

**A VYGOTSKYAN EDUCATIONAL  
PSYCHO-SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE  
OF INTERPSYCHOLOGY IN  
CLASSROOM TEACHING AND  
TEACHER SOCIALIZATION:  
THEORIES, INSTRUMENT, AND  
INTERPRETIVE ANALYSES**

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**To**

*Professor Kevin Marjoribanks,*

*My professor and mentor*

It all began in that wallless room,  
where you sat at the other side of the table and listened.

Today, as people have done for thousands of years,

I burn these pages.

The reply from you will be the most awesome of all.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study reviewed and dialogued with Vygotsky's epistemology and developmental psycho-semiotics, where development results from the dialectic connections between phylogeny and ontogeny, consciousness and unconsciousness, society and individuality, all of which are mediated in the relationship between language and thinking. Based on Vygotsky's developmental psycho-semiotics and contemporary psychoanalytic theories, this study discussed an educational psycho-semiotics, concerning the mediational mechanism of teaching as the environment of learning. 'How does teaching influence learning in a mediational way', and particularly, 'how is the dialectic speech-thinking relationship reflected in teaching and teacher socialization' were the core problems. To the core problems, this study provided a tentative, three-fold response, involving a theoretical, an instrumental, and an interpretive analytical component.

Theoretically, it argued that while the simultaneity of interpersonal infusion and intrapersonal integration underlies individual development, the simultaneity or synchronicity of intrapsychological and interpsychological communications defines the quality of teacher-initiated educational relationship and socialization. An acausal, apperceptive cycle, teachers' intrapsychology – interpsychology – students' intrapsychology was identified as the fundamental educational mechanism. Reflecting this fundamental mechanism were four structural principles in the higher (i.e., mediated) forms of teaching and teacher socialization. These were the structure of task and

participation, functional systematicity in conceptual teaching, interpsychological encounter between teacher and students, and the internal order of interaction.

As the study was conducted in the discipline of English as an Additional Language (EAL), Vygotsky's developmental theory on language and thinking and its particular implications for L2 education were also considered. For better understanding of teachers' psychological operations, the notion of scientific concepts was reinterpreted. Four features of scientific conceptual functionality were described, which corresponded with the structural principles of mediated teaching.

In the second component of the study, a tentative instrument was established, with four dimensions (structural, conceptual, social conceptual, and historical) and each at external and internal levels, for the interpretation of teachers' intrapsychology as the precondition for teacher-student interpsychology.

The final component responded to the central question of mediated teaching and teacher socialization with interpretive analyses of classroom data collected from three senior secondary ESL teachers at three Adelaide schools. Episodes of teaching and teacher-student conversations were interpreted from the four dimensions at external and internal levels so as to shed light on the acausal, apperceptive mechanism that originates from teachers' intrapsychology to teacher-student interpsychology. Overall, despite surface differences in curriculum contents, tasks, semantics of teachers' speech, and student clienteles, analyses showed that the mechanism of teacher intrapsychology – interpsychology – student intrapsychology could be used in understanding teaching and teacher socialization across school and classroom settings.

In replying to the central problem of the research, i.e., how does teaching influence learning in a mediational way, or how is speech-thinking relationship reflected in teaching and teacher socialization, the theoretical, instrumental, and analytical components of the study did not proceed in a temporal sequence. All three components interacted and mutually facilitated one another. This research methodology was likened to an equation between two unknowns and could be described as the heuristic inquiry. A heuristic inquiry was necessary because of the study's conceptualization of the research problem, i.e., teaching and teacher socialization, not as causal, but as the acausal and apperceptive origins of learning. With regards to the distinctive research methodology, this study did not present a final, conclusive answer to the problem, but a cohesive platform on which future research can be built.

## DECLARATION

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\* Matthews, R. S. & Liu, C. H. (in print) Educating the creating imagination: a synthesis of Jung and Vygotsky, in Jones, R. (Ed.) *Jung and Education*, Routledge, London.

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