

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment is a program which helps to develop or strengthen the cognitive skills necessary for learning and achievement. The program was developed in the 1950's by Professor Reuven Feuerstein as a tool for the enhancement of learning potential and has been used successfully in more than seventy countries.

The framework on which the curriculum of IE was developed is the concept of **Structural Cognitive Modifiability** (SCM), the belief that through effective instruction and interaction the structure of the brain can be changed, and the future course of an individual's development will be impacted.

Current research demonstrates brain plasticity and that new or differentially activated neuropathways can be formed. Feuerstein's belief is in a three-part theoretical structure to SCM:

1. Human development is the result of three "factors": biological, socio-cultural and mediation (in this theory called the Mediated Learning Experience).
2. Intelligence and cognitive functioning are manifestation of the *state* rather than the result of enduring *traits*. The mental, emotional, intellectual, and learned activities of the individual are open and developing.
3. Brain plasticity results in the generation of new structures through ongoing processes that lead to the achievement of greater efficiency.

The theory of **Mediated Learning Experience** is the primary vehicle involved in the efficient modification of human learning and development. The Mediated Learning Experience refers to the way in which a mediator places himself between the stimulus and the learner and between the learner and his response to the stimulus in order to shape the experience. Simply stated, the curriculum of FIE is a set of tools by which Mediated Learning is brought to the student.

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment program is a series of units, in the program called "instruments", in which particular cognitive functions are emphasized. At the same time that there is an emphasis on specific functions, the lessons are designed to address a wide range of cognitive deficiencies. The structure of the instruments is significant in that there is a sequential order of tasks, presentation is through a variety of modalities, and tasks enable the students to attain basic skills and through systematic practice with elements that are similar, transfer these functions to unfamiliar situations. The material of IE is, as far as possible, content-free, as the instrument is a vehicle for the acquisition of the prerequisites of thinking, and not the major goal. The material is familiar in order to hold the attention of the student so that instruction and mediation can focus on the goal of acquiring thinking skills and correcting cognitive deficiencies.

HUMAN INTELLIGENCE (IS) CHARACTERIZED BY THE OPTION, POSSIBILITY AND PROPENSITY TO BECOME MEANINGFULLY CHANGED BY EXPERIENCE----BY THE PRODUCTION OF NEW STRUCTURES THAT PREVIOUSLY DID NOT EXIST, OR WERE INSUFFICIENTLY PRESENT IN THE BEHAVIORAL REPERTOIRE OF THE INDIVIDUAL. (Creating and Enhancing Cognitive Modifiability—The Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment Program. Reuven Feuerstein, Raphael Feuerstein, Louis Falik, Yaacov Rand. ICEPL Publication, 2006)

Websites include:

www.icelp.org
www.iriinc.us