

*Arthur K. Ellis (USA)*

## Editorial

The Editor-in-Chief of "International Dialogues on Education: Past and Present", Reinhard Golz, has kindly asked me to write a summary of the main contents and concerns of the articles contained here. At first glance, the contributions to this issue do not appear to have a common thematic orientation, for example in contrast to the previous special issue on „Schools, Education and the Pandemic of 2020“. Nevertheless, despite the seemingly broad range of arguments and discussions, one recurring theme is to be found here, namely the strategic importance of education in the lives of young people and those entrusted with their upbringing. One could say that it is about "education as hope", all over the world.

The different perspectives that emerge from the articles serve to emphasize the significance of educational opportunities from early childhood to adulthood, from storytelling to citizenship, from the classroom to a globalized world, from involving the "other" to thinking through first principles. The authors offer theoretical, empirical and practical ideas for improving the second oldest profession in the world, teaching.

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**Sando Karikó** explores the dilemma arising in institutions where both conformity and non-conformity are at stake. The question arises regarding the appropriate balance. He notes the rise of conformist expectations in institutions, an especially important issue in school settings where both are appropriately sought in some degree, but where conformism seems to hold the edge. He takes the reader through a thoughtful journey, one that leads ultimately to such concepts as autonomy and authenticity. He suggests no easy answers, but he makes it clear that an overbalance of conformity erodes an important elusive goal of education. One is reminded of the dual translations from Old French to English of the term *education*, which can mean to train or mold (*educare*) or to set free or lead out (*educere*).

**Sinead Fitzsimons** and **Martin Johnson** point to the increasing globalization of the "education industry," as indeed it might well be termed, and the resultant , consequential change in governance of education that has occurred over the past several decades. Using a case study approach, they delve into outcomes of a across-national partnership, something that might have been difficult to achieve in past years. They identify and develop four principles that undergird the nature and outcomes of such endeavors and the lessons learned as a result of their inquiries.

**W. Jason Niedermeyer** offers new insights into an old, perhaps the oldest, form of teaching and learning, that is, storytelling. He cites anthropological perspectives that inform us that this unique and typically informal approach to mentoring, one which has existed across time, space, and culture seemingly forever, represents an "imagination to imagination" transfer of thought from one generation to those that follow across the years. His thoughtful article clearly underscores the appeal and effectiveness of this all too often undervalued style of knowledge gathering and sharing.

**Jing Xiang** and **Ying Yan** have selected the popular children's picture book, *I Wanna Iguana*, by Karen Kaufman Orloff and illustrated by David Catrow. The story is familiar to children growing up in Western societies, but our authors use it as a compelling case study in teaching and learning with Chinese children. The book focuses on a universal theme in childrearing, that is, a little boy's plea for a pet; however, in this case an iguana. The subsequent interactions between child and mother are sensitive and filled with thoughts to stimulate both the imagination and insight of young children. The authors provide a convincing case for the use by teachers of all ages to use "whole books" as teaching tools.

**Kriztina Kovacs** addresses the familiar "inclusion" idea, placing it under the lens of instruction for intellectually disabled learners at the kindergarten level. A key point she makes is that social acceptance comes about through inclusive education, and that to sequester intellectually disabled children from mainstream school experience actually defeats that estimable goal. She carefully develops

both the pedagogical and legal arguments that support inclusion. The reader soon learns that what may be supported by research and legal argument does not lead automatically to needed changes in the way things are. A key point she offers is that "teacher acceptance" of disabled children is fundamental. She offers a panoply of constructive ideas and practices for teachers in inclusive classrooms. Her advice is something all teachers should heed.

**Chen, I-Chi, Ng Lee Peng, & Chong Chin Ann** focus on two familiar themes: burnout and citizenship behavior. They carefully document, on the basis of their research, the link between the two. While cause and effect relationships are often difficult to document, they do provide convincing evidence that when burnout occurs, and it often does in our increasingly demanding world of teaching, a diminution in citizenship behavior is found. They point to examples of stress-inducing phenomena in the lives of university teachers, ranging from rapid increases in educational technologies that require new skills beyond subject matter knowledge to the current pandemic of Covid-19. They cite diminished feelings of engagement, achievement, emotion, feelings that clearly must be addressed.

**Ecenaz Yigit, Omer Faruk Keser, & Levent Uzum** ask the question, "why can't we learn foreign language in Turkey?" This question has often been asked in my own country, the USA. The authors address their question with an empirical study, one involving 100 volunteer students at Bursa Uludog University. The authors' mixed methods study yielded such results as although a generally positive attitude toward foreign language learning is present, these positive perceptions collide with high levels of anxiety and learned helplessness. Among other things, they suggest that language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing be disaggregated for instructional purposes. They modestly conclude that their study ought to be considered a beginning, and that further research involving different age groups, for example, is advisable.

**Joe Munyoki Mwinzi** engages the reader with his argument for the centrality of philosophy of education in matters of theory, policy, and practice. He points to the increasing emphasis on individualism that can lead to a decline in interdependence and the value of meeting others' needs. as an example of a pragmatic but unexamined phenomenon in current educational practice. His response is to integrate into the curriculum across subject matter a meaningful philosophy of education, one that addresses questions of purpose, integrity, and value.

**Gülşah Tikiz Erturk** has employed a documents analysis approach to a study of values inclusion in Turkish textbooks for English language teaching. To be sure, values and both taught and caught beyond the scope of textbook inclusion, but textbooks do represent a published sense of curriculum, in spite of the fact that classroom life has many nuances beyond the print medium. Textbooks can also be examined over time in order to document changes in emphasis. Erturk has focused on textbooks assigned to 14+ learners in school settings in Turkey. The author's investigation indicates that such values as benevolence, universalism, openness to change, and self-direction are prominent.

**Alina Boutiuc-Kaiser & Nadine Comes** offer an insightful review of Natascha Hofmann's book, *Bildungswege und gesellschaftliche Teilhabe junger Roma in Deutschland (2019)*. [Educational pathways and social participation of young Roma in Germany: Insights into the everyday realities of Roma refugees from South Eastern Europe]. The book deals with substantive societal acceptance of young Roma refugees in Germany. The problems of integrating young Roma individuals and groups into German society is vexing, and Hofmann's answer to an improved situation is that "education as the key to individual life chances and participation in social life."

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On behalf of the Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board of our Journal I would like to remind you again of the following:

- We will continue to maintain a broad thematic focus on educational developments from historical, international and comparative perspectives. Furthermore, not only educational scientists and practitioners can exchange information about their research results, but also representatives of related fields in the human and social sciences. We publish articles that are scientifically verifiable, permeated by humanistic, democratic values, social responsi-

lity, respect for autonomy, diversity and the dignity of individuals, groups and communities. We stand for liberal, independent educational research and publication activity and against the unrestrained commercialization of access to scientific publications.

- We publish **two** issues per year; the first is published at the end of **May** and the second at the end of **November**. This means for the **next** issue:
  - For editorial planning reasons, it is recommended that the **provisional titles** of the intended contributions be submitted to the Editorial Board **as early as possible**.
  - **The deadline for sending the complete articles is 15 April 2021.**
- Authors are requested to strictly adhere to our editorial standards and requirements in the [Instructions to Contributors](#).

We look forward to further high-quality contributions: articles, essays, book reviews, conference reports and information on research and teaching projects.

## About the Author

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