Editorial 27(3)

The distinctively international character of IIER is well illustrated in this issue, which begins with the article by Alnafea and Curtis, who examine the influence of mothers' parenting styles on self-regulated academic learning among Saudi primary school students. The article is based upon data gathered from four female schools and three male schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with analyses conducted as part of Ms Alnafea's Master of Education in Cognitive Psychology and Educational Practice undertaken at Flinders University, South Australia. Their work contributes to our knowledge of relationships between parenting style and self-regulated learning in a less extensively-researched context, and draws attention to opportunities for important further research, and the refining of instruments used to assess parenting styles.

The issue of foreign language learning is interlaced with other concepts: the goal of achieving employment; the difficulties of practice with native speakers of the language; and the struggles to remain motivated. The paper by Ghonsooly, Hamedi, Hassanzadeh and Samavarchi reveals several factors that impact on motivation: insufficient use of technological facilities, teaching method and behaviour (involving rote learning and little application in dialogue), the class environment (referred to by one participant as 'someone to learn with') and class materials (including the cost of language lessons). This mixed method study used a survey with 337 Iranian participants and interviews with 15 of those students to enhance the survey with specific detail. The comments about the importance of the teacher's approach are aligned with all studies of foreign language learning. After all, the most favourable learning occurs in a setting of low anxiety, self-confidence and high motivation.

Hains-Wesson and Appleby report on study tours and the participants' perceptions of working with third party providers (TPP) on those tours. The authors note the increase in such tours, given the support of the Federal Government through study grants and plans such as Asia Abroad and the New Colombo plan. To comprehensively gather data from 94 student and TPP participants, there was a blended learning approach for the pre-, during and post- international learning component that incorporated: 10 online learning activities, between 5-10 content site reviews, 5 cultural activities, and 3 reflective practice resources. The paper makes significant recommendations. Students' suggestions included the need for clear communication between the TPP and the University study tour staff. In addition, TPP made recommendations on the importance of a shared approach for preparing students for short-term study tours that included industry-linked projects. As universities offer more study tour programs, this research will help to frame further work.

Another study of foreign language teaching has been completed by Macari. The difference from Ghonsooly and colleagues lies in the fact that the 59 Romanian participants were completing English for tourism. Macari's study was already highly focused on future employment and required content knowledge coherently associated with a specific occupation. The realities of the Romanian labour environment triggered a reconsideration of the nature of academic programs, including the practices of evaluation, by

incorporating self and peer assessment in the teaching and learning process. Macari's plan involved team learning for oral presentations and reflection. Self-assessment questions and guided self-reflection enabled students to recognise their own gains at the end of the semester. Results indicated that the participants showed a more realistic assessment of their language proficiency, an increased ability with their specialist vocabulary, improved communication skills and an understanding of the difficulties they had encountered while working on the oral presentation. This approach may well be of use to other teacher/researchers of foreign languages.

As part of any STEM program, physics curriculum for pre-service teachers immediately draws attention. The paper by Morales investigates a retrospective evaluation with purposively selected cases of five physics teachers in the Philippines' National Centre for Teacher Education. The study focused on a transition program. Morales' study explored course syllabi and session plans to present and describe content; teaching strategies, activities, assessment conducted in 56 observations; and other related factors like beliefs to describe the intended curriculum. The actual teaching practices of the University's physics education faculty qualitatively demonstrated the enacted curriculum. The same process conducted years after the 2013 exploration provided a longitudinal aspect to the analysis, showing a shift in emphasis from a competency-based curriculum to an inquiry-based learning paradigm. The author believes the transition will better prepare pre-service teachers, with planning for interdisciplinary lessons and the use of propositional knowledge paramount. While the study is small in number of participants, its richness over time is important and it is noted that the teachers' success in enacting the transition curriculum exhibited their capability for developing a culture of adaptive capacity to new situations. There is much of benefit to other researchers of STEM teacher education here.

The paper by Morris, Lummis and Locke is about visual literacy and the cognitive engagement of Year 11 students in a visual arts course. The authors affirm that students often prefer the practical component of visual arts, but need to understand how visual artworks and artefacts promote the transmission of cultural knowledge and discourse. They maintain the significance of being able to develop a cross-cultural understanding and to use this knowledge to interact with others in a culturally sensitive way. The participants in the study were 137 Year 11 visual arts students in Western Australia, completing an online survey and 10 students who participated in interviews. The findings were interesting. For example, students were satisfied with the extent of autonomy of their learning, evidenced in their sense of accountability for their learning. Both survey and interview data showed that students were deeply motivated to study art history and its application to their own arts practices. However, they felt a lack of context knowledge, which had a large impact on their achievement in examinations and potential choice of future career. The model of engagement in this paper is of interest to all teaching areas because being able to reliably measure student engagement through a diagnostic tool is a strategy that could change teaching practices.

Leadership skills continue to be a hot topic for research. The paper by Polat, Arslan and Ölçüm tested a Diversity Leadership Scale and found it to be reliable and valid. Diversity leadership makes use of the diversity of individuals in line with the objectives of the

organisation, holding them together in harmony. In education, this is vital and thus diversity leadership skills (justice, equity, empathy and conflict management) are needed to increase harmony and cooperation among teachers. The participants in the study were 343 teachers in Turkish primary and secondary schools. The researchers affirmed that schools need to value diversity highly, to maximise the benefits of workforce diversity.

NSW IER held a highly successful Reading Comprehension Conference and consequently, this topic is very relevant. Shahian, Pishghadam and Khajavy conducted a study that examined the relationship between flow, emotioncy (the frequency of sense-induced emotions), and reading comprehension. This grows out of creating effective emotional relationships with students. The authors quote a six-level emotioncy matrix. The study was conducted with 238 Iranian EFL participants. The authors found that emotioncy and flow are predictors of reading comprehension and that reading texts can be chosen based on the sensory and emotional background of learners. Such research benefits teachers at every level of reading comprehension.

E-learning technologies are at the heart of the paper by Shih, Velan and Shulruf. Their study was conducted with university students in Sydney and, innovatively, analysed from a social practice perspective. Qualitative data illuminated the social practice of learning and the significant socio-cultural meanings that make learning technologies highly valued tools for students. The participants were 30 students who were enrolled in courses using e-learning and who participated in focus groups. The findings point to two interrelated themes: students appreciated the function of interactivity offered by learning technologies, and learning technologies that provided prompt responses, helped them save time and maximised convenience were most valued.

Sibanda's paper, like that of Polat and colleagues, also researches leadership. Sibanda's paper is from a South African perspective and historically situates distributed leadership in a post-apartheid context. The author argues that, since leadership is shaped by prevailing conditions and circumstances, there is a need to interrogate the nature of leadership across schools representative of the racial division of schools under the apartheid dispensation. Sibanda argues that most schools have maintained the apartheid legacy and that, while the demise of apartheid outlawed the division of schools along racial lines, it did not eradicate the privileges and disadvantages some schools had inherited in the apartheid dispensation. Consequently access to schooling has been improved but access to quality schooling for most of the learners has not been attained. The author recommends preparation for the role of instructional leadership through in-service professional learning towards the development of more effective instructional leaders.

The paper by Steele researches supervision practice of pre-service teachers in Norwegian schools. The paper provides a collaborative model between university supervisors and school-based supervisors of pre-service action research projects. The author argues that learning to teach should be a joint venture between the university campus and the schools. Consequently, the study, based on the discussion of partnerships in third space collaboration practices, aimed to explore collaborative relationships between schools and universities. The participants were eight pre-service teachers, two university-based

teachers and three school-based teachers. As a result of the collaboration, the school-based teachers reflected on using the same language as the university-based teachers, complementing each other and drawing on different experiences. This paper reflects with joy and honesty about the gains for all participants.

Motivation and recalling from text are the key components of Tarchi's paper. Like Shahian and colleague, Tarchi's research is about reading comprehension. Tarchi's study examined how the contributions of motivation and interest (as motivational factors), and prior knowledge, metacognition and inference-making (as cognitive factors) differ as a consequence of reading comprehension assessment. The participants were 146 Year 7 students in a school in Italy. Interestingly, topic interest moderated the association between inference-making skills and free recall. This seems to have some connection with Shahian et al's finding about the frequency of sense-induced emotions. Overall, this study confirmed that literal comprehension, inferential comprehension and free recall of a history text appear to be differently influenced by motivational and cognitive variables.

The paper by Wilang and Singhasiri has connections with Ghonsooly et al. and Macari in this issue. Wilang and Sighasiri report on the conceptualisation of the anxiety of participants in English as a Foreign Language and the consequent effects on intelligibility and comprehensibility, with the participation of 240 Thai and foreign graduate students. The paper provides a perspective on how anxiety research can be extended, based on language use, users and settings. The results of the study have implications regarding anxiety-provoking situations and these should be taken into consideration in the language classroom as millions use English and its variants as the main language of communication.

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