

Conference

**Binational Perspectives on
Education**

November 15th

Abstracts

Iris Alkaher

Teacher activism in an era of environmental crisis: Developing environmental citizenship and self-efficacy in teachers in order to lead changes in their communities

Abstract

Because of the importance of teachers as agents of change in society, developing environmental citizenship among educators is a major goal of the post-graduate M.Ed. program in environmental education in Kibbutzim College. In addition, the M.Ed. program, which is designed for in-service teachers, aims to develop the students' capabilities to become teacher researchers who investigate their work. Thus, during their studies in a mandatory research seminar course, the students conduct an action research in which they are required to be involved in an environmental activism project in their school or community. The goal of the action research is to develop the students as environmental leaders and promote their self-efficacy and competencies to lead socio-environmental change in fieldwork. The course supplies the students with the knowledge and skills required for a successful action research by utilizing group and individual mentoring. The presentation will focus on the opportunities and challenges that this experience in activism brings to the table from the perspectives of both the instructors and the students. Examples of successful activism projects will be presented and discussed as well.

Keywords: environmental citizenship, teacher environmental activism, action research, environmental education

Rinat Arviv-Elyashiv (Ph.D)

Teacher attrition: School and District Leaders Perceptions

Keywords: teacher attrition, school leaders, hidden attrition

Theoretical Framework and Objectives

Teacher attrition has long been identified as a challenge of educational systems worldwide. There is abundant data showing that a large proportion of beginning teachers, between 20% and 50%, leave the profession within the first five years. This phenomenon is also familiar among senior teachers, although it occurs in a lower extent.

High level of teacher attrition negatively affect school routine and management. It harms the efforts to construct a solid organizational culture and to maintain staff solidarity (Hanselman, Grigg, & Bruch, 2014). It costs a lot of money (Haynes, 2014), and it means losing human capital dealing with teacher shortage (Ingersoll & May, 2012). It also harms student achievements (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013) and their relationships with teachers (Liu & Meyer, 2005). Replacing teachers is not always an easy task, and sometimes principals are forced to employ unqualified teachers (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2014).

According to the cost-benefit theory, optimal level of attrition in organizations is beneficial (Siebert & Zubanov, 2009). A particular benefit of attrition is replacement of poorly performing individuals with better job matches. In this way, employee turnover maximize the organization productivity, and set the basis for promoting conceptual innovations. This is also true in the teaching context, provided that the professional qualities of the newly coming teacher exceeds those of the one who left (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013).

A significant body of literature aimed to understand the factors and conditions that motivated teacher attrition focus on the teachers' perspective (e.g. Borman & Dawling, 2008). These studies mentioned poor job conditions, challenging organizational aspects, non-supportive resources and difficulties in class management. Human capital resources also mentioned as a factor that increase the likelihood to leave teaching (Dupriez, Delvaux and Lothaire, 2016).

Fewer researches study teacher attrition from the perspective of schools and districts. School and districts leaders, mostly principals and inspectors, take a key role in determining teachers' satisfaction and career decisions. Nevertheless, their perspectives concerning teacher attrition were hardly investigated. The few existing studies have focused on the influence of school principal on teacher job satisfaction (e.g. Burkhauser, 2017) and resilience (Peters & Pearce, 2012). These studies provide evidence that principle pedagogic leadership based on democratic school environment, collegial culture, mutual partnership and professional support associated with teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to school.

Theories of emotional intelligence assume that involving emotions explicitly through leadership practices may increase employee effectiveness and job satisfaction (Beatty, 2000). Crawford (2007) examined leadership practices in Britain schools. She explained that the use of the language of emotions at school

strengthens trust, collaboration and support, and thus increases teacher's sense of belonging and the persistence in the teaching profession.

Indeed, many studies showed that principal support decrease teachers' likelihood to drop out (Borman & Dowling, 2008). This support involves open communication, assistance and consideration of personal and professional needs. The district inspector has hardly been mentioned in the professional literature concerning teacher attrition. Arviv Elyashiv and Zimmerman (2013) found that district inspectors' support also decrease teachers' dropout decisions, although their support rarely available to teachers. As mentioned, principals and inspectors' perception towards teacher attrition have received limited attention in the research literature. The present study seeks to shed light on this aspect. Three **research questions** were posed:

1. How do school principals and district inspectors identify teacher attrition?
2. What challenges do teachers' attrition produce according to school principals and regional inspectors?
3. What can be done in order to reduce teacher attrition according to school principals and regional inspectors?

Methodology

Context: Teaching in Israel is highly female-dominated occupation. It encompass with high level of job security, option of part time work and long vacations. Most teachers are employed by the state, and usually receive tenure after 3 years; afterward they are protected and cannot be easily dismissed. On the other hand, Teachers' salary is rather low (Addi-Raccah, 2005) and promotion channels are limited (Avidav-Ungar & Arviv-Elyashiv, 2018). Teaching Credential requires academic degree and teaching certificate. It also comprises participation in internship program in the first year. Teacher attrition is high in the beginning of the career, around 16%, in the first year of teaching and after five years it increases to 30% in average (Arviv-Elyashiv & Zimmerman, 2015).

Participants: The study is based on a mix-method methodology, using qualitative and quantitative research design. The participations in the qualitative part include eight school principals (4 men and 4 women) and five district inspectors (all women). They were assigned through a "snow ball" sampling, while representing each sector and level of education. The participations in the quantitative part include 126 school principals and 74 inspectors. They represent the distribution of schools within the total population

Research Tools: The qualitative research used semi-structured interviews. The interviews comprised of 6 major questions, focusing on the participants attitudes and experience concerning teacher attrition, documentations and follow up procedures as well as relationships with dropout teachers. The interview lasted for 30 to 40 minutes. The qualitative research used an anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire referred to the respondents' experience with dropout teachers, their involvement in such occurrences and the documentation procedures. It also examined the participants' attitude toward teacher attrition and its implementations. The questionnaire was tested in a focus group that comprised of two principles and two senior researchers.

Analysis: The qualitative data was analyzed using an inductive approach. In the first stage, responses were divided into topics. Answers on similar topics converged into

categories that represented the central aspects of interviews. The quantitative data was analyzed by descriptive statistics, independent t-tests and χ^2 tests.

Results

The results indicate that school and district leaders perceived teacher attrition via two-dimensional structure, including explicit and implicit dimensions.

The **explicit dimension** presents the formal aspect of teacher attrition. This dimension refers to the act of leaving the profession and it was extensively examined. In this manner, principals and inspectors indicated that the main reasons that motivate teachers' decision to leave the profession relate to stressed working environment and poor job conditions. Novice teachers are more vulnerable in these situations, mostly since they foresee their teaching career in comparison to other occupational alternatives. Principals and inspectors report that there are no established and clear procedures to deal with teacher attrition. A larger proportion of principals used to make personal conversations with these teachers, document the relevant events and inform school supervisor. It is worth mentioning that principals and inspectors agreed that teacher attrition scarcely produce teacher shortage. They reported that they were able to fill the position of teachers who dropped out in a reasonable period.

The **implicit dimension** presents a hidden attrition. This concept is less familiar in the professional literature. It was explained by the participants as professional incompetence and ineffectively performance. Principals and inspectors claim that many teachers are characterized with low level of teaching qualifications or inappropriate social skills. The absence of authority to dismiss these teachers, constantly forces them to find creative solutions in order to minimize the damage caused by these teachers' poor educational performance. The participants mentioned some ideas, such as: reduction of teaching hours, providing marginal positions at school, and recommendation to move to another school.

This study highlighted the complex structure of teacher attrition. This structure confirm the cost-benefit theory, and it emphasis the need to find systematic procedures to address both dimensions of teaching attrition.

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Ruthi Barkai

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENTS: THE CASE OF REPEATING PATTERNS

Knowledge of students' conceptions and competencies is an important element of teachers' knowledge for teaching mathematics. Shulman (1986), for example, suggested that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) includes knowing the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics and lessons..." (p. 9-10). This study is part of a larger one which investigated kindergarten teachers' knowledge for teaching repeating patterns. This current study reports on kindergarten teachers' knowledge of children's abilities to complete two repeating pattern tasks: extending repeating patterns and comparing two repeating patterns. These tasks had previously been implemented with children. Results indicated that on the extension task, teachers tended to underestimate children's ability to complete the task, but on the comparison task, they tended to overestimate children's abilities. The results point to a need for professional development that widens teachers' example space of repeating patterns, as well as promotes their knowledge of children. In the same manner that students' mathematics knowledge is a starting point for teachers to build upon (Shulman, 1986), so too, we need studies of teachers' knowledge, including their knowledge of students, in order to plan for meaningful professional development program. This study contributes toward this goal.

Key words: kindergarten teachers, pedagogical content knowledge, repeating patterns; repeating patterns tasks.

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Dr. Royit Dahan

The Esthetical and Ethical Foundation of Education: An Interdisciplinary point of view

Kant and Freud, as part of the Western philosophical tradition, distinguish between reason and imagination as two organizing principles of human consciousness. Reason is perceived as an organizing principle of the ethical dimension and of science, while imagination is viewed as an organizing principle of the esthetic dimension.

On the one hand, Freud viewed psychoanalysis as a science. For him, as an enlightened philosopher, reason and conscious communication between human beings are supposed to replace fantasy and imagination. He believed that reason offers the means for establishing psychological freedom from oppressive psychic drives. On the other hand, Freud sensed in his clinical work that irrational processes take place during psychoanalysis therapy. Imagination and fantasy become a central part of human nature.

How, then, is it possible to reconcile science, art and ethics – as competing visions of human nature – in education? How is it possible to achieve freedom and a new thought out of irrational processes?

In my lecture I will suggest that the class as group dimension may well create a space in which dialectical movement can take place between the functioning of the imagination and the ego's faculty of reason, while developing links between them. In addition, I will suggest that the concept of “free floating discussion” can point to the possibility of moving between the esthetic and ethical dimensions in the group. This movement has the potential for freeing students from unconscious forces, thus allowing them to attain new values and ideas. Consequently, it is possible to become a Long Life Learner.

Dr. Annette Deschner

CultureShake

In 2015 there was a so-called refugee wave, which shattered Europe and generated the need for teaching material for schools. In the three year project the CultureShake team thought how to tackle this problem transdisciplinary from different disciplines and to find a solution with regard to already existing issues in schools with multilingualism.

CultureShake is a strategic partnership project in the Erasmus+ programme. The consortium consists of project partners from four European countries: Germany, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The main topics are inclusion, integration of refugees and digital learning. Covering these topics the project provides teaching material and tools for the secondary classroom. The underlying theory is based on EU reports and papers such as “Education and Training 2020”, the declaration on “Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education” by the EU ministers of education written in 2015 as a reaction to the terrorist attacks in France and Denmark. A follow up to this declaration is the “Report on the role of intercultural dialogue, cultural diversity and education in promoting EU fundamental values” by Julie Ward.

On this basis the transnational project team designed teaching material and tools for the secondary class level. The content is Shakespeare and two of his plays: “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “The Tempest”.

The products are available as open access on the project website
<http://cultureshake.eu>.

Smadar Donitsa-Schmidt, Ruth Zuzovsky, Rinat Arviv-Elyashiv

Support mechanisms provided by schools to beginning teachers in their first year of teaching

The first year of teaching is known as a pivotal one in teachers' decisions to stay in teaching. Supporting teachers in this phase led many countries to offer various types of induction and mentoring programs (Ingersoll & Strong, 2014). Attrition of new teachers has also been found to occur in the Israeli education system with one out of four teachers leaving the profession in the first five years; half of them after the first year (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015). In an attempt to reduce the attrition rate of beginning teachers, an induction year became a mandatory requirement for entering teaching in Israel. During this year, the new teachers are mentored and supervised by a veteran teacher who is appointed by the school principal. Schools are also required to provide different types of support mechanisms that would enable the new teachers to succeed and remain in teaching.

The purpose of the current research was to investigate the effectiveness of the different types of support mechanisms that are provided to beginning teachers by the following parties in schools: the management board, the teaching staff and the mentor assigned to each teacher. The research questions were: (1) What are the processes that occur in the recruitment phase of the new inductees? (2) What is the role of the management board, teaching staff and mentors in supporting the inductees in their first year of teaching? (3) What are the organizational, professional and emotional support mechanisms that contribute to the satisfaction of beginning teachers from the induction year?

An online self-report questionnaire was sent at the end of the 2018 academic year to a nation-wide population of teachers throughout the country that were in their induction year in one of the past three years. Responses were gathered from 2,710 inductees. In the presentation we will elaborate on the findings of the research and discuss their implications for school policy and for building a school culture that aims at successfully recruiting and retaining beginning teachers.

Kobi Gutterman

School leadership training in Israel

In recent years Israel experienced major changes in school leadership training. From an all government controlled to a privately sponsored and supervised to a mutual sponsored program and back to a government controlled system. I will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each system, the gains and losses, the positive and negative effects of the past 12 years.

Moran Gam Hacoen

The academic degree begins during gap year

Introducing an Initiative for Academic Courses at Travel Destinations Abroad

In this presentation, I will present my initiative: *The academic degree begins during travel time in gap year*. Gap year is extremely popular among young Israeli adults and tends to occur after their compulsory military service and prior to commencing academic studies. The initiative is to hold academic courses in popular travelers' destinations abroad which would allow the young travelers to study for several consecutive days and receive academic credit for that. Ideally, these courses should deal with the relation between the Israeli culture and the local cultures, combining intellectual academic studies, along with experiential activities.

Such a course has already been piloted for the first time in June 2019 in Dharamshala India, in collaboration with 'Beit Bina' (The Jewish Movement for Social Change). The initiative, which was born due to marketing needs of the Department of Biblical Studies and Israeli Culture, has led to significant pedagogical insights regarding our students: their profile, interests and aspirations especially as well as to insights regarding our own teaching in the academia. It seems that in times of dramatic changes due to the acceleration of technological developments, globalization and internationalization trends we need to critically revisit the academic sphere so that we maintain our relevance in students' lives and professions in the future.

Jutta Kienbaum

Is that fair?

The development of distributive justice in childhood and adolescence

What criteria are pupils guided by if they are asked to distribute a resource fairly? Do they give more to the person who has worked harder? Or to the one who is more in need? Are only equal distributions regarded as really fair?

The talk reports on an experimental study with N=209 fourth-graders who were asked to distribute a resource fairly between two children who differed systematically with respect to need and effort. Two years later, when the children attended the 6th grades of different secondary schools, the same experiment was repeated.

In the 4th grade, a third of the children distributed according to need; another third based their allocation decisions on both the principle of need and the principle of effort (integration). Two years later, regardless of the type of secondary school, the number of students who integrated need and effort increased significantly.

At both times, the parents of the children were also asked to take part in the experiment. It turned out that the parents either allocated exclusively on the basis of effort information or integrated effort and need. The allocation criteria of parents and children did not match.

The discussion addresses the role of cognitive development on the one hand and socialization experiences on the other hand for the development of distributive justice.

Key words: Moral development, distributive justice, resource allocation, middle childhood, adolescence, information integration

apl. Prof. Dr. Heike Knortz

About New Aspects of the Early European Economic Integration

The historiography of European integration is, as Wolfgang Kaiser stated some years ago, still in an unsatisfactory theoretical and methodological condition. As a result, normative orientated historiography has been complemented by an analytical de-economisation. Therefore, the history of integration remains incompetent from a point of view of economic history and important insights into the driving forces of European integration would be missed. That is why my paper focusses on an economic history of Europeanization.

My empirical analysis begins with US efforts using the European Recovery Program to reconstruct Europe as a labour-divided market. The ensuing European process of integration is interpreted according to international trade theory and as the result of interplay between markets and government decisions. This view is supported by historical methods using the labour market as an example. So, my paper looks at early intra-European labour migration, remittances and, in terms of the account imbalances, their connection with the European division of labour. Early European economic integration beyond institutional history stands in the foreground.

Migration research based on economic theory has long assumed that “labour export appeared to be a solution to many ills, particularly employment and balance of payments problems” (Sarah Collinson). This particularly applies to early intra-European labour migration already seen in 1945/46 and consisting largely of Italian workers. The circumstances that compelled Italian governments to sign recruitment agreements were the so-called “population surplus”, or more precisely “labour surplus”, and a structural lack of foreign exchange. The 1946 agreement with Belgium arranged for coal deliveries to Italy in return for Italian manpower employed in the mines. For France, another destination country lacking sufficient foreign exchange, it soon appeared that coal deliveries were the only way to transfer the earnings of Italian migrant workers to Italy. Since 1952 West German trade surpluses in relation to Italy have shaped German-Italian economic negotiations. The solution once again was a recruitment agreement, at the same time the first step towards communitisation of the Italian population problem at the European level. With the “Protocol on Italy” annexed to the Treaty of Rome, Italy ultimately was successful to reach the latter completely.

Eva Jenny Korneck & Manuela Böhm

Narrating the differences.

Linguistic and historic-critical perspectives on female figures in the bible

While many think of men first when it comes to strong characters in the bible, the jewish and christian texts offer a rich variety of female figures. We find them in different roles, such as princesses, prophets, heroines, wives, survivors, leaders, mothers. For centuries, they inspired men and women to go beyond their limits. But at the same time, the texts were used to affirm social roles and expectations in order to define and limit women's behaviour. These female roles are spread by both theological interpretation and religious practices — not only in words but also in images.

In our talk, we will take a closer look at the narrations and narratives behind these female characters from an interdisciplinary perspective. We will show how in theology, exegesis and reception the 'original' figures like Mary the mother of Jesus undergo significant changes. At the same time, the question is raised how Mary is presented from a linguistic point of view and what is the language she uses when she speaks. Finally we will ask, how Mary is described in religious stories for children and what does it mean for religious education.

Olga Kunina-Habenicht

Educational Knowledge: Exploring its factor structure and relevance for teacher education

Teachers' generic educational knowledge theoretically constitutes an important aspect of their professional competence. However, empirical evidence for its importance for teachers' daily practice is scarce. In this presentation, we describe findings from the BilWiss research program, which aimed to investigate the development and relevance of the type of generic educational knowledge typically addressed in university teacher education. We developed a standardized test that assesses generic knowledge in the following six domains: learning and development, instruction, assessment, educational theory (and history), school system and educational policy, and the teaching profession. The short test version includes 65 items, whereas the long version contains 119 items from six knowledge domains.

In this talk, I will present evidence for the validity of the test score interpretations by exploring the empirical structure of the test with structural equation models and proving the correlations with study success. 2-PL-Partial-Credit-IRT models were applied to a data set collected from 788 teacher students from different German universities. With regard to the empirical structure of the test, structural equation models indicated a good fit for the model with six correlated latent factors. Small significant correlations between test performance and the number of relevant university courses attended and grades in the university studies support the convergent and prognostic validity of test score interpretations. Moreover, students who repeated at least one exam showed significantly lower test performance than students who passed on the first try. These results are discussed regarding their theoretical and practical implications for teacher education.

Michal Levi-Keren^{1,2} and Galit Shabtay ¹
Kibbutzim College of education: ²Tel Aviv University

Teacher-Mentors – Who Are They and How Do They Perceive Their Position and Contribution to Beginning Teachers?

Conference theme: To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf

Presentation category: Lecture

Abstract:

Support programs for beginning teachers (teachers in their practicum [internship] or in their first year of teaching) comprise two main components: mentoring and personal accompanying of a veteran teacher in the school, and participation in a support-group workshop. The study focused on the mentoring- accompanying component according to the perception of 118 teacher- mentors/accompanying teachers who completed a self-report questionnaire. The research question was to what extent do motives for choosing a job, perception of the position of teacher-mentor and the variables of the professional background of the mentors/accompanying teachers predict the level of perceived contribution of the role of the teacher-mentor?

One of the main findings was that the more the mentors/accompanying teachers perceived their position as providing the most beneficial foundation for the beginning teachers, the greater they perceived their contribution of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and classroom management, as well as a sense of affiliation with an organization. Research findings and their implications were discussed while relating to various aspects of the role of the teacher, as they are termed in Korthagen's "Onion Model" (2004).

Tobias Ludwig & Engin Kardas

Argumentation from Experimental Data and Observations in School Science Labs: Basic Research and Implementation

Argumentation from data and evidence evaluation is widely seen as a scientific core practice. One approach to engage students in a meaningful argumentation practice is to provide lab work situations where students can construct hypotheses on the basis of their own prior knowledge and consequently evaluate these hypotheses in light of self-collected data and experimental observations. However, until recently, only little research has analyzed students' argumentation from data.

Against this backdrop we investigated: a) the influences of personal factors (such as content knowledge, need for cognition, situational interest, and personal relevance); b) how students use different categories of argument to justify a scientific hypothesis (such as Intuition, Appeal to Authority, Measurement Uncertainties (explicit) and Data as Evidence); c) the influence of argumentation on learning outcomes through experimentation in school labs.

To answer these questions, we subsequently carried out studies where students conducted a physical experiment. First, an interview-study was used to identify the different types of arguments used by students. Analyses focused on the nature of justification in argument (Sampson & Clark 2008) and revealed ten different categories students use while arguing for or against hypotheses. As a next step, four out of ten categories were operationalized by means of a Likert-scaled instrument to assess the use of different types of argument in a valid and reliable manner. The findings from a randomized study among 1500 secondary school students in a lab work setting indicate, among others, that content knowledge is positively related to the use of data as evidence. Again, the use of data as evidence increases the probability of stating a correct hypothesis after conducting the experiment. This implies that the ability to deal with data and measurement uncertainties should be better fostered in physics classes. Hence, we develop digital learning environments to address students' competencies to adequately deal with experimentally gained data and uncertainties. First results show that we could significantly improve students argumentation and learning outcomes with these interventions.

Christine Morisset-Dammann & Gérald Schlemminger

**'Carte-mot-dessin' / 'Card, word, drawing'
a new foreign language teaching method developed by the French Departement"**

Version

anglaise

The CMD method enables teachers to teach the French language to any type of audience, through its lexical, syntactic, differentiated and repetitive spiral development. Using a flipped classroom approach students first acquire vocabulary, and then use it directly and intuitively in differentiated personal sentences using word/drawing cards. The CMD method, based on play, stipulates three successive phases for the development of each theme: First, the assigning of vocabulary to its corresponding gender, then its integration into a simple sentence specific to the theme, and finally the expansion of this sentence by using the vocabulary of the previous themes. Grammatical rules lose their theoretical aspect by becoming inductive and logical. Using the language then becomes child's play, which is limited only by the teacher's imagination.

Version

Française

La méthode CMD permet à n'importe quel enseignant de transmettre la langue française à tout type de public, de par son développement spiralaire lexical et syntaxique, différencié et répétitif. Les apprenants, après avoir acquis le vocabulaire au travers de la classe inversée, le reprennent directement et intuitivement dans des phrases personnelles différenciées au moyen de cartes-mots/-dessins. La méthode CMD basée sur le jeu, stipule trois phases successives pour le développement de chaque thème : Dans un premier temps, la fixation du vocabulaire avec son genre, puis l'intégration de celui-ci à une phrase simple propre au thème, enfin l'élargissement de cette phrase en reprenant le vocabulaire des thèmes précédents. Les règles grammaticales perdent leur aspect théorique en devenant inductives et logiques. L'apprentissage de/parler la langue devient alors un jeu d'enfant, qui n'a pour limites que l'imagination de l'enseignant.

Klaus Peter Rippe

Perceptual Learning and the Tricky Question What We Learn in School

The concept of perceptual learning refers to long term changes in perception that result from practice and experience. Examined today in neuroscience, psychology as well as in philosophy, well known examples of perceptual learning are: Presenting stoic philosophy, Diogenes Laertius writes that a statue is viewed in a totally different way by the trained eye of a sculptor than by an ordinary man. At the end of the 19th century, William James gives the example that good wine experts become able to differentiate by taste between the upper and lower half of a bottle for a particular kind of wine. And many newer articles mention that there is a difference in what it is like to hear sounds in French before and after you have learned the language. Perceptual learning as presented by examples such as these involves changes in perception, while learning that is based on perception need not.

It is assumed that perceptual learning is a prerequisite for learning languages, for excelling in mathematics, for recognizing biological species or for acquiring professional skills in football, baseball or chess. In contrast to the older notion of “acquired perception” (Thomas Reid 1764), the concept of perceptual learning implies that perception can be learned. But is it true?

Discussing this question, I will argue, *firstly*, that there are sound reasons to draw sharp distinctive lines between memorizing and learning as well as between acquiring a skill and learning. It is a more sophisticated thesis to speak of perceptual learning than to speak of acquired perception. *Secondly*, I will defend the position that there is no learning-that but only learning-to. In practice but even in school we do not learn declarative knowledge (knowledge-that) but always knowledge-how. Therefore, if perceptual learning were a defensible notion it would be crucial that the learned perceptions e.g. of wine experts can be called knowledge-how. There are only a few examples of perceptual learning that fulfil this criterion. *Thirdly*, learning is a so-called thick concept, meaning a type of concept that both has a significant degree of descriptive content and is evaluatively loaded. But what does that mean for perceptual learning? Does a wine expert have an evaluatively better understanding of wine than the ordinary woman or man? Or is the biologist’s perception of sunflowers truer than the perceptions of the ordinary woman or man? The answer to these questions will lead to general insights into the epistemology of perception.

Key words: Perceptual Learning, Learning, Social Epistemology, Knowledge-How, Tastes, Expertise

Stephan Rosebrock

Sequences and Fractals - From simple rules to complex patterns

We study several sequences of symbols, which may be built by simple construction methods as for instance the Morse-Thue sequence, or the sequence evolving from folding a paper strip. Each of these sequences leads to an astonishing variety of complex phenomena just like fractals in geometry. For instance, it is possible to speak of self-similarity of those sequences. Often such a sequence may be interpreted as a manual for drawing fractals. This manual may be implemented into a Computer Algebra System leading to pictures with their own aesthetics.

Heike Schaefer

Page Matters: Reading the Media and Materialities of Literature

In contemporary literary culture, the media of literature are multiplying—from print to audio books to e-book readers. Yet literary studies is largely unconcerned with the media of literature, because the discipline historically has concentrated on the analysis of processes of mediation at the level of signification and communication but has paid little attention to the technological and material dimension of literature. To put it bluntly, we have thought of literature as an art form, not a medium. This concept has the significant drawback that it locks literature into the premodern past and prevents us from recognizing how literary culture participates in current media ecologies. Taking contemporary erasure poetry as my test case, my talk will examine the role that the analogue and digital materialities of literary texts play for how we engage with literary works. I argue that the integration of a comparative media perspective into literary studies that can recognize both the dynamics of literary tradition and the media-specific forms and media cultural matrix of literary texts will make us and our students more multidimensional readers of literature.

Dr. Taly Segal

**Between the upper and lower:
Reading Janusz Korczak's How to Love a Child**

Joop Berding opens his essay about Korczak with somewhat of an apology: "he was by no means a philosopher of education in the current academic sense".¹

A similar tone is found in the introduction of HaKibbutz HaMeuhad to the Hebrew translation of How to Love a Child: "Korczak's pedagogic writings [...] are not organized as one well-drafted paradigm".

It is an essay that offers a collage of lively images, everyday metonymies, an impressive and expressive hyper-realism. A knotted shoelace, an ink stain on a notebook page, cut fingernails, a garter, a soap, a towel. A description of an intensive, lively being. Within the detailed description of waking up together, the educator's moments of peace that are often interrupted and the day's routine, we find some resonating sentences that form a stark contrast to the multiple existence: "the greater the number of orders and prohibitions dictated by apparent concern for the well-being of the children".

Korczak points out a defining, insightful moment at the beginning of his path as an educator: "for the first time, I spoke not to the children but with the children. I spoke not of what I would like them to be but of what they would like to and could be". Korczak's How to Love a Child is a daring, intense essay, surprisingly rich with details of the everyday situations described in it. It does not strive for harmony, and the book seems to reflect the noise of children, without trying to beautify it and present it as a childhood heaven, without being afraid or intimidated by its chaotic nature, with endless conflicts and even violence, which are an inseparable part of this existence. It is a being whose development cannot be planned or predicted ahead of time, and according to Korczak, this is the educational existence that allows one to talk with the students and not to them, and establish an independent, sovereign and learning children community.

An in-depth reading into Korczak's essay is an invitation for intimacy with the educational practice, its hardships, wounds and fractions of moments. It allows the educator to look through the prism of everyday metonymic situations and explore ideological dilemmas and significant educational decisions: The educator's movement between the individual child and the group, the privacy of the child's emotional world, authority and independence, the boundaries of the educator's responsibility, and more. It is also a statement, defining educational writing as a form of art and the educator as an observing artist.

¹ JANUSZ KORCZAK - AN INTRODUCTION, Joop W. A. Berding, January 1, 2008, For the International Section of www.korczak.nl.

Nimrod Tal & Sabine Liebig

Virtual Exchanges and Multiculturality: Challenges and Opportunities

The virtues of virtual academic exchanges are well acknowledged. International collaborations between students and faculty enhance language skills, broaden intellectual horizons, and open avenues for further cooperation, to name but few of such advantages. Especially recognised are the benefits of implementing innovative technological elements in academic studies and the unique opportunities that international collaborations summon for an intercultural dialogue. Based on our experience in planning and executing joint international courses, the present paper revisits the issues of using technology and of intercultural engagements in such course. Through a critical reflection on our experience and insights, the paper raises questions about these two pivotal pillars of virtual academic exchanges for further discussion.

The presentation opens with describing our collaborative work on the courses that we planned and taught in 2017 and 2019 on Key Chapters in the Global History of Women and on Global Historical Revolutions, respectively. Special emphasis will be given both to the role of technology and to the intercultural engagement between the students during these courses. Thus, it will be demonstrated how technological platforms enabled a continuous and direct dialogue between the students and opened up new paths for original academic initiatives. Likewise, it will be shown that the international collaboration (and the technological platforms in particular) allowed students to hone their intercultural skills and enhanced their capacities to work and interact in a multicultural environment.

To draw a more complete and a more complex picture, the second part of the presentation focuses on the challenges that the use of technology and the intercultural exchanges, and especially the combination of the two, summoned us and our classes. Amongst these challenges were communication difficulties, cultural misunderstandings, and personal mismatches. These, in turn, lead not once to negative feelings, puzzlement, or discontent. In most cases, neither technology nor intercultural skills provided the solution.

Against this background, the presentation ends with raising several questions that lie before us and could be relevant for others who are involved in virtual international academic exchanges. What are the disadvantages of using technology in such programmes? Could there be a too-close or too-direct dialogue between students from different cultures? Should a preparatory, and separated, process precede such collaborations and, if so, what should it include? Theories of multiculturalism will be mentioned as a source from which to draw possible initial answers.

Tina Waldman & Gotz Schwab

Opportunities and challenges of virtual exchange in courses across the disciplines between Karlsruhe University and Kibbutzim College

Virtual Exchange (VE) is a form of collaborative international learning in higher education, which is intrinsic to the current discourse of internationalisation. VE is a powerful way to stimulate academic cooperation, facilitate collaboration and to share ideas, as well to support physical mobility. For pre-service teachers, VE offers meaningful opportunities to experience intercultural learning based on constructivist principles. The virtual, multicultural setting of VE calls for participants continued critical analysis, negotiation, technological dexterity and creative planning and thinking. While this combination of elements appears complex, this hybrid of skills are necessary for teachers to meet today's classroom challenges in both the German and Israeli context.

The aim of our talk is to stimulate interest in colleagues to adopt this innovative pedagogy across disciplines between our two institutions. We will focus on some of the opportunities and challenges of our virtual exchange which we have now implemented for four consecutive years between students in Karlsruhe and Kibbutzim College. We will show how we have exploited some of the opportunities to create wider cultural awareness, and acquisition of technological and transversal skills. Similarly we will explain how we have dealt with some of the challenges of achieving sustainable working partnerships, task complexity, and assessing outcomes.

Tal Yael

Acting toward inclusion in a multicultural divers learning community

The student population in the physical education and movement Department is a reflection of the diverse population in Israel. Students from different religions, various ethnic backgrounds, speaking several languages make a rich human mosaic.

This complexed situation poses many challenges to the teaching faculty. Looking beyond prejudice and enabling an open dialogue. Searching for common grounds yet maintaining authenticity. Catering for the individual needs as well as his peers.

The actions taken had a larger effect than the faculty imagined. Acting toward solving a complicated situation evolved into a change in beliefs and behaviors of faculty and students alike. Acting toward inclusion became part of the daily routine.