

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the December 2017 issue. During the past seven years, the journal has grown and developed from a little more than an idea, to the formation of the Editorial Board members into what it is today. It is with pride that we are happy to announce that the journal has been accepted to be indexed in the ASEAN Citation Index (ACI).

Although JRPPTTE publishes important research areas related to teacher education, JRPPTTE is also a biannual peer-reviewed publication of original research with focus on new effective instructional approaches, methods and tools, which the first two articles in this issue will look at. These two articles identify challenges, propose conceptual ideas, and explore empirically the development of various teaching methods that can aid teachers in their teaching. Nevertheless, teacher education and teacher issues are also currently high on policy agendas, internationally and locally, because of concerns expressed by teacher educators and teachers themselves about the future and quality of the profession of teaching. The third article explores this issue through the characterisation of the teaching practices of teacher educators themselves in teacher education to uncover any potential pedagogical shortfalls. Teacher education, teaching, research and scholarship are interrelated. Research improves aspects of teacher education which in turn enriches teaching and has the capability to improve student learning outcomes. With this in mind, the final two articles look at improving student learning in two specific subject areas, namely, the English Language and Moral Education.

The first article entitled “Development and validation of an inventory to evaluate the implementation of main educational elements in promoting higher-order thinking skills” by Nor Hasnida Che Md Ghazali, Norfishah Mat Rabi and Nurulhuda Md Hassan assessed the validity and reliability of an inventory in promoting Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTs). Analyses of validity by an Exploratory Factor Analysis and internal consistency on the data show that the instrument seem to be sound and could be used to measure the implementation of curriculum, teaching strategies and assessment practices in promoting HOTs. However, the authors cautioned that a more detailed analysis with a larger sample using an Item Response Theory (IRT) model might need to be conducted before the instrument could be finalized for use or to provide a higher level of confidence for its use.

In “Students' anxiety: An examination of the perception of facial threat and perceived paternal and maternal parenting style”, Roslinda Mustapha, Md Azman Shahadan, Rahmatullah Khan Abdul Wahab Khan, Ian Stephan and Marc Archer investigate the relationship between anxiety and threat perception and how it is related to perceived parenting styles. Students are given a set of questionnaire to answer regarding parenting styles and anxiety. They are also required to identify the facial expression to explore the threat perception by looking at images of facial expression in 2 and 3 dimensions. These images can transform into 5 levels of anger using the FaceGen Modeller 3.5. The authors find that angry faces are perceived as threatening by students, and play a significant role in students' emotional well-being and student-teacher interactions.

The third article is a study titled, “The character of teaching practices in a teacher education institution: Findings from observation checklist”, by Eng Tek Ong, Nurulhuda Abdul Rahman, Rosdy Wahid, Nor'ain Mohd Tajudin, Razak Abd Samad Yahya, Azwani Mazuwai and Ahmad Nazri Kosni. The authors conducted their study to characterise the teaching practices in a teacher education institution so as to inform about existing practices

which could then be compared with aspired practices and at the same time, uncover any potential pedagogical shortfalls. The authors identified important characteristics of effective teaching by teacher educators based on a psychometrically-supported observation checklist comprising 50 items or indicators. Their study also indicated that there were two major short falls, namely in terms of ‘offering diverse learning environment’ and ‘nurturing a climate of inquiry and critical reflection’ which were not constituted well among teacher educators.

In “Integrating English with total physical response for pre-schoolers’ cognitive development”, Krishnavani Anmal Govindan Nair, Suppiah Nachiappan and Wong Kung Teck explored the integration of English with Total Physical Response (TPR) for pre-schoolers’ cognitive development. The research was built upon review of cognitive developmental theorists, stakeholders, teachers’ feedback and experience. Five TPR related lesson plans were specially created and vetted by experts in order to collect data related to young learners’ cognitive development with the integration of English with TPR. The findings indicated that there were improvement in language progressions, cognitive output such as the ability to think, to question, to justify thoughts and opinions and a higher interest in learning through TPR. Therefore it was concluded that by integrating English with TPR, pre-school educators could maximize the output of their teaching.

The final article of the journal is in *Bahasa Melayu* (Malay Language) titled “*Masalah dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran Pendidikan Moral di sekolah menengah dan penyelesaian masalah melalui kaedah Hermeneutik* [Problems in teaching and learning of Moral Education in secondary schools and solutions through Hermeneutics method]”. Suppiah Nachiappan, Barathy Sinnasamy and Sandra Suffian set out firstly, to identify the actual problems faced by teachers in the teaching and learning of Moral Education and then to seek solutions to overcome it. The findings are analysed qualitatively by using a Hermeneutics method. The study found that the main problems faced by teachers are: 1) when the students are not able to relate to the values learned to the real life, 2) teachers fail in mastering the teaching and learning processes of Moral Education and, 3) the lack of teaching aids. Results show that the problems of teaching and learning Moral Education can be solved if teachers take the initiatives of varying their teaching methods to attract students’ interest.

We remain deeply appreciative for the support and encouragement given by the journal’s editors, reviewers, authors and – very importantly – the readers.

Pauline Swee Choo Goh
Nagendralingan Ratnavadivel
Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia