

Coming Together as a Research Community to Support Educators and Students in K-12 Online and Emergency Remote Settings

LEANNA ARCHAMBAULT

Arizona State University
leanna.archambault@asu.edu

JERED BORUP

George Mason University
jeredborup@gmail.com

Co-Editors-In-Chief, Journal of Online Learning Research

In the midst of a global pandemic, our work specific to the field of K-12 online and blended learning has never been more relevant or important. Teachers all over the U.S. and globally are faced with the difficult challenge of working to continue remote learning opportunities for their students. Parents are realizing the many challenges of being a teacher and the importance of their role as many step into the fill the gap and help their students. Schools and districts continue to adjust, adapt, try new approaches, and figure out what works being at a distance. We all struggle with the realities of the digital divide and lack of access to devices, internet connections, and necessary accommodations for learners. To say that we are not sure what to expect or often how to proceed is an understatement. Fortunately, our community is filled with talented and giving individuals who have stepped up to provide a wealth of research-driven advice, resources, instructional design support, guidance, ideas and strategies. From [Kerry Rice's blog](#) to [Michael Barbour's 5 minute video chats](#) with selected colleagues, to Stephanie Stephens' High Noon Help Desk on Facebook Live, there have been so many examples of coming together to help teachers make the transition to emergency remote learning. This is the kind of community we are proud to be a part of and to continue to cultivate through the *Journal of Online Learning Research*, an open access, academic outlet.

For our first issue of 2020, one a bit delayed by the complexities of juggling a new normal as a result of COVID-19, we have three general articles and one as a part of our international section. We briefly describe each below.

First and foremost, we wish to recognize and congratulate April Lawrence who was the 2020 SITE K-12 Online and Blended Learning SIG Promising Scholar Award for her article, “Teaching as Dialogue: Toward Culturally Responsive Online Pedagogy.” In a very important addition to our field, Lawrence examined how four teachers practiced culturally responsive online pedagogy in one state-supported online program. Through a qualitative analysis, she found that the teachers in her study engaged in frequent and ongoing dialogue with their students by implementing a number of strategies to get to know their students, build class community, adapt instruction to students’ learning needs, and make learning relevant. Despite this positive finding, however, certain culturally responsive pedagogical elements, such as infusing students’ cultures into the curriculum and helping students to challenge power and hegemony, were not identified. With schools across the U.S. and abroad being transitioned to remote models, it is important that we recognize the significance of integrating culturally responsive pedagogy.

In the second article “K-12 Community of Inquiry: A case study of the applicability of the Community of Inquiry framework in the K-12 learning environment” employing the use of qualitative methods, Kyle Sanders and Anissa Lokey-Vega examined how teaching practices of four online social studies teachers were aligned with the Community of Inquiry framework. Through a descriptive case study method, the authors suggest Collegial Presence, consisting of collaboration with parental guardians/learning coaches, collaboration with teachers, and collaboration with supervisors, and collaboration with support staff as a new theme for a K-12 Community of Inquiry framework. They recommend additional research to identify practices of online teachers and to further develop the proposed K-12 Community of Inquiry framework.

Investigating whether students’ use of their primary language as a scaffolding strategy, delivered via a computer-based intervention program, can predict the language outcomes of English Language Learners (ELL) is the subject of the third article, “Using Primary Language Support in a Computer-Based Intervention to Scaffold Second Language Learners” by Falal Amro and Nada Dabbagh. The research that examined a computer-based intervention both with and without primary language support among 251 students who were ELLs. They found a strong positive relationship between linguistic scaffolding and vocabulary scores; however, no significant relationship between linguistic scaffolding and comprehension scores was

established. As the authors noted, "...the findings support existing research by arguing that ELLs need more scaffolding in the classroom to successfully compete with native English speaking classmates."

In our international section, we feature an article from Soonhwa Seok and Boaventura DeCosta entitled, "Relationships Between Young South Koreans' Online Activities and Their Risk of Exploitation." The authors investigated how a sample of 1,092 South Korean high school students had the potential to be exploited through engaging in popular and everyday online activities including exposure to sexually explicit material (SEM), violent content, cyberbullying, malware, phishing, and/or identity theft. These harmful impacts can be experienced through a myriad of ways such as the use of social media, streaming movies and/or television, streaming and/or posting videos, downloading and/or listening to music, sharing files, involvement in free and/or subscription-based online gaming, and even completing school assignments. Findings suggest that exposure to online SEM and cyberbullying are the two of the largest issues as they were significantly correlated with students' popular and everyday online activities. It is imperative that parents and teachers are made aware of the problem and that students are taught how to safeguard themselves when online. The work by Seok and DeCosta raises very important issues especially with the current shift to remote learning and an increase in online activity.

As this semester begins to wrap up, we hope this finds you well and that this research is relevant and useful, not only in your own research and teaching efforts, but also as you reach out to help fellow educators. We also hope that you consider submitting your manuscripts to JOLR for review to share your work and ideas. As always, we strongly encourage submissions to the international section. In addition, there is a special issue on *[Reimagining Online Educational Settings As Accessible, Inclusive Spaces](#)* (manuscripts are due June 1, 2020). The goal of the special issue is to "showcase studies grounded in conceptualizations of students with disabilities or other students who may need special attention or services that extend beyond what we already know and provide new insights into how disability and other challenges students face are understood, identified, and supported in online and blended learning environments." Never has this topic been more critical, and we welcome your manuscripts. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.