



The ITC Archives: Interviews with the Early Leaders of the ITC



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As explained in the cover e-mail, the ITC Council would appreciate your providing detailed answers to the following questions:

1. During what year did you become involved with the ITC, how did this affiliation occur (e.g. were you asked to join the ITC, were you a representative of another organization, or did you elect to become involved), and what was the nature of your initial work on the ITC?

“I came into contact with the ITC through Ron Hambleton at the end of the 1980s. I had written a chapter in the book that was edited by Ron a few years before and he invited me to become involved in the ITC. I was not elected in a position, but was asked and appointed by the EC to become editor of the Bulletin. This periodical had been published as a separate publication, but became incorporated in the early 1990s in the European Journal of Psychological Assessment. This initiative fitted in an attempt to inclusive the international visibility and standing of the ITC. I have been editor for a number of years. Various special issues have been published, dealing with a variety of topics relevant for assessment. During that period I attended all EC meetings. Later in I was also involved in setting up the International Journal of Testing. “

2. What were your initial impressions of the ITC, including its organizational structure, missions, and personnel?

“In those days the organizational structure of the ITC was relatively simple. Major events were the EC meetings and the General Assembly. What I found striking was that there were two almost different levels of activity. First, there was the formal level where great care was taken to follow all procedures, ensure backing from the members, making sure that finances are in order, etc. Second, there was a more informal level where key people of the ITC were developing all kinds of initiatives in the assessment domain.“

3. Who were some of the key leaders in the ITC at that time and what were their roles?

“I have always been impressed by the amount and quality of activity coming out of the ITC. The group of really active people was very small. The key people were very well connected in the assessment world. In the early 1990s the real leaders were Tom Oakland and Ron Hambleton. There were several people around them who were involved in various activities. However, strategic discussions were led by these



two colleagues. It is important to note that they were not only active during meetings, but mainly between meetings. They had a clear vision about the future of the ITC.”

4. Every organization and association goes through growing pains. During your first few years on the Council, what were some of the impediments that you felt limited the ITC’s work and needed to be changed?

“During my period in the EC of the ITC, there have problems with two positions (bear with me that I will not mention names). One person had an own agenda, which was insufficiently discussed and not always shared by other members of the EC. The other person did not have enough time (or did not make enough time) to do the assigned work in a proper manner. One of the remarkable experiences of that period was that these malfunctioning members did not challenge the continuity of the ITC in any way. There was enough agreement among the other EC members not to be challenged by this malfunctioning. I always found that impressive.”

5. What prominent changes have you seen in the ITC between when you first were a member and now?

“The ITC has become larger, individuals can now become members, the international visibility has increased, the international reputation has improved, and everything is happening now at a larger and more professional scale. Although I am much more peripheral now to what goes on in the EC, I still have the strong impression that the power of the EC is based on strong friendship bonds between the members. When I was in the EC, all members considered each other as friends. I have the impression that this is still the case.”

6. Where has the ITC done well? What do you think the ITC’s biggest accomplishment has been over the years?

“I think that my admiration for the ITC does not come from a single accomplishment, but from a deep respect for the various projects, such as guidelines, that have been successfully completed over the years. The ITC has been and continues to be an influential player in the international assessment arena.”

7. Where has the ITC possibly made “wrong steps” or mistakes?

“I think that the (limited) size of the group of really active people has been the strength in the past, but it could easily become a weakness. So far, the ITC has been very fortunate in having strong leaders. However, if this small group would not be succeeded by equally strong leaders, the future can quickly become dim.”

8. What do you perceive to be current challenges facing the ITC and what role should the ITC play in this regard?



“Assessment is common of age in many emerging countries. The ITC can play an important role in the developments. Linking with people from specific countries would be very useful to support them in their efforts to professionalize assessment in their country.”

9. What do you believe should the ITC be focusing on right now and who are the key stakeholders that should be involved?

“In line with the previous question, I think that it is important to listen to assessment people in countries like South Africa, Turkey and Mexico. They all show important developments in the area of assessment. Linking with these people would help to sustain their efforts and to make sure that are aware of what is going on in other countries.”

10. If there was one thing you could change with regards to the ITC, what would it be?

“Probably nothing else than the number of members.”

11. What structural or organizational changes to the ITC should be considered to further its effectiveness?

“I would not propose any change.”

12. To what extent did you find it difficult to dedicate your time to the work of the ITC?

“Working for the ITC has always been great fun.”

13. How would you compare the first ITC conference you ever attended with the one hosted in San Sebastian in 2014?

“The scientific level has gone up, the coverage of the assessment domain is now better, new conferences can now build on the good reputation of previous conferences.”

14. Among your various contributions, what do you believe may be your lasting legacy?

“In all fairness, I do not think that my contributions were sufficient to claim any lasting legacy. This is not a matter of modesty, but an appreciation that the total amount of time that I spent on the ITC is a fraction of what various key people have spent. I was involved in the time when the ITC was expanding and professionalizing. In those days various colleagues were doing wonderful things for the ITC, but as I mentioned there were relatively few leaders. In my view only those people could claim a lasting legacy.”

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