



Dear Readers

The study of instruction is complex and multi-faceted as demonstrated by this issue of the International Journal of Instruction. The authors of the twenty papers in this edition are from ten countries and collectively they provide you with a wide range of topics about instruction in diverse parts of the world. Each of the papers in this collection adds to our understanding of instruction, learning, literacy (particularly the English language) and mathematics and science education.

The first contributions in this issue covers research about attitudes to reflective practice in Ethiopia, perceptions of competency of novice teachers in Malaysia and the effect of project-based learning on the academic achievement of seventh grade students in Turkey. Research by Eryilmaz and Kara from Turkey examines an interesting aspect of the teaching profession by comparing teachers and pre-service teachers with respect to their personality traits and their “career adaptability.” An article that is likely to be read with interest by many teachers and pre-service teachers is by Delen, also from Turkey, that outlines teacher augmentation using Facebook groups. The use of Facebook as a discussion tool has many implications for contemporary teaching and learning as well as for the organization of teacher education.

A paper that is likely to be of interest to teacher educators in this issue, authored by Irajzed, Pishghaham and Shahriari, examines “stroking behaviour” of English, Persian and Arabic teachers in Iran. Strokes (teacher attention) is a key aspect of instruction and central to the relationship between teachers and students. It was found that Arabic teachers “stroke” students more than English and Persian teachers. For teachers in these three cultures as well as for the field of language instruction, this is an article that deserves to be widely read.

This issue contains several contributions in the area of literacy, particularly the teaching and learning of the English language. From Malaysia, Nordin and Eng take issue with the use of “irrelevant, uninteresting and culturally unfamiliar” materials that are sometimes used in the teaching of reading. The result is that many students struggle to learn English. However, the experiences of first year EFL students in “flipped classrooms” in Indonesia is reported by Zainuddin to provide a successful way of teaching English. Zainuddin reports that flipped classrooms led to “enhanced student enthusiasm” in learning this important foreign language. The paper by Muslem and Abbas provides information about a different way of teaching English through “immersive multimedia learning” that is based on peer support groups. A contribution from Nigeria by Muhammad and Nair looks at the teaching of ESL to undergraduates based on “pragmatic competence.” A gender difference was found in the learning of English in that girls put more effort into improving their “pragmatic competence” than the males in their classes. Finally, a paper by Ergul, Sarica, Akoglu and Karaman on home literacy environments in Turkish kindergartens, based on SES considerations,

provides insights into an interesting domain of language learning that will have particular interest to early years educators.

This issue contains three articles about instruction in mathematics and science. In'am and Hajar report on a way of teaching geometry in Indonesia through discovery learning using a "scientific approach" that includes asking questions and developing reasoning. Another paper from Indonesia, by Fuad, Zubaidah, Mahanal and Suarsini, focused on junior high school students' critical thinking skills in learning science. As with the paper from Nigeria, gender differences were found in the critical thinking skills of boys and girls. The final paper in this collection is also about instruction in science.

Several authors in this collection report on research that is focused on student experiences of instruction. Berk and Unal compare writing anxiety and writing dispositions of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students and report on the extent to which they predict each other. Gelisli and Beisenbayeva have developed a scale of competency perception by post-graduate students in Kazakhstan based on one hundred students across four Kazak state universities. This is a study that may interest many post-graduate instructors. From Pakistan, Alam writes about perceptions and attitudes of grade 8 students in regard to a school outreach program based on a citizens' archive. Finally, from Hong Kong Richard Cheng Ching Ho reports on a study comparing L2 students' task repetition and task sequencing in their oral performance.

Collectively, the papers published in this edition inform the professional education of teachers in a cross-cultural and international way. Together they provide breadth as well as depth to our knowledge of pedagogy. This issue contains some papers that develop our understanding of instruction in unusual and innovative ways. It will be interesting to see if any of these are replicated in other cultures, particularly those represented in this issue, in future research.

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