



Ages for learning and growth: Sociocultural perspectives (AGILE)

FOUNDING: 1 January 2015

E-CIR SCOPE

AGILE aims at expanding socio-cultural psychology to research the field of learning and development of elderly people, that is of persons in a period of their lifecourse in which they are usually considered as “ageing” (by others and/or themselves). As a matter of fact, learning and development of elderly people remains largely unexplored from this perspective.

Consequently, AGILE studies development and learning as a situated activity, pays particular attention to the variety of spheres of experiences in which persons are engaged, their mutual relations and their reconfiguration, and focuses on the way in which people maintain, transform or develop interests and future orientations.

More specifically, the project consists of:

- ❑ identifying research topics where socio-cultural psychology could add significant new perspectives and types of analysis;
- ❑ undertaking theoretical expansion to scrutinise the concepts that might illuminate the study of these research topics;
- ❑ drawing on recent developments in socio-cultural psychology (in particular with regard to mediated action and semiotic tools) to develop new methods adapted to the study of learning and development of elderly people;
- ❑ exploring the practical relevance and consequences of such theoretical and methodological propositions for the employment, health, housing, and independence of elderly people.

E-CIR MEMBERS

Michèle Grossen is professor of social psychology at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland). Drawing on a dialogical approach to thinking and learning, her research focuses on learning and interaction in various social and institutional settings, as well as on dialogues and the construction of shared knowledge in the field of healthcare and psychotherapy. Her recent research projects led her to study the role of materiality in the transition into elderly home (with Tania Zittoun) and in collaborative work in healthcare.

Tania Zittoun is a professor at the Institute of psychology and education, University of Neuchâtel, in Switzerland. A sociocultural psychologist, she has studied transitions in the lifecourse, and the role of fiction and imagination in learning and development. Together with Michèle Grossen, she has studied uses of knowledge in and out of schools, as well as the transition to the elderly home. She is currently interested in expanding theories of learning and development in the “ageing”



person. She is Associate Editor of *Culture & Psychology*, and her recent books include the monograph *Imagination in human and cultural development* with Alex Gillespie (Routledge, 2016), and the forthcoming edited *Handbook of culture and imagination* with Vlad Glaveanu (Oxford University Press).

Aleksander Baucal, PhD, is Professor at the Department of Psychology at the University of Belgrade, Serbia. His main field of interest are socio-cultural studies of developmental and educational processes and their inter-relation with various personal, institutional and socio-cultural contexts. His research studies are mainly focused on learning of new competencies through interaction with others and by using diverse symbolic and technology tools as well as how learning processes are constituted, structured, and mediated by the socio-cultural context. In his research studies he combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies in various ways. Currently, he is the Editor in Chief of the *European Journal of Psychology of Education* and member of editorial board of *Educational Research Review*.

Peter Renshaw is professor of Education in the Brisbane University, Australia. His research focuses on learning and teaching processes both at school and tertiary level. With a team of colleagues in the School of Education at UQ, he is currently investigating the quality of teaching and assessment practices in schools across Queensland. These projects are framed by a sociocultural theory of education that foregrounds the social and cultural construction of knowledge and identity, and the responsibility of educators to create challenging, inclusive and supportive learning contexts for diverse groups of students. He currently is on the International Advisory Board of CICERO Learning, an interdisciplinary research centre at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

Pernille Hviid is associate professor at the Department of Psychology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Her research focuses on developmental processes from a Cultural Life Course perspective. Her empirical focus has mainly been on children's life and development in institutional practices and on the development of educational and managerial practices, aiming at caring for and educating children. Recently a study of elderly persons has begun. It centers on elderly people's life and their continued engagement in societal political and humanitarian processes through the NGO "Grandparents for asylum". At present she edits (in prep.) *Culture in Education and Education in Cultures: Tensioned Dialogues and Creative Fits*. Hviid is editor of the open access on-line journal: *Outlines: Critical Practice Studies*.

Kyoko Murakami is Associate Professor in Psychology at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Her research focuses on aspects of cognition such as learning, identity and memory, examining language use and social relations in practices of education and discourses of remembering. Her research draws on Discursive Psychology, Cultural Psychology and Discourse Analysis and other qualitative approaches including ethnography. Her recent projects and publications relevant to educational research include internationalisation in a Danish University and an edited book titled *Dialogic Pedagogy* (2016). Since 1998 she has been researching on international reconciliation practices such as war grave pilgrimages by British veterans (e.g., 2014, under review), family reminiscence as memory practice (2017), materiality of memory (2017) and intergenerational



succession of memories of catastrophes and disasters in Japan (in progress). She is an editorial board member for *Culture & Psychology* and a review editor for *Dialogic Pedagogy* and *Frontier in Psychology*.

Roger Saljö, Ph. D., Doctor honoris causa, is professor of educational psychology at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. He specializes in research on learning, interaction and human development in a sociocultural perspective, where he has published extensively. Much of this work is related to issues of how people learn to use cultural tools and how we acquire competences and skills that are foundational to learning and participation in a socially and technologically complex society. He has been visiting professor at many universities in Europe and elsewhere, and he is also a former president of EARLI.

Valérie Tartas is a Professor in developmental psychology at the University of Toulouse Jean-Jaurès in the interdisciplinary research laboratory CLLE (Cognition, Langues, Langage, Ergonomie) in which she is co-director of a research team working on developmental psychology. She works within a cultural-historical approach to child development of thinking in (formal and informal) learning contexts. She participated in two different European projects about learning in and through argumentation and her research focuses on cultural tools as means to enhance the development of ideas and collaboration.

Sanne Akkerman works as Professor of Educational Sciences at Leiden University Graduate School of Teaching, Leiden University in The Netherlands. She has been studying processes and effects of both 'horizontal' transitions (i.e. between school-home-peer-work contexts or within boundary crossing, interdisciplinary and inter-professional, collaborations) and 'vertical' transitions in educational and career on the way people learn and develop their interests and identities. She is currently starting up an ERC project in which she investigates life-wide and longer term interest development of students transitioning to postsecondary and early career. At the core of her research lies a focus on multiplicity within individuals and their social participations and the ultimate ambition to integrate sociocultural and sociological with cognitive psychological traditions both theoretically and methodologically. She is one of the establishing editors of *Frontline Learning Research*.

With the participation of **Isabelle Tournier**, PhD, is a postdoctoral researcher in gerontology and psychology at the University of Luxembourg within the research unit INSIDE. Her research interests include normal and pathological cognitive aging, cognitive and behavioral adaptation, habits and routines, mobility, and non-pharmacological approaches promoting health and well-being in older adults.

We are very sad to announce the sudden passing of professor **Dieter Fierring**, who was a member until his death upon August third 2017. He was a professor of developmental psychology and geropsychology at the University of Luxembourg. We offer our condolences to his family, friends and colleagues.

E-CIR MEETINGS

- ❑ March 2018
- ❑ 3-4 November 2017 (Leuven, Belgium)
- ❑ 17-18 March 2017 (Neuchâtel, Switzerland)
- ❑ 27 August 2016 (Tartu, Estonia)
- ❑ 28-29 April 2016 (Leuven, Belgium)
- ❑ 12-13 November 2015, (Leuven, Belgium)
- ❑ 8-9 May 2015 (Leuven, Belgium)

ANNUAL REPORT:

[Report 2016](#)



From the left to the right: Roger Säljö, Valérie Tartas, Dieter Ferring, Kyoko Murakami, Tania Zittoun, Pernille Hviid, Aleksander Baucal, Isabelle Tournier (*missing Michèle Grossen & Peter Renshaw*)