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Editorial

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Why We Aren't Facebook?!

Q: How are journal editorials not like a Facebook post?

A: Nobody "likes" or responds to your posts!

So please read this one, because it includes a plea for more careful scholarship as it pertains to writing journal articles. Perhaps call this "an editor's lament"; some of the trends I see in submitted articles are unfortunate. The APA guide, particularly for verbatim quoting of passages from another source, is still current, but would it surprise you to know that some submitters borrow huge chunks of material from others' work, word-for-word, with no quotation marks of acknowledgement? As a part of *IRRODL*'s behind-the-curtain operation, we put each submission through the TurnItIn system and the resultant report spews out facts and figures on where every part of a submission comes from – well, with some reservations. But it's still very far-reaching. And some submitters have had submissions declined, as we have noted too much borrowed material in their work, not appropriately referenced or cited. It's too bad when this happens, because often the research seems relevant and interesting to our readers, but it is journal policy to hold strictly to the rules that restrict the amount of previously-published material that can be used AND also to uphold adherence to APA guidelines.

But let's get on with this first regular issue of 2017, the first of many to come this year. We are delighted to be so busy! We begin with a longitudinal overview of IRRODL's content from the past 15 years. In *Review and Content Analysis of the International Review of Research in Open and Distance/Distributed Learning (2000–2015)*, **Zawacki-Richter, Alturki,** and **Aldraiweesh** present a review of our published articles to describe the status thereof and to identify gaps and priority areas in distance education research. These broad themes were identified: the establishment of online learning and distance education institutions (2000–2005), widening access to education and online learning support (2006–2010), and the emergence of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Open Educational

Resources (OER) (2011–2015). Although it may seem self-congratulatory, this type of long view of our field is useful; and, of course, we at IRRODL are pleased that the research confirms our status as a leading journal in the field.

Picking up on the third theme identified by Zawacki-Richter et al., we move next to a bevy of articles that investigate MOOCs from several perspectives. **Costley** and **Lange** examined MOOCs to gain a better understanding of e-learning materials through the delivery of content by using diverse forms of media. Their findings are reported in *The Effects of Lecture Diversity on Germane Load*, for which they surveyed a large group of students who participated in MOOC courses in South Korea to investigate the relationship between delivery diversity and germane cognitive load. Results show a positive relationship between diverse media delivery (auditory, visual, and total media) and germane cognitive load. The implication of these results is important for instructors who wish to promote a better understanding of e-learning materials through the delivery of content by using diverse forms of media.

Cabrera and **Fernández -Ferrer** used a qualitative methodology to investigate the opinions and perceptions of academics in educational technology regarding MOOCs. They also compared the contributions of teachers from a traditional university with a face-to-face model and those from a distance university which has a greater possibility of coming into direct competition with MOOCs. Read about their study in *What the Experts in Education Technology have to say About MOOCs: Comparative Study Among Teachers in a Traditional and an Open University.*

We are seeing more and more studies that describe the application of MOOCS to various life scenarios, which is an exciting way to expand the reach of this tool/way of learning. In *A Team of Instructors' use of Social Presence, Teaching Presence and Attitudinal Dissonance: An Animal Behavior and Welfare MOOC*, **Watson, Watson, Janakiraman,** and **Richardson** present a review of an instructional team's facilitation that focused on shaping attitudes in regards to the topic of animal behaviour and welfare within a MOOC. They conclude by providing insights into instructional design and facilitation of MOOCs in general or attitudinal learning specifically.

Milligan and **Littlejohn** ask, *Why Study on a MOOC? The Motives of Students and Professionals?* In examining two MOOCs, a similar profile of primary motivations emerged, with respondents identifying the potential benefits to their current role, or future career, alongside more general responses reflecting casual interest in the topic or a simple desire to learn. The authors conclude that it is clear that MOOC study represents a popular mechanism for professionals to address both current and future learning needs.

From MOOCS to OER ….The RISE Framework (Resource Inspection, Selection, and Enhancement) is a framework for the continuous improvement of open educational resources. The framework is an automated process that identifies online resources that should be evaluated and improved. Here, authors **Bodily, Nyland,** and **Wiley** present a case study applying the RISE framework to an Introduction to Business course. Using the RISE Framework, researchers successfully identified resources, time periods, and modules in the course that should be further evaluated. Results are reported in *The RISE*

Framework: Using Learning Analytics for the Continuous Improvement of Open Educational Resources.

How is academe responding to social media? **Manca** and **Ranieri** address this question in *Networked Scholarship and Motivations for Social Media Use in Scholarly Communication*, a study in which they examined Italian scholars' reasons for use of social media. Results show that frequency of use, age, years of teaching, and disciplinary field were relevant factors especially for LinkedIn and ResearchGate-Academia.edu, while gender and academic title seemed to have a limited impact on scholars' motivations for all social media sites considered in the study. The authors provide considerations for future research.

As scholars and researchers, we are constantly looking for new ways to do things – new approaches to learning, new tools, new uses of old tools. To this end, **Fidalgo** and **Thormann** examined *Reaching Students in Online Courses Using Alternative Formats*, and found that text was the preferred format for accessing course information and resources as well as assignment submission. However, a substantial number of students acknowledged the benefits of using alternative formats and a smaller percentage used them. The authors suggest that instructors take advantage of UDL strategies since sufficient numbers of students used them and because learning styles differ.

In another investigation into ways of doing things**, Feng, Xie,** and **Liu**, in *Community Presence- Based Online Tutoring Scaffold Design*, aimed to design a scaffold framework for online tutoring based on the Community of Inquiry Model (CoI model). Using design-based research (DBR), a scaffold design framework for online tutoring was developed and the scaffolds proved supportive for the development of social, teaching, and cognitive presences. The study also provides guidelines for scaffold design of online tutoring.

Li, Zhang, Yu, and **Chen's** study**,** *Rethinking Distance Tutoring in e-Learning Environments: A Study of the Priority of Roles and Competencies of Open University Tutors in China*, looked at changing priorities and roles of tutors working in China's evolving e-learning environments. Their findings suggest that the priority of the roles and competencies has significantly changed, a result of the pedagogical shift from cognitive-behaviorist to social-constructivist and connectivist. Changes in the roles of the instructional designer and instructor were highlighted.

And just as many times, as scholars and researchers, we continue to examine how our teaching and learning processes work. Do they work? What do our learners say? To this end, **Sanghoon Park** conducted a comparative analysis of online learner behavioral interactions, time-on-task, attendance, and performance at different points throughout a semester (beginning, during, and end) based on two online courses: one course offering authentic discussion-based learning activities and the other course offering authentic design/ development-based learning activities. A series of Mann-Whitney tests were conducted to compare the two types of behavioral interactions between the two courses. Read *Analysis of Time-on-Task, Behavior Experiences, and Performance in Two Online Courses with Different Authentic Learning Tasks* for results.

Gómez-Rey, Barbera, and **Fernández-Navarro**, in *Student Voices on the Roles of Instructors in Asynchronous Learning Environments in the 21st Century*, studied which instructional roles and outputs are important in the 21st century from the perspective of students in asynchronous learning environments. Their findings suggest that a new role, the life skill promoter, has emerged. Furthermore, analysis of the remaining roles (pedagogical, designer, social, technical, and managerial) showed that: (i) online teachers are, first and foremost, pedagogues; (ii) the design of particular online program influences the pedagogical and designer roles and; (iii) the managerial role has declined in importance over the years due to the development of more intuitive and transparent online scenarios from the beginning of the course onward.

This issue also includes two "notes," each of which offers insight into our field. The Research Note entitled *A Survey of the Collaboration Rate of Authors in the E-Learning Subject Area Over a 10-Year Period (2005-2014) Using Web of Science* by **Mohammadi, Asadzandi,** and **Malgar** showed that despite the need for research activities as a team, authors in our field of e-learning tend to publish their papers alone or in a team of two.

And our final piece, a Technical Note from **Laaser** and **Toloza**, examined *The Changing Role of Educational Video in Higher Distance Education*, concluding that the ongoing usage of audio visual media is falling behind in terms of educational quality compared to prior achievements in the history of distance education.

The possibility of publishing preliminary or partial research findings in our Notes sections should be attractive to scholars and researchers who are somewhere in their process or, for whatever reasons, are not quite ready with a fully-developed research article.

And that's it for this first regular issue of 2017. There is much more to come this year. Stay tuned!