

## ARE YOU DOING INQUIRY ALONG THESE LINES?

*This regular feature describes proposed or current scholarly work around which networks of researchers might be formed. Those interested in specific research paradigms, problems or questions, inquiry approaches, or other related aspects of curriculum and/or supervision may use this Journal as a contact point for communicating informally. Anyone wishing to suggest a focus for such a network should prepare a brief sketch of the particular research interest (in 600 words or less, double-spaced) and submit it, along with the name and address of the contact person, to the editors for consideration.*

### ORDERING METACOGNITION STUDIES

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One suspects that something is up when a computer search of ERIC databases using an uncommon, single descriptor yields over 200 articles and papers, most of them published within the last three years. Such was the case recently when I asked for a bibliography of documents using the descriptor "metacognition."

The resulting list was not only numerous but diverse: articles treated primary grades, middle schools, high schools, university settings, and private and public schooling. There were papers inquiring about, or reporting on, metacognitive features in mathematics, English, written composition, reading, linguistics, teacher training, gifted learners, handicapped learners, adult education, gerontology, curriculum design, art, memory, social development, computers, and educational policy. And that's only a partial listing.

Complicating the matter, investigators have used various other terms synonymously, or at least in an unmistakably related way: learning strategies, cognitive strategies, metaknowledge, comprehension instruction, comprehension monitoring, cognitive training, cognitive education, learning how to learn, and probably dozens of others. Given this surprisingly prevalent, diverse, and complex effort in the field, we have to ask, "What relationships, what connections, are to be seen or discovered among the disparate inquiries that will permit us to understand, in some practical—or at least intelligent—way, what we have?"

As an example of the difficulty of categorizing productively these related ideas, consider the possibility that as homely (and time-honored) a practice as "study skills" (say, the SQ3R method) qualifies as an example of metacognition. Yet, the same designation is applied to a procedure as sophisticated as "ambiguity detection" in linguistics.

The benefits to students claimed for the "new" cognition are substantial and compel us to take seriously the scholarly activity of the field. Additionally, the potential impact on curriculum studies is great. Maybe we would take it seriously more willingly and efficiently if the information were organized according to some rational plan.

Is anyone doing inquiry along the lines of the logical ordering of metacognitive studies? I hope no one will be offended if I point out that the question as framed is not the same as asking if anyone is doing work on metacognition.

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### **ACTION SCIENCE NETWORK**

Colin M. Glanville, a Master of Educational Administration candidate, at the University of New England, Armidale, Australia, has offered to serve as contact person for a network of those who are interested in, or are doing, research in action science as described in the initial issue of this *Journal* [See "Are You Doing Inquiry Along These Lines?" *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 1 (Fall 1985): 72-73.] Glanville's research examines professional development needs of the Royal Australian Army Educational Corps Personnel. This research attempts to identify issues as seen by the actors involved, to identify values held, and to influence change in organizational dynamics as a result of the researcher's research and involvement in intra-organization interactions.

Researchers wishing to establish contact with an action science network, share reports of work done or in progress, or resolve problems related to this approach, should write to COLIN M. GLANVILLE, 5 Westdale Court, Watsonia, Victoria 3087, Australia.

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