

Dear IEJEE Reader,

International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education is bringing you a comprehensive issue which covers many important topics in the field of elementary education. Dr. Berat Ahi addresses and discusses the mental models in preschool children's conceptualization. Researchers from Finland highlight how supervision supports inclusive teaching practices of the professional teachers. Three other researchers study and capture the primary school teachers' experiences with and opinions on constructive classroom managements. Dr. Theresa A. Coogan describes and discusses the role of supportive school counselling for the establishment of a middle school career development program in Belize.

Two other researchers investigate the locus of control and personality traits of preschool teachers related their level of self-directed learning readiness.

The next paper investigates another important challenge in our time: the sensitivity of Students to the Natural Environment, Animals, Social Problems and Cultural Heritage.

Another paper which addresses environmental consciousness is written by Dr. Laurie James of Western Washington University, United States. Dr. Laurie's research is very concrete, practical oriented and demonstrated how the schools can make substantial gains with regard to minimizing waste in a school setting by reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting waste products by small but conscious strategies.

In this issue of the IEJEE the readers will also find two which address reading related topics. One has Turkish and the other has Arabic as its point of departure. In the international literature English-based perspectives on reading related issues have a dominating position. The field has a need of reading research which also takes the characteristics of different languages like Turkish and Arabic.

Dr. Birkan GÜLDENOĞLU of Ankara University, Turkey, investigates the effects of syllable-awareness skills on the word-reading performances of students reading in a transparent orthography as the Turkish has.

On the other hand Dr. Abdullah M. SERAYE of King Saud University, Saudi Arabia addresses the impact of different approaches to reading comprehension as the children have Arabic as their language.

As an Editor-In-Chief, I consider the mentioned two reading related papers as important contribution which can enrich and expand our understanding of reading in different language environments.

Dr. Ebru Melek KOÇ addresses several aspects of In-Service Training of English Language Teachers at Elementary Schools. Her research reminds us once more the importance of teachers' learning for students' learning and school development.

Dr. Angela Maria LA PORTE of University of Arkansas, AR, United States investigates the efficacy of the arts in a transdisciplinary learning experience for culturally diverse fourth graders. Her findings are convincing and inspiring us educators. With her words:

“A cooperative school environment paved the way for student self-confidence and motivation for learning through (1) opportunities for student choice and decision-making and (2) collaborative, inquiry-based, transdisciplinary, project-based learning. Regardless of demographics, transdisciplinary learning through the arts challenged and motivated students to think and make decisions in collaboration with others, using and valuing the expertise of peers. Regardless of student ethnicity or socioeconomic status, learners felt empowered and enthusiastic about attending school and gained knowledge through inquiry and project-based opportunities. This progressive ideology and practice has the potential to benefit diverse learners in 21st century education.”

Researchers BASAL, CELEN, KAYA and BOĞAZ of Yildiz Technical University, Turkey, investigate the illustrations in English course books in a Turkish context. The illustrations in the textbooks are the iconic representations of the realities in our lives. What kind of functions do they accomplish and what kind of roles do they have in the teaching-learning processes in the schools is an important area of research, but as much as we know it did not get enough attention from the researchers that it deserves. Therefore we appreciate that the four researchers submitted their paper to IEJEE. It's an informative paper because they

“... investigate the frequency of occurrence and functions of illustrations in English course books. Four course books (5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades) approved by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey were analyzed. In this qualitative research, content analysis was used as the research technique. In the analysis, Levin's 1981 typology including five categories in terms of the functions of illustrations (decorational, representational, organizational, interpretational, and transformational) was employed. Based on the results, it was found that most of the illustrations in four books were subsumed under the category of representational function. The results also showed that the books were mostly lacking transformational, interpretational, and organizational illustrations. This is considered a serious drawback of the books in terms of content-related illustrations since they make abstract concepts more memorable, enhance the recall of details of texts, and facilitate students' comprehension. The study also provides recommendations for the use of illustrations in English language course books.”

As one of the peer reviewers said *“this paper demonstrate the power of iconography”* in teaching-learning processes.

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