

Editorial

The forerunners: presage variables

In October 2002, a group of professors from the Universities of Almería and Granada (Spain), under the coordination of Dr. Fernando Justicia and Dr. Jesús de la Fuente, considered the need to launch a publication that could become a standard in the field of Educational Psychology research, for the use of both academics and practitioners. Other researchers from the University of Malaga and University of Jaén joined in the idea. And so the *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology* was born. This bilingual publication seeks to meet several objectives:

- 1) Disseminate Educational Psychology research, as an added-value product, thus serving as a bridge and mutual exchange between academic and professional groups.
- 2) Promote knowledge from Educational Psychology research, making it available in a bilingual format, free of charge, available worldwide through Internet.
- 3) Prove to ourselves that we were able not only to produce research, but also to compete in a 21st century international market of knowledge.

Development: the process variables

Quite beyond our initial expectations, numerous academics and practitioners from around the world have supported this initiative with their work and recognition (see the journal's full Editorial team and list of reviewers). To all of these we extend our deepest appreciation for their generous participation. And in particular, we acknowledge the explicit support received from the Publications Service of the *Universidad de Almería*, as our initial sponsor.

Three years ago, the *EOS* publishing house (Madrid), and its general manager Miguel Martínez García, in conjunction with Dr. Jesús García Vidal, believed in the project and came on board with financial support for the electronic and print editions. During the ensuing years we have seen first hand the good will and professionalism of this Publisher, which has demonstrated what it means to make a commitment to bringing research closer to practitioners, and above all, helping make possible a real connection between the academic and professional worlds. We take advantage of this opportunity to extend well-deserved recognition.

Later, in July 2007, a spinoff was launched, a technology-based business called *Education & Psychology I+D+i* (Almería), the first Spanish company of its kind. Formed by researchers in Educational Psychology from the University of Almeria and University of Granada, its purpose is to provide stability to the publications. Recognition is warranted by all the researchers who have believed in this project.

Finally, in October of this year, we are joined by the *Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Andalucía Oriental* [Association of Psychologists of Eastern Andalusia], with Dr. Mariano Vera at the head, now co-sponsors of the print and electronic journals, in a commitment to the role that knowledge and research in Educational Psychology must take on both nationally and internationally.

The product: satisfaction, quality and future prospects

At this time we find great satisfaction in the Electronic Journal's positioning in Google.es, where it occupies the first place in response to a search for "*educational psychology*", not to mention our current impact factor of 0.033. This evidence is a good example of how the publication has been welcomed and well-received in its particular field. It means we have significant international visibility and that this knowledge has become a point of reference in the search for topics from Educational Psychology. At the present time, we are meticulously reviewing all journal indicators to increase our international impact indices.

As for the print version of the journal, which represents a selection of articles for practitioners and academics, with this issue we have adopted a new Journal-style format. The present monograph represents the 5th anniversary issue of our publication.

The Monograph on Evaluation and Improvement of Teaching-Learning Processes

The present monograph addresses the central element of any educational or instructional reform, and yet it is probably one of the least analyzed: the evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning processes. This is approached from a two-fold perspective, from that of *research* and from the *applied* point of view.

In the section on *academic and practitioners' research*, several reviews on highly current topics open this issue. First we find a study by Dr. Allen Thurston (University of Dundee, U.K.) and other European colleagues on the construction of scientific thought and peer support. Next we see two views, complementary though not in opposition, for adequate understanding and construction of teaching-learning, as proposed by Dr. Carles Monereo (*Autónoma* University of Barcelona) and professors Jesús de la Fuente (University of Almería) and Fernando Justicia (University of Granada).

Another set of empirical studies address core elements of current research. Research on teacher motivation and identity, from María Cardelle-Elawar (USA) and María Luisa Sanz de Acedo (Public University of Navarra, Spain) illustrates the importance of research regarding teacher experiences. And to round out this portion of research on teacher variables, Dr. Alonso-Tapia and his research team present a study on teachers' ideas and their impact on how they evaluate learning.

Other studies offer an up-to-date view of this area of academic and practitioners' research. A study of the role of goals and self-protection strategies in motivation is presented by the team of Antonio Valle (University of La Coruña, Spain), José Carlos Núñez (University of Oviedo, Spain) and Pedro Rosario (University of Minho, Portugal). Assessment through the ABC Inventory, regarding students' self-efficacy expectations is presented by Drs. P. Sander and L. Sanders (UWIC, UK). And the improvement teaching-learning processes for writing is contributed by Dr. María José González and Miriam Delgado (University of Malaga, Spain).

Finally, there are two studies which report on other highly current lines of research. The role of goal orientation in satisfaction and performance is proposed by H. Roebken

(Germany), and the study by A. Desoete (Belgium) on evaluation and improvement of learning processes in mathematics takes on a metacognitive view.

The section on *practical applications and experiences* offers contributions for innovation in the practice of Educational Psychology. Three studies refer to innovation experiences in teaching-learning processes using ICT. The article by Dr Lara and Dr Reparaz (University of Navarra) shows the value of using WebQuest at pre-university levels in order to strengthen cooperative learning. Two other studies report on the effects of innovation at the university level, giving evidence to support the potential of ICT. One experience, reporting on regulated teaching and learning based on ICT, was coordinated by Jesús de la Fuente and Dr. Francisco Cano (University of Granada), and the other, addressing continuous evaluation using ICT, is presented by Dr César Coll and his team (University of Barcelona).

Two other experiences serve as references from the experience of practitioners. New lines of practitioners' intervention are contributed by Dr María José Cochera and Dr Miriam Naranjo (Univ. of Barcelona, Spain), on self-regulated learning through evaluation in primary education, and by Dr. Rosario Mérida (Univ. of Cordova, Spain), on using Work Project methodologies at the university level.

In conclusion, two practical studies are presented on the possibilities of Educational Psychology consulting for improving teaching-learning processes. Both offer empirical evidence regarding possibilities for evaluation and innovative improvement. One comes from Dr Maria Dolores Sánchez (Guidance Counselor) and Dr. Francisco Javier Peralta (University of Almeria), and the other from Ana María López (Agave School, Almeria), with an R&D&I focus—in both cases, with consulting and collaboration from Jesús de la Fuente.

In summary, the 17 different articles are the product of effort from many persons—researchers, practitioners, organizations and institutions. The aim is for research and scientific-technological knowledge in Educational Psychology to take their place as substantial elements in our culture, in our economic development and in our innovation, addressing educational and psychological issues of utmost relevance.

Scientific-technological knowledge, if it is not transferred to society, or applied to solving problems of daily life, becomes lifeless, and undervalued out of sheer ignorance. For

this reason we seek to be a link in the transfer chain of creating scientific knowledge, modeling procedures, and developing a taste for the science of Educational Psychology. These three aspects are basic sub-competencies needed by any practitioner or researcher in the 21st century.

We dedicate our effort to all of those who have made this researchers' and practitioners' dream become a reality.

Almería, November 11, 2007

University of Almeria (Spain)
Dr. Jesús de la Fuente
Editor-in-Chief

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