Advisors Commentary

As noted in my introductory editorial (vol. 1-1), TICL was founded as a natural successor to the *Journal of Structural Learning* — with the primary purpose of encouraging discourse among heretofore-disparate groups. Founded in the late 1960s by Z.P. Dienes, *JSL* covered a field of inquiry later defined as “the science of cognitive, instructional and intelligent systems engineering”. In fact, “structural learning” as an area of inquiry predates the “cognitive sciences” — first defined in the mid 1970s — by almost ten years.

A considerable body of empirical and theoretical research has been done in “structural learning” over the past 40 plus years, initially in the mathematical, instructional and cognitive sciences and later in instructional technology and software engineering. Much of this research remains highly relevant today given its long-term emphasis on increasingly precise understanding of broad conceptual issues.

It is especially gratifying to find many of the excellent articles in TICL this year addressing critical problems my colleagues and I grappled with decades ago. Much of our earlier work, however, was published in *JSL* and scattered psychological, educational, mathematical and computer science journals and is unfamiliar to many contemporary specialists.

Given the outstanding work being done by our co-editors, Norbert Seel and Peter Brusilovsky, one of my most important roles as senior advisor is to facilitate continuity with *JSL* and the disparate fields that make up TICL today, and to encourage positive dialog. Toward this end, I will from time to time in the course of reading final edited manuscripts add Advisory footnotes highlighting important relationships to seminal research in structural learning. My comments will be selective but hopefully useful in planning future research.

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