

ISCAR Executive Committee Meeting

Moscow, Russia, 2 October 2006

Minutes for the meeting held Monday, 2 October 2006, 9 am - 7:00 pm,
Moscow, Russia

Present members: Antonia Candela, Seth Chaiklin, Anne-Nelly Perret-Clermont, Harry Daniels, Fran Hagstrom, Inger Eriksson, Vitaly Rubtsov, Ana Luiza Bustamante Smolka and Irina Verenikina.

Apologies from members unable to attend: Alberto Rosa, Naoki Ueno

In attendance: Arkady Margolis

Chair: Seth Chaiklin

Secretary: Irina Verenikina

I. Society Business

Introduction:

The vision of ISCAR – discussion of the “big picture”

The points of discussion:

- The vision of ISCAR – how centralised should it be? Should it lead or just support local initiatives and activities?
- What activities should ISCAR exec committee undertake? Are there enough activities?
- What are our connections with other disciplines?

Discussion – firstly in small groups and then – together.

The vision of ISCAR:

- It's a porous organisation, it includes different streams of thought, it develops in a heterogeneous manner; it allows us to be in dialogue and discuss practical applications as well as conduct international talks about the theory (need to keep away from the dichotomy of theoretical vs. applied research)
- Creates feeling of belonging: working in the same tradition of thought; creates better conditions for discussion

Possible actions:

- Sharing information
 - building overviews of work – maybe organised by language
 - position papers which encourage discussion
- Support special issues of Journals
- Support connections for student exchange
- Maintain connections with other societies

- Create possibilities for dialogue, create environment which encourages dialogue.
- Think how we can say which activities can be regarded as ISCAR activities and which are not.

Resolution: maybe we need to write up a one page statement which we can pass on to the next Executive Committee and new president.

II. Coordinators

II.1. Clarification of sections

- Sections are supposed to report to the Exec committee at the end of every year and then see whether the section should continue its work and whether or not to make it formalised. Each section can form its own structure and their own regulations.
- Sections need facilitation of their work:
 - support to get started
 - put their titles on the web
 - what kind of assistance can be given from exec committee?

II.2. Clarification of coordinators' work

- Support communication and sharing info.
- Regions should not be strictly defined as there are regions which speak more than one language and they might want to form ISCAR communities based on a shared language; however, this might be problematic to as there are many geographically remote areas which speak the same language
- All and each region are different and there is no one unified way to coordinate them.

II.3. ISCAR local websites

- Some regions developed quite sophisticated websites, eg Russian, Danish, Japanese.
- The purpose – information and communicative function. Italian website has been developed.
- How do you name the regions? Nationalities, language and regions should not be the base. Regions are not stable, they can be changed. Thus, there is no need to give regions a name. Sometimes the regions are formed in an artificial manner
- Local websites might be a problem in a multi-lingual region; some regions might decide not to have their own website

II.4. Recruiting members.

- There are about 550 members now in ISCAR.
- Idea of identity is important in joining the society
- Recruiting on the basis of benefits – what do people get by becoming a member?

II.5. Membership benefits – this issue is to be combined with III.2

There are many benefits now on the website: Journal subscription at a reduced cost; newsletter.

Also, the fees of ISCAR are quite low – US\$50 per year for regular member and US\$25 for students

III.1. ISCAR newsletter

- There is a problem with the newsletter – who is going to take over from Seth to produce it? Seth has worked on it for the past 4 years.
- There were some suggestions to create a bulletin board so people could upload info, that they want to share, by themselves.

Action plan: Antonia will talk to Gilberto Perez who might be happy to look after the newsletter and involve people from his group to share responsibilities for it.

III.2. ISCAR website

- ISCAR website is located on Seth's home computer and there is a need for somebody to take over as Seth cannot do it by himself anymore. It needs to be moved to a proper location such as a Web Hotel so it could be available to other members to maintain, not only to Seth. In other words, ISCAR website needs to be institutionalised. It needs to become a property of ISCAR not the current president or exec committee.

Action plan: Create a working party (a publication committee) to find a solution to institutionalise the website of ISCAR. Anna-Nelly, Vitaly and Antonia volunteered to be on the committee. Maybe Alberto Rosa could be involved too either in Website production or Newsletter. There is money available to support the web production and the newsletter. The working party is to estimate the cost of these activities.

III.2. Supporting and initiating intellectual activities.

- A system of entering publications in the socio-cultural and cultural-historical paradigm can be created. There is a need to look for a database shell program so members can enter their publications. However, it is not a straight forward problem. There are language barriers and there is a need to clarify what needs to be centralised and what can be done locally.
- What intellectual activities can be supported by ISCAR? There is a request to support translation of Vygotsky's letters.
- We might spend money to write up applications for money to support people who need help attending ISCAR congresses.
- Mariane Hedegaard had 11,000 Euro surplus from the Aarhus ISCRAT Congress. She used some of this money to support the costs for Vladislav Lektorsky (travel and hotel) to attend the 2003 ISCAR Executive Committee meeting, and the remainder she will use for a conference for the Cultural-Historical Approaches to Children's Development and Childhood (CHACDOC) Section of ISCAR.
- There is a need to create a party to develop a budget policy.

Action plan: Fran is to develop a proposal for how to manage budget.

VII. 2008 San Diego ISCAR Congress - Meeting with organisers

In attendance: Olga Vasquez, organiser of the congress in San Diego

- **Suggested dates:** 7-13 September 2008 (this is suitable for local schedule)

- At that time **accommodation** will be available for 500 people on campus plus 100 people can be accommodated in apartments.
- **The Logo** was presented by Olga and the exec committee was happy to delegate the decision on the San Diego Congress Logo to the local committee. However, a wish was expressed that the local logo doesn't include USA but San Diego in it. It also was recommended that the logo of ISCAR be used in all the documents along with the local logo.
- **The content** of the congress: a general theme. Local committee suggested a general theme around the ideas of "making a difference" and "diversity".

Action plan: The exec committee suggested that the local hosting committee formulates a theme of the congress and then e-mail it to exec committee to discuss.

- **The structure:** the exec committee and the local committee will share responsibility on choosing key-note speakers and the structure. There is a need for a balanced point of view on these issues. Maybe it is useful to identify a few main themes (perhaps four) for the congress and invite key notes for each of the themes. To have themes is important.

Action plan: To identify the themes, the three following steps need to be undertaken:

1. Olga and local committee identify some themes and key-notes in accord with the themes and e-mail them to the exec committee
2. Exec committee is to discuss the themes/key-notes and maybe add few more
3. Exec committee send the elaborated themes back to Olga to finalise

The proposals for symposia will be called in accord with the identified themes

Overall balance: the local committee suggests two key-note speakers and opening address

- **Papers selection and acceptance:**

Questions discussed: should an international committee be formed to select the papers? What are the criteria for acceptance? What publications can come out of it?

- Make themes as criteria for paper acceptance might be difficult: people might be forced to re-describe their research in Vygotsky's terms to fit into the themes
- Paper selection needs to be a collaboration of local committee and experts who will work with the papers in their symposia
- Also, do we want to accept newcomers who want to learn more about the theory?
- Suggestion about publication: publish extended abstracts with references on a CD. Also, four themes of the congress might become a basis for four books.

Action plan: continue the discussion over e-mail in order to work out the selection committee and the criteria; in particular, do we need outside people on selection committee or would it be exec committee and local committee only?

- **Language** of the Congress: there need to be a diversity; English can be one language, and another should be a local suggestion.

Action plan: The exec committee is not making a decision on language; it is up to local committee to decide on the languages of the congress and how translations, if necessary, can be arranged.

- **Financial issues:** Exec committee can provide organising committee of the congress with some seed money to help the organisation to get started.

A suggestion: If the local hosting organisation (UCSD) is to make profit it will pay back to the exec committee and share profit 50/50.

- **Fees of the congress**
 - Fees should be the same for everyone (no low fee for any country in order not to single them out)
 - There should be differentiation in
 - students fees
 - early bird fees
 - member/non member fees

Conclusion of the meeting:

It was a long and productive work, many thanks to everyone; many topics were discussed which makes it easier now to continue the conversations via e-mail.