

Editorial for EJEL Volume 18 Issue 1

Dear friends of the EJEL,

Finally, it is done, the first issue of EJEL for the year 2020 is out! This issue, comprising eight articles, is larger in volume than the last regular issue from September 2019. The articles in this issue once again invite you to a journey through the different dimensions of e-learning, be it geographical, thematic or methodological.

In the opening article, Ari Haaranen and Jarmo Saarti, two Finnish researchers lead us across the African continent: their article "Enthusiastic Academic and Support Service Staff as an Agent for Change: A Case Study Based on a Project in African Higher Education Institutes" is a qualitative study on the implementation of e-learning over several years at three African higher education institutions. The enthusiasm, pedagogical skills and training of both academic and IT support staff were considered the key factors for a successful e-learning integration into practice in these institutions.

The second article operates on a conceptual level: Johannes C. Cronje from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa, examines in his contribution entitled "Designing Questions for Research Design and Design Research in e-Learning" the question of how research objectives suitable for research in the field of e-learning can be developed systematically. Johannes C. Cronje integrates several existing concepts from the literature into a comprehensive model and validates the model on a sample of eight previously published EJEL articles.

The third article takes us to the Arabian Gulf University in Manama, Bahrain and into the teaching field of medicine. Rima Abdul Razzak, Zuheir Hasan and Arpan Stephen describe in their article on "Medical Student Perceptions of Integration of a Customized Cloud Based Learning Operating System into Problem Based Learning Tutorials" the conversion of problem-based learning scenarios from paper-based learning material to digitalized learning material. The evaluation indicated that the students were neutral towards the change, but also that they recognise higher effectiveness of the digital mode of delivery.

The fourth article addresses acquisition of basic medical knowledge and skills. Lukas Seifert, Arda Manap, Jasmina Sterz, Ferdinand Gerlach and Robert Sader from Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, prepared the groundwork for their article entitled "A Comparison Between Virtual Patient and Peer Assisted Learning in Teaching Basic Medical Knowledge and Skills" at the "Studentische Poliklinik", the first student-run free clinic in Germany. The authors compared the effectiveness of Virtual Patient Learning (VPL) with that of Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) and conclude that VPL can certainly keep up with the effectiveness of PAL. Moreover, given the advantages of VPL such as cost-effectiveness, reproducibility and independence of time and place, they recommend VPL to be used more often to support learning in student-run free clinics.

The fifth article "Contextualisation of the Information Literacy Environment in the South African Education Sector" takes us back to South Africa. The authors, Oluwole O. Durodolu and Samuel Maredi Mojapelo, from University of South Africa (SA) in Pretoria have conducted a literature review highlighting various ICT tools for supporting e-learning in SA educational sector. Their paper concludes with an overview of challenges and opportunities of information literacy in South Africa.

The sixth article is from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, where Rabail Tahir, and Alf Inge Wang have looked into the subject of game-based learning (GBL). Starting from the observation that there is no uniform terminology for the design, analysis and evaluation of educational games, the authors have systematically categorised GBL elements by scope, definition, and usage in their article "Codifying Game Based Learning: Development and Application of LEAGUÉ Framework for Learning Games". The resulting conceptual framework (LEAGUÉ) is seen as an instrument for enabling all stakeholders to design, analyse and evaluate educational games.

The seventh article is a Lithuanian-German co-production. Airina Volungevičienė, Margarita Teresevičienė (Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas) and Ulf-Daniel Ehlers (Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg, Karlsruhe), explore the interdependences between society, digitisation and learning. Their article, "When is Open and Online

Learning Relevant for Curriculum Change in Higher Education? Digital and Network Society Perspective " starts with a theoretical discourse on the characteristics of a digitised and networked society, emerging pathways to learning and a gap analysis of future requirements for learning and curricula. This is followed up by semi-structured interviews which are used to infer the future learning needs: learner-centred approaches, small learning groups and a multi-dimensional model of teaching. These requirements could potentially create major challenges for higher education in future.

The eighth and the last article is another co-production, this time from Mexico and Russia. Eduardo Cornejo-Velazquez, Mireya Clavel-Maqueda, Hector Perez-Lopez-Portillo and Ekaterina Lyubimova examine economic aspects of e-learning. In their article "Business Model of Learning Platforms in Sharing Economy", the authors provide an analysis of the business models of leading global e-learning platforms such as edX, Coursera, Udacity, Udemy, and Codeacademy. They conclude that future global education will be collaborative and characterised by online payments, shared resources and shared access to knowledge.

In closing the editorial, we would like to say goodbye to our co-editor Rikke Ørngreen. Since 2015 Rikke has led and shaped the EJEL using her knowledge, enthusiasm and vision. During her time as the editor, the journal has achieved a Scopus status, increased its impact factor, but more importantly widened its reach in the readership as well as the authorship. We would like to thank Rikke sincerely for all her efforts and great achievements over the years, and wish her well in future as she takes on more managerial responsibilities in her institution.

Last but not least, we would like to welcome Marija Cubric as a new co-editor. Marija has already done excellent work as one of EJEL's Associate Editors and together with her theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of e-learning she is very well prepared for her new role.

Together with good wishes for Rikke and Marija, we wish you, dear readers, a very enjoyable time and many new and interesting insights while reading this issue of the EJEL.

Journal Editors

Heinrich Söbke and Maria Cubric.