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EARLI Association News, Summer 2009

EARLI is proud to announce the birth of its sister association called 'European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning' (EAPRIL). The idea of a practitioner research association had grown for many years, and it was the EARLI EC under the presidency of Prof. Roger Säljö that took the decision to proceed with the foundation of EAPRIL. EAPRIL focuses on practitioner research and seeks to bridge research, theory and practice. It aims at becoming a network for anyone who wishes to contribute to the development of education through practice-based and applied research: practitioner researchers, educational developers, professional and staff developers, educational technologists, instructional designers, educational policy makers, people involved in organizational change in educational institutions, teachers, trainers, academic researchers in the field of applied education, and so on. Besides more information about EAPRIL and its upcoming conference in November, this summer edition of Association News contains information on the EARLI 2009 and JURE 2009 conferences in Amsterdam, an announcement of the JURE 2010 conference, an invitation to the EARLI General Assembly meeting, and much more.

1. European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning

EAPRIL seeks to bridge research, theory and practice. It aims at becoming a network for anyone who wishes to contribute to the development of education through practice-based and applied research: practitioner researchers, educational developers, professional and staff developers, educational technologists, instructional designers, educational policy makers, people involved in organizational change in educational institutions, teachers, trainers, academic researchers in the field of applied education, and so on.

Rapid technological changes, immigration, international competition in our societies are among the many developments influencing education. More and more, researchers, teachers and developers in education believe that new ways are needed to understand these developments. They believe that 'traditional' or 'fundamental' educational research may not address the full range of these changes. Further, they feel that new venues are needed for practitioners and researchers to talk to each other. These people argue for research-based practice as well as practice-based research, in other words, research that is relevant to practitioners.

EAPRIL is strongly connected to EARLI, the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction, a network of about 2000 fundamental researchers in the field of learning and instruction. Members of the executive board of EARLI are represented in the organizational structure of EAPRIL, and EARLI has provided substantial backup to start up this new organization. The involvement of EARLI strengthens the link between theory and practice.

More information about EAPRIL on the website: <http://www.eapril.org>

2. EAPRIL / PBPR 2009 conference, 18–20 November 2009, Trier, Germany

This year's conference theme is 'Improving Social Competences and Network Learning in education and professional practice'.

Modern society is facing many challenges, putting schools under pressure to create effective learning environments where students can acquire social as well as academic skills that will allow them to succeed in school and beyond. Institutes are forced to rapidly implement changes and innovations, keeping into account the increasingly diverse population. Many practitioners and researchers are developing and applying usable knowledge to improve the quality of educational practice and policy. This conference offers a platform to organize and disseminate information and knowledge that illuminates our long-range understanding of learning processes.

The central task for educational processes is to convey factual competences as well as personality-development. The core of personality-development is the development of social competences, for example empathy, problem-solving ability, ability to cooperate and communicate. Those abilities insure the coping of social and personal needs as acting in a context of globalization and modernization, fulfillment of the individual, psychically and physically unbiased, socially and job-market-related integrated way of life.

For this conference we have chosen a broad definition of “social competence”, all forms of individual self regulation can be interpreted as the core of social development. So social competence can be interpreted as a sub construct of the theoretical construct of “competence” and includes all forms of “personal competencies”. According to DuBois/Felner (1996/2006), it is created by the linked elements “cognitive skills and abilities”, “behavioral skills”, “emotional competencies” and “motivational skills and expectancy sets”.

The underlying question of this conference is how to promote social competencies, for instance setting and achieving goals, self-management, models of communication, win-win-strategies, forms of cooperation, team-building- and team-development-processes, etc. Despite a clear approval of educational policy towards conveying social competencies in schools and at universities, research in this area is neglected due to predominance of a debate that favors the achievements in certain subjects (factual competencies).

With this conference, we will strengthen the research and teaching/learning practice in this fascinating area. All contributions concerning self regulation, motivation, cognitive and emotional development, behavioral skills, self- and social expectancies e, g. are warmly welcomed. Looking forward to meeting you in Trier!

More information about sessions, keynotes, submission and registration at the conference website: <http://www.eapril.org/EAPRIL2009>

3. EARLI conference, 25–29 August 2009, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Amsterdam is not only the largest city of the Netherlands but also the most visited city, with over 3,5 million foreign visitors a year. In the week of 25 August, the city may expect about 2000 extra visitors who will combine work and leisure by attending the 13th edition of the biennial JURE and EARLI conference 2009.

The EARLI 2009 conference will offer ample opportunities for sharing knowledge with colleagues from the field. 1203 contributions are scheduled in the programme and about 1800 participants are will attend the conference. Sharing research results, meeting colleague researchers, gaining new insights and inspiration, establishing collaborative relations, etc... that is what this biennial meeting is all about.

The conference theme is “Communities of learners”. Brown and Campione (1996) laid down the framework for the educational concept of the community of learners. This theme provides a focus for both the research which will be presented and discussed, and for the meeting as such. Everybody agrees that learning is a social process and that students have to learn how to contribute to the process of knowledge creation by collaborating with peers and teachers in a community of learners. By the same token, we as researchers understand that conducting research on learning and instruction benefits from collaborating with students, teachers, parents and fellow researchers. Obviously, by highlighting this theme, we do not mean to underestimate or neglect other important aspects of educational research and practice on learning and instruction.

We hope to welcome you in Amsterdam, a city with a rich history, many cultural highlights and a warm atmosphere. To register for the conference, or to gain more information about the event, consult the website: <http://www.earli2009.org/>

4. JURE pre-conference 2009

Professional development and international networking for the Junior Researcher

If you are a junior researcher or PhD student in the field of educational research, or if you are interested in innovative research by junior researchers, you might want to reserve Monday the 24th and Tuesday the 25th of August 2009 in your agenda's for the JURE 2009 Pre-Conference.

During this conference, young researchers are given the opportunity to present their work in paper sessions, discuss questions and dilemmas in roundtable sessions, share their work in interactive poster sessions, and learn from experts in workshops with themes decided on by the very participants visiting them.

Although the deadline for submitting proposals has passed, everybody is warmly invited to visit this vibrant conference. Beside the scientific activities already mentioned, lots of social activities will be organized, such as dinners and drinks, but also jogging and beach-volleyball. These activities will be organized not only during the two days of JURE, but will already start on Sunday the 23rd of August (pre-registration day!) and continue during the EARLI-conference that will be held from the 25th until the 29th of August (our ‘shadow-festival’). For more information, please visit our regularly updated website (www.jure2009.org) or send us an e-mail (jure2009@gmail.com).

See you in Amsterdam!

6. JURE conference 2010 pre-announcement

Another agenda-item to be taken down is the 12th JURE conference, taking place from Monday 19 July until Thursday 22 July 2010 in Frankfurt, Germany. The conference theme is 'Connecting Diverse Perspectives on Learning and Instruction: A Conference of Synergy'. The conference committee is very busy preparing the first call and will inform you in the upcoming months. All information will be on the conference website: <http://www.earli-jure2010.org>

7. Invitation to the General Assembly meeting at the Biennial conference in Amsterdam.

We are happy to invite all EARLI members to the biennial General Assembly meeting, taking place on Friday 28 August 2009 during the EARLI 2009 conference. Members will be informed on the activities, membership development and financial status of the association. Furthermore, the old president will delegate his power to the new president, the Executive Committee election results will be announced, the new editors of the EARLI journals will be officially welcomed and much more. All EARLI members will receive a detailed agenda well in advance. For EARLI members all meeting materials will be accessible at the EARLI website. We are looking forward to your participation in this meeting!

8. A farewell note to the resigning EC members, SIG coordinators and Editors

For certain persons within the Executive Committee of EARLI, the governing period in the Committee will come to an end at the EARLI biennial conference 2009. After a period of two years leading the association of EARLI and chairing the Executive Committee, we are saying goodbye to Prof.dr. Pietro Boscolo, the EARLI president 2007-2009.

Prof.dr. Boscolo was the first Italian president in the history of EARLI, a calm personality but passionate about educational research and the EARLI association. He governed EARLI in a period of an expanding the EARLI office, growing membership and new initiatives like the Advanced Study Colloquia. Together with the managing director and other EC members, he guided EARLI as a highly skilled shepherd. We would like to express our sincere appreciation for his contribution to the EARLI association and already wish the upcoming president, Prof.dr. Sari Lindblöm, a successful start.

Two of the former Executive Committee members, Prof.dr. Lauren Resnick and Prof.dr. Rob Martens will also leave the EARLI EC ship. During four years, Prof.dr. Resnick and Prof.dr. Martens contributed to the growth of EARLI, bringing in their expertise and experience. We wish them all the best in their future activities and would like to thank them for the nice cooperation in the last four years.

Besides the Executive Committee members, we are also saying goodbye to several Coordinators of Special Interest Groups, who were on board for a period of 4 years. The Special Interest groups are the backbone of the EARLI association, making good SIG coordinators a crucial success ingredient of EARLI. Special thanks to all resigning SIG coordinators!

Finally, special thanks to our two editors who will leave their editorial offices: Prof. Dr. Anastasia Efklides, Editor of Learning & Instruction 2005-2009, who performed an outstanding job in this period for our leading journal; and Prof. Dr. Filip Dochy, Founding Editor of Educational Research Review who will hand over the flag to a new incoming editor at the Amsterdam conference.

9. Studies on Transitional Programmes – European Project

Although an increasing number of educational institutes are developing remedial courses, very little is known on how one can effectively develop and teach remedial education, in particular when courses are supported by ICT. Please help us to increase our knowledge on how remedial education in Europe can be improved. Your input is very important and will help us to gain insight in best-practices of effective teaching in Europe! As part of the EU-Lifelong Learning project S.T.E.P. (<http://www.transitionalstep.eu/>) a Community of Practice where teachers can share and search for best-practices in remedial teaching will be established. What's in this for you? All respondents will be informed on the final outcomes of this survey and will receive free access to the above mentioned Community of Practice. One at random selected respondent will receive following prize: free registration and hotel accommodation for three nights at the S-ICT conference 2009 in Amsterdam in November 2009. Please fill in the questionnaire, that you can find on this website: <http://www.transitionalstep.eu>. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

For more information, please contact Bart Rienties (UM), the STEP project coordinator at bart.rienties@erd.unimaas.nl or at Tel: 00-31-43-3883770.

10. European Educational Quality Indicators project (EERQI)

EERQI is a research project in the 7th Framework Programme for Research in the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Theme (SSH), in which EARLI is involved as a partner. More information about goals and stakeholders of this project can be found on the project website: <http://www.eerqi.eu>. A hypothesis in this project is that automatic extraction of text parts that indicate quality by an electronic tool could accelerate and support the evaluation process of scholars of research publications. In order to test this hypothesis, texts with the highlighted parts will be distributed to scholars, who will then look at the highlighted parts only and make their assessments. After that they will be asked to read the whole texts and assess the articles again. Then both assessment sets will be compared. If you are interested in cooperating in this exercise, please send an E-mail to goele.nickmans@ped.kuleuven.be