

Cognitive Physics Education Research§

This bibliography has been compiled primarily for the purpose of helping individuals get started in physics education research and/or helping them make use of this research in their teaching. While an attempt has been made to make the bibliography reasonably extensive, no attempt has been made to be exhaustive. The materials included are concerned with cognitive research, i.e., investigations of such matters as attitude, motivation, and learning style, to name a few, have been excluded. Most of the papers listed come out of a particular theoretical framework such as Diagetian or Information-Processing.

The materials in this bibliography have been categorized, hopefully to make it easier to find something of interest. The categories below have been generated by one individual so they are clearly not meant to be definitive. These categories, and their titles, should be thought of as rough identifiers designed to help narrow any search. In the same way the descriptions found with each category title are only intended as a rough guide to what the category contains.

Finally the categories are not mutually exclusive. In fact they tend to overlap in several ways. For example, all of the theoretical frameworks involve research on problem solving. In the same way information processing psychologists are interested in both declarative knowledge, closely related to what we have called conceptual understanding below, and procedural knowledge, such things as problem solving and mathematical skills. The articles in the various categories have been placed, as best we can, in the category associated with their major emphasis.

Three other aspects of the bibliography are intended to aid the beginner. First, articles which are primarily of an overview or review nature, rather than a specific research report, are indicated with an asterisk. Second, a group of books relating to cognitive and/or physics education research have been listed in the last section. Third, a list of journals, their publishers, and sponsoring organizations is given at the end of the bibliography. A number of these journals are typically found only in larger libraries.

Finally, since it is the hope of the AAPT Committee on Research in Physics Education that this bibliography will be useful, any suggestions for modifications, revisions, and additions would be appreciated. Please send any such items to:

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1) Conceptual Understanding

The articles in this section are concerned with the qualitative understanding of physics. For example, what do students typically understand as the meaning of terms such as velocity and acceleration? Many of the articles found in this category deal with "alternate conceptions," a phrase used first by Driver and Easley, to describe the way students think of some physical concept. Probably the most familiar example, to a physics teacher, is the "heavier falls faster" alternate conception.

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8) Books

The books listed contain many articles that range over most of the topics in this bibliography. They are not listed in any specific order.

The Psychology of Teaching for Thinking and Creativity, Lawson, A.E. (Ed.), 1980 AETS Yearbook ERIC, Columbus, OH (1979). This book contains a number of articles describing several of the theoretical paradigms and the research involved. A good reference for someone getting started.

Proceedings of the International Seminar on Misconceptions in Science and Mathematics, Helm, H. and J.D. Novak (Eds.), Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY (1983). This volume contains a wealth of material about current research on conceptual understanding.

Cognitive Process Instruction, Lochhead, J. and J. Clement (Eds.), The Franklin Institute Press, Philadelphia, PA (1979). An excellent volume with several very good overview articles and specific examples of the application of research findings to classroom instruction.

Mechanisms of Cognitive Development, Sternberg, R.J. (Ed.), W.H. Freeman & Co., San Francisco, CA (1984). A recent collection of articles, by various researchers, on their research on cognitive development.

Human Abilities: An Information Processing Approach, Sternberg, R.J. (Ed.), W.H. Freeman & Co., San Francisco, CA (1994). A collection of articles by researchers, all operating from an information processing theory of cognition, based on their recent work. Includes a chapter on problem solving ability.

Developmental Implications of Science Teaching: Early Adolescence, Wollman, W.T. ERIC/SMEAC (1978). This is a useful critique of the Piagetian theory with an introduction to other, primarily information processing, approaches to science education research.

Proceedings of the International Workshop on Problems concerning Students' Representation of Physics and Chemistry Knowledge, Jung, W., H. Pfundt, and D.V. Rhoneck (Eds.), Paeagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg, Ludwigsburg, West Germany (1981). Another volume containing a large variety of articles on current research on conceptual understanding. This volume is especially rich in articles on electrical circuit investigations.

Mental Models, Gentner, D. and A.L. Stevens (Eds.), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ (1983). Most of the systems considered in this volume are physical systems. Several of the articles can be read without any background in contemporary psychology, for example, the ones by di Sessa, Larkin, McCloskey, and Clement. However, a number of the other articles really require knowledge of information processing theory to be fully understood. The character of the presentations in this volume is quite variable since some of the authors are physics education researchers, while others are psychologists.

Aspects of Understanding Electricity: Proceedings of an International Workshop, Duit, R., W. Jung, and C. von Rhoneck (Eds.), IPN-Arbeitsberichte (1985). The papers in this volume are organized into three areas: students' conceptions and problem solving processes, methods of investigations, and teaching electricity.

Cognitive Structure and Conceptual Change, West, L.H.T. and A.L. Pines (Eds.), 1985 Academic Press, Inc., NY (1985). Three chapters in this volume are directly concerned with physics. Two of the three are by Champagne, Gunstone, and Klopfer, and the third is by Fred Reif. The other chapters all essentially fit into the "constructivist" paradigm of learning.

Thinking and Learning Skills: Volume 2 Research and Open Questions, Chipman, S.F., J.W. Segal, and R. Glaser (Eds.), Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ (1985). A survey volume about cognitive research, including a section on problem solving with a chapter by Jill Larkin. Other sections deal with research on such matters as knowledge acquisition, intelligence and reasoning, and approaches to the teaching of cognitive skills.

Learning in Science: The Implications of Children's Science, Osborne, R. and P. Freyberg, Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, written by staff members of the Learning in Science Project at the University of Waikato, New Zealand (1985). The children's science of the title is that of subjects from about 10 to 17 years of age.

Children's Ideas in Science, Driver, R., E. Guesne, and A. Tiberghien (Eds.), Open University Press, Milton Keynes, Philadelphia, PA (1985). The chapters in this volume are written by individuals who have carried out investigations on alternative conceptions, alternative

frameworks and children's science. All but one chapter deal with topic areas from physics.

Qualitative Reasoning about Physical Systems, Bobrow, D.C. (Ed.), MIT Press, Cambridge, MA (1985). This volume is more directly associated with the artificial intelligence framework than the cognitive science perspective.

Proceedings of the Second International Seminar on Misconceptions and Educational Strategies in Science and Mathematics, Novak, J.D. (Ed.), Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (1987). These proceedings were published in three volumes; most of the physics related articles are in volume 3, but there are physics articles in the other two volumes also.

Research in Physics Learning: Theoretical Issues and Empirical Studies, Duit, R., F. Goldberg, and H. Niedderer (Eds.), IPN, University of Kiel (1992). The articles in this volume were presented at an international workshop held at the University of Bremen in March, 1991.

J) Journals

We list here the journals mentioned in the bibliography with their sponsoring organizations and/or publishers, where known.

American Journal of Physics -- American Association of Physics Teachers

Cognition -- Elsevier Sequoia S.A.

Cognition and Instruction -- Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, Hillsdale, NJ

Cognitive Psychology -- Academic Press

Cognitive Science -- Cognitive Science Society, Ablex Publishing Corp.

Developmental Psychology -- American Psychological Association

Educational Psychologist -- American Psychological Association

European Journal of Science Education -- Institute for Science Education (Now: International Journal of Science Education) Kiel, FR Germany, Taylor & Francis

Instructional Science -- Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston

Journal of College Science Teaching -- National Science Teachers Association

Journal of Educational Psychology -- American Psychological Association

Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognitive -- American Psychological Association

Journal of Research in Science Teaching -- National Association for Research in Science Teaching, John Wiley & Sons

Physics Education -- Institute of Physics, London

Problem Solving -- Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, Hillsdale, NJ

School Science and Mathematics -- School Science and Mathematics Association

Science Education -- Association for the Education of Teachers in Science, John Wiley & Sons

Studies in Science Education

The Physics Teacher -- American Association of Physics Teachers