



EARLI ASSOCIATION NEWS

Find out more about the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction and its activities in this 1st issue of Association News of 2007. This issue contains reports on the past SIG conferences of SIG 2, SIG 8, SIG 9 and SIG 12; a report on the 1st Practice-based and Practitioner Research conference, the announcement of the 2nd Practice-based and Practitioner Research conference, as well as the announcement of the upcoming EARLI biennial conference and JURE pre-conference in Budapest in August 2007. All this information and more about the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction can be found on the website www.earli.org.

1. Reports of recent SIG meetings

1.1. SIG 2—*comprehension of text and graphics*

Date: 30 August–1 September, 2006

Venue: University of Nottingham, UK

Coordinators: Shaaron Ainsworth, Eduardo Vidal-Abarca

SIG 2 focuses on how learning is influenced by the form of representation that learners study. Historically, we focussed on text and picture comprehension but given the explosion of representations made available since the introduction of graphical interfaces, the SIG now considers all forms of representation including but not limited to, text, pictures, graphs, diagrams, concept maps, animations, equations, virtual reality, information and scientific visualization, haptics, multimedia, hypermedia, and simulations.

The SIG-meeting took place at Nottingham, from 30th of August 2006 to 1st September. The theme of the 2006 year's meeting was "Learning by interpreting and constructing educational representations". Sixty-five participants from Europe, America and Australia attended the meeting and enjoyed 2 keynote speakers, 26 papers, and a vibrant poster session.

The two keynotes speakers represented the varied interests of the SIG. Danielle McNamara opened the event and spoke on text coherence and Raymond Duval addressed the topic of multiple representations.

Papers and posters addressed many of the SIG's themes but with particularly strong representation from researchers interested in improving text comprehension, and learning with dynamic visualisation and multiple representations.

A varied social program saw delegates playing Hunt the Buffet on the University's Jubilee campus and enjoying dinner in central Nottingham.

The program ended with a SIG business meeting where participants discussed issues in the SIG's future including the Budapest conference and the location of the next SIG meeting (which we are happy to report will be Tilburg University in the Netherlands).

If you are interested in the SIG's research areas and would like to find out more, we would encourage you to come to the SIG 2 meeting in Budapest, or you can download a copy of the 2006 proceedings from this site <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/lsri/News/SIG2/Proceedings.pdf>.

1.2. SIG 12—writing

Date: 20–22 September 2006

Venue: University of Antwerp, Belgium

Coordinators: Asa Wengelin, Joachim Grabowski

Conference Manager: Luuk van Waes

The 10th Earli Sig Writing conference was hosted at the University of Antwerp. The organisers can look back on a very successful meeting, both from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Not only were there more papers and participants than ever before, but there was also again a raise in quality. And, on top of that, even the weather was very nice.

Some facts:

- *Papers and Posters*

Out of more than 210 proposals 130 papers and 30 posters were selected for this conference. So, even after a rather selective review process, this SIG Writing meeting brings together significantly more papers than ever before. This is very good news because it shows that the research domain is attracting more and more researchers and that those researchers realize that the conferences of the Earli Special Interest Group of Writing are an outstanding opportunity to communicate with colleagues in the field.

- *Participants*

More than 200 people participated in this conference, which is also more than ever before. Researchers from 6 continents and from over 40 different countries traveled to Antwerp. A lot of new and young researchers have found their way to the Earli SIG Writing conference.

- *Proceedings and Publication server*

The organizers stimulated the participants to publish their papers on the SIG Writing Publication server: <http://www.sigwritingpublications.org>. This will make the progress of writing research easily available for the interested community.

1.3. SIG 8—motivation and emotion

Date: 24–27 September 2006

Venue: University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany

Coordinators: Marold Wosnitza, Stuart Karabenick

The Summer School on Motivation preceded the International Conference on Motivation in 2006 and was hosted by the University of Koblenz-Landau (Campus Landau). It was organized by the University and the SIG 8.

The main objective of the Summer School was to give insight into current research related to topics of motivation within learning and instruction and its foundation in general psychology. Moreover, the Summer School was designed for Ph.D.-students coming from all over the world and the program was of high academic quality including a reading list (compiled by the teaching staff) referring to the topics addressed during the Summer School. In addition, it was an opportunity for Ph.D.-students working on the field of motivation, to broaden their knowledge and to deepen their understanding of the subject. Finally, it was a unique occasion to provide an academically as well as socially rewarding experience.

The Summer School lasted for 3 days and included several interactive tuition formats, including hands-on-workshops. Participants were given the chance to present and to discuss their research work in small groups with

colleague students and internationally recognised researchers. Furthermore, all participants of the Summer School were given the opportunity to attend the subsequent International Conference on Motivation.

The Summer School was carried out in the following formats of tuition:

- Student presentation—overview and discussion of current dissertation.
- Discussion-based and hands-on-workshops, planned and organised by the groups and their lecturers.
- Group presentations of elaborated issues.
- State of the art lectures regarding special topics of tuition.
- Panels on methodology.
- Discussions about “Presentation and Academic Writing” (formal prerequisites for papers and presentations) and “Career as a researcher” (exchange of experience and discussion of advises between lecturers and their group).
- Consultation hours in the evening giving each student the opportunity to discuss his dissertation with a member of the teaching staff.

Invited teaching staff for the Summer School on Motivation was:

- Kirsti Lonka, Helsinki (Finland).
- Peter Nenniger, Landau (Germany), Chair.
- Reinhard Pekrun, Munich (Germany).
- Wolfgang Schnotz, Landau (Germany).
- Simone Volet, Perth (Australia).

The 23 participants (selected in a review procedure by the teaching staff) were coming from 10 different countries: 3 Belgium, 7 Germany, 1 Greece, 1 Italy, 3 the Netherlands, 3 Norway, 1 Switzerland, 2 Australia, 1 Canada, 1 Hong Kong.

The next Summer-School on Motivation will take place in 2008 in Turku (Finland).

1.4. SIG 9—phenomenography and variation theory

Date: 7–9 December 2006

Venue: The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China

Coordinators: Mona Holmqvist, Ming Fai Pang

Organising Committee:

Chairpersons

Ming Fai Pang
Mona Holmqvist

The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, China
Kristianstad University, Sweden

Members

Gerlese Åkerlind
Jonas Emanuelsson

Australian National University, Australia
Göteborg University, Sweden

The workshop was conceived to be a resounding success. There was enthusiastic response to the call for papers and the wide variety of topics proposed was intellectually stimulating. The conference proved to be a valuable academic and networking event with lots of discussions about the recent developments in phenomenography and variation theory.

The workshop was launched on Thursday, 7th December at a lecture theatre in the campus of the University of Hong Kong. A total of 59 participants from more than twenty institutions all over the world participated in this 3-day event. There were seven sessions of 1-h keynote presentations each given by a renowned scholar in this research area. Also, eight paper presentations sessions were arranged, in which two or three papers were presented in each of them. Furthermore, two symposia with contributors from different parts of the world were held on the second day of the workshop. On the third day, all the keynote speakers addressed the theme of the conference at the plenary session, to be followed by the closing of the workshop. One of the highlights was the conference dinner which was held on 8th

December. About 40 participants joined this lovely gathering in which some excellent Chinese cuisines were served and all participants very much enjoyed the food as well as the conversations.

An evaluation form was distributed to participants shortly after the plenary session on the last day. Response indicated that the participants were very satisfied with the organization of the workshop and they expressed sincere thanks to the organizing committee. Many of them found the workshop very insightful and thought-provoking, with presentations made on those cutting-edge issues of the area of research. There were some fruitful academic exchanges amongst top-notch scholars and doctoral students in this field, which allowed the development of a learning academic community.

Invited keynote speakers:

Christine Bruce
Lars-Owe Dahlgren
Lo Mun Ling
Ferenc Marton
Ming Fai Pang
Ulla Ruesson
Lennart Svensson

Queensland University of Technology, Australia
Linköpings University, Sweden
Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong SAR
Göteborg University, Sweden
The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR
Göteborg University, Sweden
Lund University, Sweden

2. Report of the 1st European Practice-based and Practitioner Research conference, Leuven, 19–21 October, 2006

The 1st European Conference on Practice-based and Practitioner Research took place at the faculty club, which is located at the ancient historical site of the Grand Beguinage of Leuven, Belgium. The conference was hosted by EARLI and the Centre for Research on Teaching and Training of the Catholic University of Leuven. The theme of this 3-days event was **‘Improving quality in teaching and learning: developmental work and implementation challenges’** and we welcomed about 160 participants from different parts of Europe and beyond. Participants were practitioners, practitioner researchers, educational innovators, people involved in organizational change, academic researchers and policy makers who consider their inquiry as ‘useful and relevant’ for their colleagues and shared interest in research results – evidence – that contribute to the improvement of educational practice.

Organising Committee:

- Veronica Bruyns, The Hague Professional University, The Netherlands.
- Filip Dochy, University of Leuven, Belgium.
- Marijke Kral, College of Higher Education of Arnhem and Nijmegen, The Netherlands.
- Regina Mulder, University of Regensburg, Germany.
- Goele Nickmans, EARLI Project Manager.
- Bridgit Somekh, Manchester Metropolitan University and University of Huddersfield, UK.

The conference started on Thursday, 19th October with a first keynote speech presented by Prof. Dr. Graham Gibbs from Oxford University. He animated the public with an interesting talk about changing assessment policy and practice in higher education through research. After his speech, the conference took off with sessions in formats that promoted interactivity and discussion: presentations, workshops, roundtables, poster presentations and learning groups. On the last day, Saturday, 20th October, the second keynote speaker, Prof. Dr. Caroline Liberg from Upsalla University gave an inspiring presentation on the role of practice-based research in a Scandinavian perspective.

The evaluation forms that were filled in by the participants show that the overall evaluation of this 1st European Conference for Practice-based and Practitioner Research was very positive. Participants indicated that they felt a need for this kind of meetings that focus on the improvement of practice and stimulate interaction between practitioners and researchers in the field of education. These positive evaluations have resulted in the decision to organise a 2nd PBPR conference in Maastricht in November 2007. We are looking forward to meeting you in The Netherlands!

3. 12th EARLI biennial conference, Budapest, August 28–September 1, 2007

The University of Szeged, the Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences will host the 12th Biennial EARLI Conference in 2007. This EARLI 2007 conference will provide an opportunity not only

to present the results of your recent work, but also to discuss research findings with international colleagues. The theme of the conference, **Developing Potentials for Learning**, has at least two levels of meaning: the growing importance of enriching the potentials of learning and the unidirectional trend of increasing possibilities in educational systems both play an important role in educational research.

We hope the conference will be an enjoyable and unique experience for all of you. Hungary, and her beautiful capital Budapest, have a rich history that is over one thousand years old. Hungary is known for its cultural heritage, various Nobel Prize winners, great sportsmen, and tasty food and wines. Budapest lies on the river-sides of the Danube, boasts of beautiful buildings, bridges, restaurants, and a lively cultural life, which we hope you will take the time to enjoy the atmosphere!

Please visit the conference website: www.edu.u-szeged.hu/earli2007/ for detailed information about registration.

4. 10th JURE Pre-conference, Budapest, August 27–28, 2007

The primary aim of JURE is to represent and support research students on matters that are of interest to them. Furthermore, learning and interaction among all junior researchers as well as among junior and senior researchers are significant goals for JURE.

JURE arranges meetings where junior researchers can discuss their research topics with other juniors as well as with seniors, and where they can attend workshops on various topics, for instance academic writing and presentation skills. JURE provides an environment where juniors can socialise and participate in a scientific community. Prior to the 12th biennial EARLI conference, the Junior Researchers of EARLI (JURE) will organise a pre-conference. The theme of this conference is ‘**Learning as a focus, process and outcome**’ and it will take place on August 27 and 28 in Budapest, Hungary.

Please visit the JURE 2007 website: <http://www.edu.u-szeged.hu/jure2007/> for detailed information about this JURE 2007 Pre-Conference. We are looking forward to welcoming you there!

5. 2nd European Practice-based and Practitioner Research conference, Maastricht, 14–16 November, 2007

The 2nd European Practice-based and Practitioner Research Conference will be held in Maastricht, The Netherlands from 14 until 16 November 2007. The conference is organised in cooperation with the Centre for Teaching and Training from the University of Leuven. The conference venue is Hotel L’Empéreur, located right in front of the central station of Maastricht and on a walking distance from the centre of the city.

The conference theme is **Learning and Instruction for the new generation**. This event will offer opportunities to discuss educational innovations and developments based on evidence emerging from different forms of enquiry into educational practice. The interactive contribution formats are intended to promote interaction and cooperation between practitioners and researchers. Further information can be obtained from the conference website at <http://www.earli-pbpr.org>. The deadline for online submissions of proposals is June 20th. If you would like to receive conference flyers for distribution, please contact the EARLI office at earli@ped.kuleuven.be.

6. Call for position papers

EARLI publishes position papers on the website (http://www.earli.org/position_papers) and in its journal Educational Research Review. A position paper is a short paper on a topical subject in the field of learning and instruction, written by three to four experts. The aim of a position paper is to inform educational policy makers, officials and/or practitioners on research findings and to advise them with practical recommendations concerning a better adjustment of policy and educational practice.

All EARLI members are invited to submit proposals for position papers by e-mail to Goele Nickmans, EARLI Project Manager at goele.nickmans@ped.kuleuven.be. A proposal consists of a short abstract on the topic and a presentation of the authors, who must be active in at least three different countries.

You can find the 1st EARLI Position Paper titled “A Learning Integrated Assessment System”, and the second one titled “Ethno-culturally diverse education settings: Problems, challenges and solutions” on the EARLI website and in the first two issues of EDUREV. The third position paper titled “The use of e-learning course management systems to support learning strategies and to improve self-regulated learning”, is published in the 3rd issue of EDUREV.