



Abstracts

Collaboration and advanced technology: Close interaction between pedagogy and technology

Miri Shonfeld, Noga Magen-Nagar

The present study was conducted on an innovative online M.Ed. studies program. It examined the contribution of collaborative learning, satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation to positive attitudes towards the use of advanced technologies in terms of technology anxiety, technological self-confidence, and technological orientation. The innovative program applies principles of collaborative learning, and is designed to introduce students to distance learning, to gain knowledge and experience, and to deal with issues in depth. It also develops skills of investigation, collaboration, and analytical thinking in an ICT environment. Participants were 92 students from two colleges of education, with 47 students in the intervention group and 42 in the control group. The research tools consisted of four questionnaires. SEM path analysis results showed that intrinsic motivation is a significant mediating factor between collaboration and attitudes towards the use of advanced technologies. The main research conclusion is that pedagogy and technology maintain close interaction. Pedagogy contains high levels of online collaborative learning that promotes positive attitudes towards the use of advanced technology. In a future study we recommend increasing the number of participants and adding a research tool to examine the level of collaboration within the distance-learning group.

Keywords: attitudes towards technology, intrinsic motivation, online collaborative learning, satisfaction

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Relations of trust and concealment in pedagogical supervision

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Mentor-mentee relationships are not always smooth and open. The present study explores one such disharmonious aspect: pre-service teachers' tendency to hide their difficulties. Within the context of teachers' professional preparation in two Israeli colleges, the researchers documented 32 lessons taught by student teachers at their PDS schools, and the subsequent supervision meetings. In private semi-structured interviews conducted shortly afterwards, the students described the topics they wanted to discuss but decided to conceal, and their motives. It was found that one quarter of the interviewees felt secure and confident to discuss any topic. The other mentees concealed topics associated with their relationship with their mentors, not necessarily related to professional dilemmas. They sought to protect themselves and others, maintain smooth relations, and properly address some practical issues. In a few cases, mentors offended students and betrayed their trust. Concealment, it is argued, provides the student teachers a sense of control; it enables pre-service teachers to effectively regulate the relationship with their mentors, and satisfy their needs and interests. Despite these advantages, concealment undermines trust relations, hinders mentors' ability to perform their role, and blocks the path toward effective learning and proper professional education.

Keywords: interpersonal relationships, pedagogical mentors, professional development school (PDS), teacher training

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Holocaust memory literature in teacher education: The story of a joint teaching-learning project in Israel and Germany

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The paper presents the story of a phenomenological study that accompanied a joint teaching-learning project involving students and a lecturer at Levinsky College of Education in Israel and students and a lecturer from Hildesheim University in Germany. In the study, we observed the reading processes of our students, who belong to the second and third post-Holocaust generations¹ in both Israel and Germany, with regard to literary works written in Hebrew, German, and other languages by members of the same post-Holocaust generations. The research questions were as follows: (1) How did our students derive meaning from their experience of reading second- and third-generation post-Holocaust literature in the context of the seminar? (2) What can we learn from this experience with regard to teaching literature and teacher education specializing in literature?

Our findings attest to the cardinal importance of interaction and dialogue in the teaching of Holocaust memory literature as a means of assuaging anxiety and helping the readers cope with the works and the topic. An analysis of the online dialogue between the Israeli and German students demonstrates the importance of the very existence of such a dialogue, the different places occupied by the culture of Holocaust commemoration for Israeli and German students, the difference between their conceptual worlds, and the entirely different understanding of the effect of the Holocaust on members of the second and third post-Holocaust generations in the two countries. The process indicates the need for and importance of memory studies – including Holocaust memory – in teacher education as a human ethos that necessitates an awareness of ethical reading and perspective-taking.

Keywords: German and Israeli students' dialogue, Holocaust literature instruction, memory, teacher education

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Help-seeking behavior as a strategy in a Self-Regulated Learning model (SRL)

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Requesting help from an outside source is a behavioral learning strategy. It allows students to acquire knowledge and skills that they lack, and to solve learning problems. There is a distinction between two aspects of help-seeking behavior that have often been studied separately: intention and adaptation. This study focused on elementary education in Israeli culture, and simultaneously examined the two aspects of students' help-seeking behavior towards teachers as a strategy in a self-regulated learning model (SRL). The theoretical model included components of motivation, metacognition, and beliefs. To date, no studies have been conducted in elementary education in Israel that include all these components. The tools consisted of questionnaires administered to 242 elementary school students. The findings reinforce the theoretical model underlying this study, and indicate that the beliefs component constitutes a predicting factor of students' help-seeking behavior towards teachers ($p < .001$). The study has implications in theoretical and practical aspects.

Keywords: beliefs, help-seeking behavior, metacognition, motivation

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Like everyone else or with everyone else? Pre-service teachers' willingness to teach in inclusive classrooms

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This article presents the results of a preliminary study that examined the willingness of future teachers, currently students in faculties of education, to teach inclusive classes. The study examined how these pre-service teachers understand the concept of inclusion, and how willing they are to teach inclusive classes. Students at various points in their studies and from different disciplines participated in semi-structured interviews. Results showed differences among pre-service teachers regarding how they understood the policy of inclusion and the methods of its implementation. Similarly, the results sharpen the distinction between willingness to help pupils with special needs and willingness to teach inclusive classes. Pre-service teachers' attitudes reflect the principle of normalization, and not the more current approach of inclusion. This distinction may help explain the difficulty in implementing the policy of inclusion in educational settings.

Keywords: inclusion, normalization, pre-service teachers, willingness to teach in inclusive classrooms

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Attitudes toward inclusion of students with conduct disorders and the degree of empathy toward them: A comparison between teachers, parents, and classmates

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The present study examined attitudes toward inclusion of students with conduct disorders, disorder severity perceptions, and the degree of empathy toward the included students among teachers, parents, and their normative classmates. Findings showed that teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with conduct disorders were more negative than the parents' attitudes. They also showed that students' attitudes toward inclusion were more positive than those of teachers and parents. Parents perceived aggressive behaviors as more severe than the students, and teachers perceived Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as more severe than both students and parents. The students, however, perceived the emotional difficulties as more severe than the teachers did. The teachers were more empathic than the parents, whereas the teachers' and parents' level of empathy was higher than the students'. Each group's difficulties with inclusion are examined in the discussion, as are possible responses.

Keywords: conduct disorders, empathy, inclusion

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Assessment of relationships between demographic, socio-emotional, and educational-learning characteristics, and social anxiety among student teachers in Arab society in Israel

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The aim of the present study was to investigate the issue of social anxiety among student teachers in Arab society in Israel, and to examine the relationship between social anxiety and demographic variables, and socio-emotional and educational aspects. To this end, 543 student teachers, selected from different tracks by the researchers using random cluster sampling, responded to questionnaires assessing these various aspects. Significant differences were found in the level of social anxiety among student teachers in the demographic variables of age, learning tracks, and school year, while no significant differences were found in the level of social anxiety in gender, work, marital status, socio-economic status, and religious background. Regarding the socio-emotional and educational aspects, the results of the study show that apart from a significant positive correlation between social anxiety and depression, the other correlations – between social anxiety and social and family support, learning motivation, and self-esteem – were negative and significant.

Keywords: depression, self-esteem, social anxiety, teaching students

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Fostering writing skills in higher education students: Between organizational assimilation and pedagogical implementation

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This paper describes a study conducted to gauge the success of a faculty-wide project designed to foster the writing skills of students in a large Israeli teacher training college, which aimed to improve the achievements of its participants, both as students in the present and as teachers in the future. The study collected data from a variety of sources, following the first three years of implementation of the Faculty of Education's new agenda. The data analysis revealed that the project's implementation was progressing on two distinct levels, the organizational level and the pedagogical level. The data indicated that the implementation of the organizational level was going well, unlike that of the pedagogical level, which was not progressing as successfully. To integrate basic changes into their students' learning experience, instructors must acquire specific pedagogical content knowledge, which combines knowledge in the field of writing development with disciplinary knowledge in the field of teacher education.

Keywords: metacognition, pedagogical change, pedagogical content knowledge, teacher education, writing skills

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Examining the effectiveness of additional instructional hours on the academic achievements of junior high school students

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If the education system was given a tool that could predict which group of students would benefit the most from a given investment of resources, then principals, school staff, and students would also benefit, and valuable resources would be saved. The present study focuses on analyzing the effects of additional tutoring hours on the scholastic accomplishments of ninth-grade Hebrew-speaking students possessing varying English language abilities.

The study included 150 ninth-graders attending a junior high school in northern Israel. The control group comprised 75 students who studied standard hours, while the experimental group – also consisting of 75 students – received an additional weekly English study hour for 12 weeks. Both groups were divided into three English achievement levels: high, intermediate, and low. It was found that while improved achievement scores characterized all levels in the experimental group, the greatest improvement was noted in the intermediate level students, followed by the low-level ones. These findings point to the importance of allocating resources in such a way as to augment the study of English among intermediate and low-level learners, because such investment results in improved student achievements. The finding that the greatest absolute improvement occurred at the intermediate level, may assist education system officials in reaching effective decisions regarding efficient allocation of additional instruction hours based on student ability levels.

Keywords: academic achievements, additional instructional hours, English as a Second Language (ESL), junior high school

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"A kindergarten teacher is not what I thought it would be": Role perception of a kindergarten teacher among early childhood education students

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The teaching role as perceived by teachers has been widely studied due to its implications for the quality of the teachers' work over the years. Few studies have examined the teaching role perceived by kindergarten teachers. The study focused on this area, and explored the development of a professional identity among kindergarten teachers at an early stage in their training. 133 students were asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning and end of their first year of studies. In the questionnaire they were asked to write a metaphor which represents the kindergarten teacher's role, and to explain their choice of metaphor. Analysis of the explanations showed that the students' teaching role perception focused mainly on their ability to provide emotional support to the children. Additionally, it was found that the perception of the teaching role was dynamic: Students tended to change the definition by adding more aspects to the role, or by altering the teaching role's characteristics. Interviews conducted at the end of the year confirmed the findings, and expanded understanding of the change that took place and the factors that led to a change in the perception of the role. Recommendations mainly relate to the practical aspect of training students in early childhood education, the contribution of the metaphor explanations as a tool that will facilitate an understanding of the internal process of formulating a role perception, and creating a rich dialogue between pedagogical instructors and students.

Keywords: early childhood students, kindergarten teacher, professional development, role perception

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