funding for LD students and including a definition of LD amongst its Disabilities Law), but becomes more dangerous where governments do not set a standard or a benchmark for working practices such as Egypt for example where various sub-standard working practices in the field of LD go unchecked. However, the wealth of the Gulf region, the increase in the number of Western expatriates living there and the accompanying increase in and trust of American and English schooling systems have brought about an increased awareness of learning and reading problems and of learning disabilities in general.

On the government level, advances have been made in the field of physical disabilities and special education. There are now various nationwide programmes grappling with the issue of inclusion and mainstreaming of individuals with disabilities, and recently this has been

looking more and more at individuals with severe and mild learning disabilities. Bahrain, Jordan and Saudi Arabia have tried the policy of introducing resource rooms in their schools. Other centres and initiatives have looked at introducing a “mobile special education teacher/specialist” and more recently, other countries (Kuwait to be specific) have looked at introducing concepts developed in European countries (such as the UK) vis-à-vis a whole school approach in dealing with individuals with LD. *Dyslexia Friendly Schools* and *Inclusion Quality Mark* are examples of such initiatives currently on trial in Kuwait.

The development of the field of LD in the Arab World is similar to its counterparts elsewhere in the Western world albeit at a somehow a slower pace. It is ironic that although academic programmes in the Arab World in the field of learning disabilities geared towards developing assessment tools, both the quality and quantity of such assessment tools are no way near as the quality or the quantity of assessment tools used and developed in the Western World. Issues of legislation, teacher training, the use of assistive technologies, early intervention techniques and alternatives therapies must be investigated for any hope of an increased pace of progress in the field of LD in the Arab World.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations' resolutions 45/199 & 50/143

<sup>2</sup> Victor Billeh, Director UNESCO Beirut & Regional Bureau for Education

<sup>3</sup> [[http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=8521&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=8521&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)]

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**IARLD:** The Academy holds its 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference from July 5-7, 2007 in Bled, Slovenia. For details, visit [[www.iarld.net](http://www.iarld.net)].

**South American Special Education Forum:** The Council for Exceptional Children's Division of International Special Education and Services is co-sponsoring this forum to be held July 9-12, 2007 in Lima, Peru. For information about this event, please contact Clay Keller, *IARLD* Fellow & President of DISES [[ckeller@ecsu.k12.mn.us](mailto:ckeller@ecsu.k12.mn.us)].

## GOALS WITHIN THE *IARLD*

To increase the *visibility, impact, and sphere of influence* of the Academy by:

- 1) Increasing our membership through ongoing membership drive initiatives.
- 2) Encouraging *IARLD* Fellows and Members to list the *IARLD* as an additional affiliation on all publications in journals, books, and newspapers.
- 3) Encouraging *IARLD* Fellows and Members to list the *IARLD* as an additional affiliation on all conference presentations.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE 2006 *IARLD* CONFERENCE in Boulder, Colorado

*IARLD*'s 30<sup>th</sup> annual conference was held this past July in sunny Boulder, Colorado, USA. Fifty participants from eight countries, including Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Slovenia, Spain, Taiwan, and the United States, joined together for thought-provoking presentations and lively discussions. The program included two invited talks, four symposia, five roundtables, and 14 poster presentations. There were several conference highlights. Dr. Malka Margalit presented an exceptional William Cruickshank Memorial Lecture (detailed in this issue of Updates). Another highlight was Dr. Richard Olson's enlightening invited talk, *Genetic and environmental influences on reading development*. Dr. Elana Bloom was recognized for her outstanding dissertation, *Recognition, expression, and understanding facial expressions of emotions in adolescents with nonverbal and general learning disabilities*. Symposia topics included: cognitive, affective, and executive function processes, impairment in frontal executive function and the learning and behavior of children and adults with dyslexia, mathematics learning disabilities, and LD research on line. In roundtable discussions, participants explored issues of phonological processing as a predictor of

reading skills, career pathways for urban adolescents with and without LD, self-disclosure and adults with learning disabilities, English language learners from multiple language backgrounds, and culturally diverse early adolescents with learning disabilities as narrators.

## WILLIAM CRUICKSHANK MEMORIAL LECTURE

Malka Margalit, Tel-Aviv University

**Loneliness, the Salutogenic Paradigm and LD:**  
*Current Research, Future Directions, and  
Interventional Implications*

Already 30 years ago, Cruickshank's vision at the time he founded *IARLD* emphasized the advantages of international considerations in LD research. The goals of this lecture, in honor of his memory, were to present cultural dynamics of risk and resilience perspectives in loneliness studies.

Many students with LD experience loneliness in addition to academic difficulties. The Salutogenic paradigm proposes different approaches to understanding loneliness, exploring the origin of health and functioning rather than trying to explain disabilities and disease. This paradigm rejects the dichotomous classification of people as healthy or diseased and identifies factors that may contribute to the dynamic movement of individuals along the health ease/dis-ease continuum.

### The goals of the lecture were:

- To present theory and research, reflecting new research challenges in the loneliness conceptualization and the implications of the Salutogenic paradigm with a focus on experiences of children with LD:
  - Negative and positive perspectives
  - Interpersonal and personal aspects
- To discuss why loneliness may be considered a risk factor, with interventional implications related to current trends in loneliness studies within different contextual perspectives: reflecting cultural differences in schools, families, and community environments and proposing future research challenges.



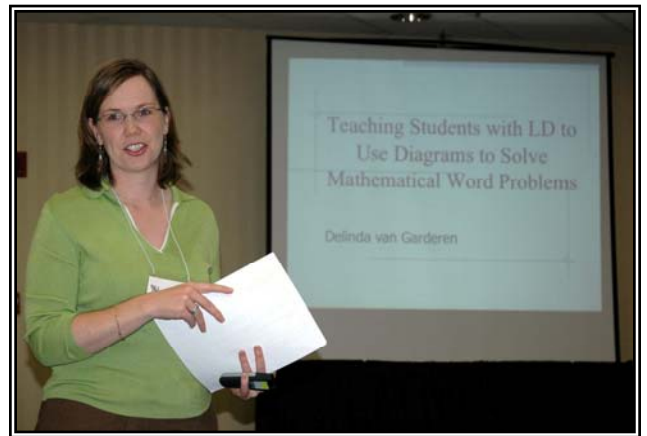
*Lynn Meltzer*, Immediate Past IARLD President



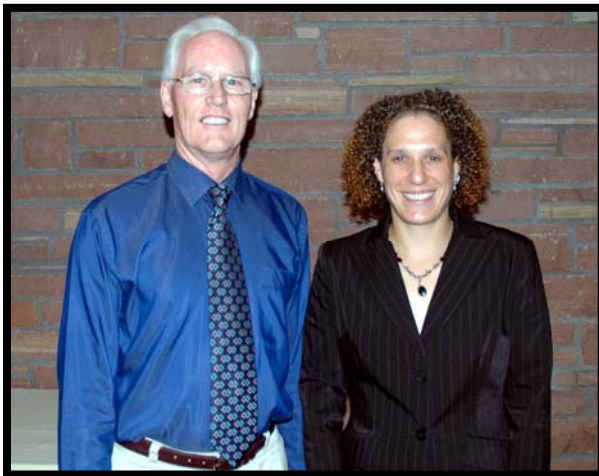
*Malka Margalit*, VP International Development, delivering *Cruickshank Memorial Lecture*



*Lee Swanson*



*Delinda van Garderen*, presentation on math instruction



IARLD President, *James Chapman*, and doctoral award winner, *Elana Bloom*.



*Marshall Raskind*, VP Fellows



## NEWS FROM *IARLD* MEMBERS

**Celinska, Dorota:** Two papers, as follows, were presented at the 2006 annual conference of the American Educational Research Association.

Adolescents with learning disabilities as narrators:

Effects of ethnicity, language, and narrative genre (Special Education Research session *Adolescents & Young Adults with Disabilities*).

Personal and fictional narratives of diverse early adolescents: Effects of ethnicity and learning disability (Social Context of Education session *Rethinking Inclusion and "At-Risk" in 21st-Century Classrooms*).

**Elbeheri, Gad:** *IARLD* Member, Gad Elbeheri, would like to announce that the book, *Dyslexia: A Guide for Teachers and Parents* by Gad Elbeheri and Gavin Reid is now in press. In addition, the following two papers have been published:

Elbeheri, G., & Everatt, J. (2007). Literacy ability and phonological processing skills amongst dyslexic and non-dyslexic speakers of Arabic. *Reading & Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 20(3), 273-294.

Elbeheri, G., Everatt, J., Reid, G., & Al Mannai, H. (2006). Dyslexia assessment in Arabic. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 6(3), 143-152.

**Fawcett, Angela:** As of January 2007, Professor Fawcett has taken up a new position as research chair in Child Development, and Co-Director of the Centre for Child Research at the University of Wales, Swansea.

**Heath, Nancy:** Associate Professor at McGill University and *IARLD* Fellow, Nancy Heath, would like to announce publication of the two following papers related to her work in LD:

Heath, N. L. et al. (2006). Turf and tension: Psychiatric and inclusive communities servicing students referred for emotional and behavioural difficulties in the schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10, 335-346.

Heath, N. L., & Glen, T. (2005). Positive illusory bias and the self-protective hypothesis in children with learning disabilities. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 34(2), 272-281.

**Katz, Lynda:** *IARLD* Fellow, Dr. Lynda J. Katz, President of Landmark College in Putney VT was invited to address a conference of educators which was held at the University of Ljubjana in Slovenia on September 29 and 30 along with the current President of the European Dyslexia Society, Michael Kalmer, Sionah and Colin Lannen from the Red Rose School in England, Dr. Snorre A. Ostad from Norway, Dr. Ann Morrison from Colorado, and Hans Pauli Christiansen from Denmark at the invitation of Dr. Marija Kavkler, a Member of *IARLD* and the program chair for next year's conference in Bled, Slovenia. Dr. Katz's presentation was entitled *The Use of Assistive Technology with College Students with LD and or AD/HD*. Three hundred individuals from around Slovenia and nearby Croatia attended the two day conference including classroom teachers, social workers, educational therapists, university faculty, and parents. The conference was extremely well organized by Dr. Kavkler, her co-faculty members, and the volunteer members from "Bravo" as well as being very dynamic and interactive, with state of the art technology in place and simultaneous translation provided for the non-Slovene speakers via electronic headphones. *IARLD* members should look forward to next year's conference in Bled.

**Leong, Che Kan:** *IARLD* Fellow, Professor Emeritus, Educational Psychology and Special Education, University of Saskatchewan. C. K. Leong was honoured with the Margaret Byrd Rawson Lifetime Achievement Award by the International Dyslexia Association at its 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Indiana, U.S.A. on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2006. In addition, Dr. Leong has published the following articles:

Leong, C. K. (2005). William M. Cruickshank Memorial Lecture: 'WORD' is a many splendored thing: Lessons from Cruickshank, Cerventes and others. *Thalamus*, 24(1), 34-41.

Leong, C.K., Hau, K.T., Cheng, P.W., & Tan, L.H. (2005). Exploring two-wave reciprocal structural relations among orthographic knowledge and phonological sensitivity, and reading and spelling of English words by Chinese students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 97, 591-600. [Correction from *IARLD* Updates 2005-06, Vol 7(3).]

**Montague, Marjorie:** Dr. Montague is pleased to announce the publication of her new book.

Montague, M., & Jitendra, A. (2006). *Teaching mathematics to middle school students with learning difficulties*. New York: Guilford Press.

**Rourke, Byron:** *IARLD* Fellow and Professor at the University of Windsor and Yale University, Byron Rourke has been selected to receive the 2007 Gold Medal Award from the Canadian Psychological Association. This award reflects appreciation of Dr. Rourke's distinguished and enduring lifetime contributions to Canadian Psychology. He will be presented with this award on June 7, 2007, at the Welcoming Ceremony of CPA's annual convention held in Ottawa, Ontario.

**Sawyer, Diane:** *IARLD* Fellow, Diane Sawyer, was guest editor for a special issue of *Topics in Language Disorders* published April, 2006. The issue was titled "Dyslexia in the Current Context". In addition, she contributed the lead article and co-authored the following chapter:

Sawyer, D. (2006). Dyslexia: A Generation of Inquiry. *Topics in Language Disorders*. Dyslexia in the Current Context, 26, 95-109.

Sawyer, D. J., & Joyce, M. J. (2006). Research in spelling: Implication for adult basic education. In J. Comings, B. Garner, and C. Smith (Eds.), *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy, Volume 6, Connecting Research Policy and Practice*. Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.

Additionally, Dr. Sawyer serves as principal investigator for a project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. In 2005-06 the project involved field-testing a set of four modules developed to provide professional development regarding dyslexia for the full range of school professionals. In 2006-07, these modules will be prepared for online delivery. Dr. Sawyer completed a three-year longitudinal study of a 14-item Parent Survey designed to identify entering kindergarten students at-risk of failure in literacy acquisition. The survey is rooted in the extensive literature on "best predictors" and has yielded impressive results. A written report of this work will be finalized in 2006-07; and results of year 2 were presented at the 2005 meeting of the International Dyslexia Association in Denver.

**Van den Broeck, Wendy:** As of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, Professor Van den Broeck left the Leiden University (Netherlands) to begin a new position in Developmental and Lifespan Psychology (Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences) at the "Vrije Universiteit Brussel" (Free University of Brussels). She will continue to do research on reading development and reading disabilities.

**van Kraayenoord, Christa:** *IARLD* Fellow and Associate Professor, School of Education, The University of Queensland, Christa van Kraayenoord has a new research project "*Improving and sustaining literacy through pedagogical change*" with schools in the Brisbane Catholic Education system. Five primary and secondary schools from the Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast areas are involved. Together with her colleagues, Drs. Eileen Honan and Karen Moni, Christa will be working with the schools as they drive their own school-determined action research projects over the next 18 months. The research team will be supporting schools with workshops on undertaking action research and developing teachers' professional knowledge of pedagogical approaches, and with school visits to work with the School Teams and the staff of the various schools. The project is based on the premise that the literacy outcomes of students, including those with learning difficulties and those with disadvantage can be enhanced through teachers who respond pedagogically to assessed student need. However often schools initiate new practices but do not build in how they can be sustained. One of the goals of this research is for the schools to deliberately develop ways of sustaining the changes to pedagogy through the use of the action research cycles.

**West, Thomas:** Last June 2006, in Cheltenham, England, Dr. West – Research Scholar Study Office of the National Library of Medicine – gave an invited presentation for code-making and code-breaking descendants of Bletchley Park. It was their first ever "diversity day" at GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters). Apparently, among the very smart mathematicians, engineers, linguists, analysts, scientists and technologists employed there, there



are a good number of individuals with dyslexia, ADHD, dyspraxia, or Aspergers syndrome. All this used to be top secret at GCHQ. But now they are proud of their diversity support policies and have put it on the web. If you are interested, have a look at their website [www.gchq.gov.uk] ("diversity" section). The GCHQ experience suggests special reasons for the *IARLD* membership to consider serious research on the talents of those with dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

Dr. West spent 3 weeks traveling from Auckland to Christchurch by Toyota van, sponsored by the Learning and Behavior Charitable Trust of NZ. He gave five day-long workshops and one school talk (at a school for computer graphics professionals) in cities and towns along the way. They were able to participate in a total of 12 local and national media spots – including national radio, television, print, and a soon to be released film documentary called "*Decoding Dyslexia*."

## NEW *IARLD* MEMBERS

***IARLD* Member – Rasa Barkauskiene**  
Lecturer, Department of Psychology  
Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania



*What are your current research interests?* My research interests include primary psychosocial functioning of children and adolescents with learning disabilities, comorbidity of learning disabilities and behavioral – emotional disorders. From a developmental psychopathology paradigm, I try to understand the interplay of different factors within and outside a child with learning disability for his/her functioning. I am also

interested in other groups of children with behavioral and emotional problems, especially ADHD.

*How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?* I found the information about the *IARLD* on the internet while searching for professional associations in the field of learning disabilities. It was in 2004. Professor Malka Margalit was the first person I contacted. Since then I have been regularly visiting *IARLD*'s website and have learned that many people whose publications I knew were members of this organization. The possibility to build up professional relationships and present what has been done in Lithuania in the domain of learning disabilities has been a stimulus to come up with a decision to join.

*Tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now.* My professional background is in psychology. After the university, I gained my professional experience in working as a child and adolescent psychologist. Since the early 1990s, I have been involved in the assessment and counseling of children with various developmental disorders. The past 10 years I've been working mainly with children and adolescents with learning disabilities in an assessment, counseling and educational policy making areas. The field of learning disabilities has been very new in Lithuania, and this work has posed many questions. To answer them I needed deeper understanding. This inspired me to move back to university and grounded the direction of my doctoral studies and PhD work. So now, I continue research within the field of learning disabilities, teach *Psychological Assessment* and *Developmental Psychopathology* courses at the university, and also work as a consultant for children/adolescents with learning disabilities, their families and teachers.

*What are your personal hobbies or special interests?* I like reading, learning languages, traveling, and gardening, especially floriculture. These would be my personal hobbies, if I had more time. I am a curious person and many of my interests upspring from a "grasping" a moment – it could be music, new novel, historical

information, any discovery or whatever anything that attracts my attention. Besides my interests, I enjoy just being at home, doing housework, and making home a cozy place for my family.

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***IARLD Member – Kevin K. H. Chung***

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education  
Program Director Special and Inclusive Education  
The University of Hong Kong



***What are your current research interests?*** My main areas of research are developmental dyslexia; literacy acquisition and failure; first-second language acquisition and assessment and measurement.

***How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?*** I have come in contact with IARLD from Professor Malka Margalit. I decided to join the Academy because this could help me to keep in touch with experts in the field and exposure to research in the international focus.

***Tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now.*** I was a classroom teacher working with student disabilities at primary and secondary levels. I became interested in learning disabilities through my own students and later my mentor and colleague Professor Connie Ho who is the expert in Chinese reading acquisition and developmental dyslexia. I received my first degree and PhD in educational psychology. I currently teach courses on educational psychology, research methods and learning disabilities. In May 2007, I will move to The Hong Kong Institute of Education and take up an Associate Professorship.

I am currently conducting research work on developmental dyslexia in Chinese at several aspects and levels. My recent projects are (a) to examine whether Chinese dyslexic children have difficulties in learning to read and write English, (b) investigate the extent to which dyslexic children's affective and socio-contextual factors including motivation, attitude, home literacy support and practices affect learning English, (c) to evaluate the role of perceptual via auditory and visual temporal processing, speech perception and cognitive processing skills, (d) to investigate the profiles of developmental dyslexia in Chinese, (e) to examine various perceptual and cognitive aspects of the pre-attentive and attentive processes through electrophysiological measures (event-related potentials - ERPs) and (f) to examine a long-term development of cognitive profiles in reading performance for Chinese dyslexic children from the transition from childhood to adolescence. Apart from this research, I have also developed assessment tools and remedial training kits for Chinese children with learning disabilities.

***What are your personal hobbies?*** I enjoy travel, photography, and water sports.

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***IARLD Member – Gad Elbeheri***

Consultant, Centre for Child Evaluation & Teaching



***What are your current research interests?*** My current research interests focus on developmental learning difficulties as well as individual differences in literacy acquisition. My work takes a broad cognitive and linguistic developmental approach and I endeavour to make sure that my work is applicable in areas of education, language

acquisition and learning disabilities. I am interested in investigating the relationship between literacy ability/disability and various aspects of language processing. I am also fascinated by cross linguistic-research and its contribution to the manifestation and severity of specific learning disabilities. My research interests have led to various collaborative research projects with colleagues from the UK, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and Jordan.

*How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?* I came to know about *IARLD* when I heard about their activities from a colleague and when I looked up their website, and I did not find any Arab country listed or any Arab member listed, I felt that I should become a member and use this as an opportunity to inform my fellow colleagues about the research taking place either in the Arab World or on monolingual and bilingual Arabic speaking children.

*Tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now.* I have a PhD (2004) in applied linguistics from the Faculty of Arts & Humanities, Durham University, UK. My main focus was looking at Specific Learning Disabilities (Dyslexia) and how it manifests itself in Arabic. I moved to Kuwait in April 2005, where I worked as the United Nations Development Programme Country's expert on Dyslexia right until September 2006. During my work with the UNDP, I also helped the Kuwait Dyslexia Association (KDA) in a number of nationwide projects related to dyslexia in Kuwait. During my time with the KDA, I helped them Arabize a computer-based tool for dyslexia identification (Cognitive Profiling System in Arabic) and I also helped them pilot a nationwide project (Dyslexia Friendly Schools) in collaboration with the British Dyslexia Association. My work with the UNDP and the KDA has enabled me to convince the Ministry of Education in Kuwait to establish a Dyslexia Higher Education Committee, as well as allocate resources and donate a new headquarters for the KDA. I have now moved to work as a Consultant for the Centre for Child Evaluation & Teaching (CCET), a charity established in 1984 to assist individuals with learning disabilities in Kuwait. I

helped them with strategic restructuring and have been working with them to boost awareness levels of LD in Kuwait. I also submitted a number of funding projects for CCET. We are now establishing a national helpline for individuals with LD, establishing an LD specialist library, a national Training Unit as well as developing and Arabizing our diagnostic and assessment tests. We are also working working on a Multisensory Structured Language Programme in Arabic to use it in teaching individuals with learning disabilities in Arabic in Kuwait and elsewhere.

*What are your personal hobbies or special interests?* I like swimming and I workout twice a week in my local gym.

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***IARLD Member – Tali Heiman***

Department of Education and Psychology  
The Open University, Israel



*What are your current research interests?* My current research interests' areas focus on social and emotional aspects of students with learning disabilities in higher education. These areas include students' coping, social support, stress, and adjustment. In addition, I examined the learning strategies and the learning style of students with LD in higher education. I am currently conducting research on the usability and the advantages of the technology (assistive technology, course Forums, e-mails) to students with different disabilities in higher education. Other researches include coping of families with a child with disabilities, teachers' attitudes and inclusion aspects.

*How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?* I heard about *IARLD* at the Bangor conference, Wales, UK. I attend the conference; it was very professional and well organized. As I am interested in learning disabilities and I conduct research in the area, I am pleased to join the Academy.

*Tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now.* I finished all my academic studies at Tel Aviv University (Israel). My B.A. studies were in special education and French literature. I wanted first to be a translator... but I changed the field, and I finish the master degree in educational counseling. I worked as a counselor in regular schools and special education schools for 15 years. My PhD was in special education. For the last 10 years I am a part of the senior academic members of the Open University in Israel, I developed courses in special education (e.g., LD; ADHD), I conducted researches and I trained groups of teachers in the LD areas.

*What are your personal hobbies or special interests?* I enjoy traveling, talking, and exchanging ideas with people; I love movies, long walks, jazz music and chocolate.

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***IARLD Student Member – Wei-Pai Lu***  
 University of Virginia, PhD Student



*What are your current research interests?* I am interested in the Cognitive science of reading and reading disabilities, and how to apply the theoretical knowledge of psychology to the practical implication of diagnosis and remediation

for children with learning disabilities. I am also interested in the cross-linguistic study of dyslexia. Currently I am studying the universal phenomenon of fluency difficulties (in either reading or math facts retrieval) among Chinese and English dyslexic students.

*How did you hear about the IARLD? What made you decide to join?* It was my adviser who introduced me the *IARLD*. I later learned about it from its website and was very impressed that many well-known scholars have joined the *IARLD*. I feel honored to be nominated as a student member and I am really excited that I have the opportunity to meet with these elite researchers and to learn more from them.

*Tell us something about your professional background and what you are doing now.* I have been an advocate for children with learning disabilities since 1996. With great enthusiasm to make learning disabilities information more readily available, I have translated numerous English academic articles and books to Chinese. In order to provide a platform through which high quality research papers in the field of learning disabilities that could be published, I founded the Journal of Learning Disabilities, the first monthly journal of its kind in Taiwan. The journal was well received by many professionals and educators. Furthermore, in 1998, with other advocates' help, I established the Association of Learning Disabilities in Taiwan and was subsequently elected as the first president of the Association.

Although the educational environment for LD students has improved significantly since the association was founded, educators are still struggling with the less than adequate research that has been done on Chinese LD students. Since the Chinese language system is very different from the English language system, the characteristics of Chinese LD children's reading and writing problems are waiting for more research. This prompts me to receive more academic training in order to equip myself as a researcher who can help these children. I chose to study in the US because the US is the leading country of most extensive research in the realm of

learning disability. In 2004, I received my Master degree from Northwestern University Communication Science and Disorder Graduate School with a concentration of learning disabilities. Currently I am perusing a Ph.D. in the Special Education Department at University of Virginia.

*What are your personal hobbies or special interests?* I swim regularly to keep my mind and body balanced. In addition, I occasionally I attend concerts to relax and to refresh my spirit.

## MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSIONS

### ➤ *THALAMUS*

*Thalamus* is the official journal of the *IARLD*. *Thalamus* contains primarily articles contributed by the membership (and colleagues) and focuses especially on issues related to learning disabilities in a global context. In 1994, after the death of *IARLD* Founder, Bill Cruickshank, the *IARLD* initiated the Cruickshank Memorial Lecture at conferences and began publishing the keynote address in *Thalamus*. For further information about submission guidelines, contact Paul Gerber via email [[pgerber@mail1.vcu.edu](mailto:pgerber@mail1.vcu.edu)] or by telephone at 804-828-1332, ext. 529.

### COMING SOON TO THALAMUS!

#### *Learning Disabilities: 10 Years in Review*

This special issue of *Thalamus* will focus on providing a comprehensive review of research developments in the field of LD over the past ten years. Five “hot topics” will be highlighted in review papers, and will feature interviews with Joseph Torgesen, David Geary, Lee Swanson, Rosemary Tannock, and Judith Wiener (edited by Nancy Heath, McGill University).

### ➤ *LEARNING DISABILITIES RESEARCH AND PRACTICE (LDRP)*

Charlie Hughes, *IARLD* fellow and editor of *LDRP* invites submissions. *LDRP* is the journal of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division

for Learning Disabilities. Both research and practice oriented articles are welcome and issues are published quarterly. Extensive information about the journal, including submission guidelines, can be found by going to [<http://www.blackwellpublishing.com>]. Please feel free to contact Charlie if you have any questions. Ideas for Special Issues are also welcome. [[cah14@psu.edu](mailto:cah14@psu.edu)]

### ➤ *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DISABILITY, DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION*

*IARLD* Fellow, Christa van Kraayenoord, is the editor of the *International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education*. She invites submissions of manuscripts for publication in the journal. *IJDDE* is a multi-disciplinary peer-reviewed journal. The *IJDDE* makes a unique contribution to the fields of disability and special education as it attempts to draw together the areas of disability, human development and education. The Journal provides an outlet for all aspects of theory, research and practice including such topics as identification, assessment, education, support and intervention of children and adults within their families and communities. The Journal is inclusive of descriptions or cross-cultural comparisons of education, special education and rehabilitation in developed and developing countries. For guidelines, please visit our website [[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/cijdauth.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/cijdauth.asp)] or contact Christa [[c.vankraayenoord@uq.edu.au](mailto:c.vankraayenoord@uq.edu.au)].

## POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS

*University of Miami, School of Education*  
Special Education – High Incidence Disabilities

The School of Education, University of Miami, located on the Coral Gables Campus, a 260-acre tract in the city of Coral Gables, invites applications for an assistant, associate, or full professor in special education. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate classes, conducting research, supervising doctoral students in the Ph.D. program in special education, and obtaining external funding for research and training activities. The successful candidate is

expected to have a research agenda appropriate to a Research I institution. The tenure-line position is open until filled.

A letter of application, curriculum vitae, three letters of recommendation, and official graduate transcripts should be sent to Marjorie Montague, Special Education Search Committee Chair, University of Miami, School of Education, P.O. Box 248065, Coral Gables, FL 33124. Please direct all inquiries to [[mmontague@miami.edu](mailto:mmontague@miami.edu)].

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*The City University of New York, Hunter College*  
 Department of Special Education  
 Special Education (Learning Disabilities)  
 [[www.hunter.cuny.edu](http://www.hunter.cuny.edu)]

Hunter College in NYC is seeking a faculty member to join an outstanding graduate department to teach in master's degree program. Qualifications: A doctorate in special education or a related area. College teaching experience or in-service teacher training is a plus. Scholarship is highly valued. Anticipated opening, September 2007. Contact Professor Kate Garnett, Chair of Search Committee [[kgarnett@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:kgarnett@hunter.cuny.edu)]

## SEARCHING FOR FUTURE CONTRIBUTION TO *UPDATES*

We are looking for submissions from the *IARLD* membership for either of our feature columns: "*LD around the World*" or "*Thoughts from the Academy*". If you would like to write a column about thoughts/issues that are fresh in your mind, or a column sharing information about how learning disabilities are perceived, assessed, serviced, and researched within your country, please contact Nancy [[nancy.heath@mcgill.ca](mailto:nancy.heath@mcgill.ca)].

**PLEASE SEND YOUR NEWS BRIEFS**  
 to *IARLD* Updates Editor,  
 Nancy Heath [[nancy.heath@mcgill.ca](mailto:nancy.heath@mcgill.ca)]

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 31<sup>ST</sup> *IARLD* CONFERENCE JULY 5-7, 2007



Don't miss the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual *IARLD* Conference! It will be held July 5-7, 2007, in Bled, Slovenia. Hotel reservations can be made at Hotel Kompas, contact Jelka Cerne [[jelka.cerne@kh-bled.si](mailto:jelka.cerne@kh-bled.si)]. Following the model of the successful conference in Valencia, Spain in 2005 and Boulder, Colorado, USA in 2006 the conference will include three presentation formats: interactive posters, symposia, and roundtable discussions. Topics will include language-based LD, math disabilities, adolescents and adults with LD, plus much more, and, of course, the Cruickshank Memorial Lecture, in honor of William Cruickshank, the founder of *IARLD*.

Proposal submission deadline has been extended to **April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007**. For further information, please visit [[www.iarld.net](http://www.iarld.net)].

### Questions?

Email conference co-chairpersons:  
 Marja Kavkler [[marja.kavkler@guest.arnes.si](mailto:marja.kavkler@guest.arnes.si)]  
 Marjorie Montague [[mmontague@iarld.com](mailto:mmontague@iarld.com)]



**SEE YOU IN JULY!**

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