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From the Editor

Dear readers of RIGEO,

Welcome to second issue of Review of International Geographical Education Online-RIGEO for 2019. This is the Volume 9, Number 2 of the RIGEO since 2011.

First paper is entitled “Comparative Analysis of the Quality of Visuals in Geography Textbooks for ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 Levels of Education” written by Petr TRAHORSCH, Jan D. BLÁHA and Vlastimil CHYTRÝ from Czechia. The aim of the article is to assess the quality of visualization of geomorphology, hydrology and agriculture of Czechia through maps, schemes and photographs in geography textbooks for ISCED 1 and ISCED 2 levels of education. A total of 15 geography textbooks were selected and a total of 90 visuals from these textbooks were analyzed. The scaling method according to defined criteria relating to the concept of usability was applied; the result of scaling was the usability coefficient. The data obtained through scaling was subsequently statistically analyzed. The outcomes of the statistical analysis show that the usability coefficient of visuals in textbooks for the older cohort is higher than in textbooks for younger students. The usability coefficient as an indicator of quality of the assessed visuals is linked especially to the tradition of publishing houses, as visuals in textbooks published by publishers with relatively long tradition are of a higher quality than those by publishers with shorter tradition and therefore less experience with publishing textbooks. Differences in the quality between individual types of visuals or themes are not statistically significant.

Second paper of this issue is from Greece entitled “Differences between Dyslexic and Non-Dyslexic Students in the Performance of Spatial and Geographical Thinking” by Aikaterini KLONARI and Anthoula STYLIANI PASSADELLI. Dyslexia is a specific form of learning disability which comes along with diverse difficulties, both in learning, social and emotional fields. It obstructs the development of the individual at all levels of education. This research investigates students’ spatial and geographical thinking and whether there is a differentiation of these abilities between dyslexic and non-dyslexic ones. For this purpose, 50 questionnaires were distributed to 25 dyslexic and 25 non-dyslexic students aged 14 using opportunity sampling from different areas (rural, urban). The questionnaire included spatial thinking exercises like mental rotation, plan views, shapes folding - unfolding and mental manipulation of shapes and exercises by which geographical thinking is examined, according to the Greek geography curriculum. The results indicated that the non-dyslexic students had better performance than the dyslexic ones in all cases, except one, this of 2D - 3D exercise. The most significant difference was in the section of plan views, mental rotation and folding - unfolding, whereas in the shapes mental manipulation, both children’s groups faced difficulties. Although the research sample was limited, the results supported our hypothesis that non-dyslexic students would perform better on spatial and geographical thinking assessments.

Third article is “Professional and Pedagogical Competencies of Geography Teachers in Malaysia” and written by Mahat HANIFAH, Hashim MOHMADISA, Saleh YAZID,

Nayan NASIR and Norkhaidi Saiyidatina BALKHIS from Malaysia. This study aims to examine the professional and pedagogical competencies of form six geography teachers in Malaysia. Study involved 200 geography teachers from across Malaysia, separated into five zones; the Northern Zone, the Central Zone, the East Coast Zone, the Southern Zone and the East Malaysia Zone. A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The six variables of professional and pedagogical competence studied were as follows: teachers' understanding of their topics, professional knowledge, subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical technology knowledge and professional values. The findings showed all competencies of professionalism and pedagogy to be at high levels. Specifically, correlations revealed teachers' understanding of topics to have strong, significant relationships with their subject content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical technology knowledge, and moderate, significant relationships with their professional knowledge and values. Hence, the results indicate that teachers' professional knowledge and values need to be enhanced in order to achieve the ideal level of professional and pedagogical competence for form six geography teachers in Malaysia.

The fourth article is from Turkey entitled "Peer Assessment and Active Learning Experiences of Social Studies Teacher Candidates" written by İrem NAMLI ALTINTAŞ and Hüseyin KARAASLAN. The aim of this study is to determine the opinions of teacher candidates on how teacher efficiency should be through peer assessment and active learning. For this purpose, an implementation was performed on the presentation skills of the social studies teacher candidates at a state university. In the study group, there are 28 teacher candidates as 10 males and 18 females. The study was designed in the case study. For 9 weeks, 8 groups gave lessons and a general assessment was performed for 1 week. The teacher candidates, in groups of twos, made presentations in accordance with the class level related to the subjects included in the secondary school social studies program. The presentations are based on critical, empathetic, reflective and project-based thinking. As the data collection tool, preliminary and final assessment forms consisting of open-ended questions were distributed. During the process, the teacher candidates were asked to keep individual and group reflective diaries. The diaries were used to support the final assessment forms. The data were coded through content analysis and analyzed by using the NVIVO 12 program. The main theme in the findings obtained was coded in accordance with peer assessment and active learning. The main themes were determined as The Effect on Peer Relationships, The Effect of Being Assessed, The Effect on the Assessor, and The Effect of the Process. The Category, Code and Dimensions were also shaped according to the main themes. The findings of the reflective diaries support the final assessment. At the end of the process, teacher candidates stated that peer assessment made a positive contribution to them, their relationships with their peers were negatively affected sometimes and active learning contributed to their personal development, professional knowledge, and collaborative works.

The fifth article's title is "Examination of Prospective Teachers' Perceptions of Homeland: A Phenomenological Study" and written by Yavuz DEĞİRMENÇİ from

Turkey. Homeland can be described as the territory in which people who are bound to each other with several ties and have common values. It's one of the most valuable heritages which has been left to us from former generations, and will be transformed to future generations. There are great responsibilities on us, families, education and especially our teachers as an important elements of education to protect and transfer it to future generations. The reason is that patriotism begins in the family and continues in educational environments. An examination of the renewed primary and secondary education programs in terms of general objectives and contents revealed that there is a conscious effort for children to gain such values as consciousness and love for the homeland, and patriotism in especially social sciences and geography classes. Therefore, perceptions of prospective teachers regarding homeland, who will raise future generations, are important. The purpose of this research is to study perceptions of prospective teachers regarding the concept of homeland. The population of the study consists of 157 prospective classroom teachers, 98 of whom are females and 59 males, who were being educated in three different departments (social studies, Turkish and classroom teaching) in the Fall semester of 2017-2018 Academic Year. Phenomenology, a qualitative research method, has been employed in the research. The data collected were analyzed by the technique of content analysis. According to the findings of the research, the prospective social studies teachers came up with 28, prospective classroom teachers came up with 27 and prospective Turkish teachers came up with 28 valid metaphors about the concept of homeland, which makes a total of 83 different metaphors. In addition, the participants' most preferred metaphors about the concept were the metaphors of mother, home, family, house and earth.

Sixth article of this issue entitled "Map Skills in Education: A Systematic Review of Terminology, Methodology, and Influencing Factors" and written Lenka HAVELKOVÁ and Martin HANUS from Czechia. For a few decades, map skills stay at the forefront of not only geographers' and geographic educators' research interest. To identify what has already been accomplished, where the research currently stands and where the potential for future studies lies, a review of the literature was carried out. Specifically, this comprehensive synthesis of map skill research focuses on three perspectives: terminology, methodological approaches, and mainly on investigated factors affecting the map skill level. As non-uniformity in terminology is apparent, an integrative framework of map skill types based on theoretical works and previous studies is proposed. Similarly, methods that can be more suitable and beneficial for future research than now prevailing non-standardized test are presented. These suggestions are mainly based on a variety of identified scarcely used methodological approaches. Furthermore, the synthesis shows that the number of factors which influence on the level of map skills has been tested is substantial. But that, frequently investigated categories of factors are identifiable. In addition, current gaps in map skill research are identified and insufficiently studied, yet potentially important factors are suggested for future studies

The title of "Small-Group Work and Relational Thinking in Geographical Mysteries" is the seventh article of RIGEO in this issue and written by Jan KARKDIJK Wilfried

ADMIRAAL and Joop Van der SCHEE. Relational thinking is a necessary skill for building students' individual capabilities and a core concept in geography education. Geographical relational thinking refers to being able to give interrelated, causal explanations for geographical phenomena such as regional change. The aim of this study was to gain more insight into differences in relational thinking between small groups of students working together on an assignment to explain a regional event which was framed as a geographical mystery. This insight could help teachers to advance students' geographical relational thinking skills. Two geographical mysteries were examined with data from 69 small groups in Dutch upper secondary education. The two mysteries resulted in differences in the level of relational thinking, which were partly explained by small-groups' on-task behaviour. Many student groups showed a low level of geographical relational thinking. Findings point to the need to incorporate exercises into geography lessons which require the use of thinking and reasoning with interrelated causal relationships

The eight paper of this issue is about "Using UNESCO World Heritage Site of Vlkolínec (Slovakia) in Geographical Education" written by Iveta RAKYTOVÁ and Ivana TOMČÍKOVÁ from Slovakia. UNESCO identifies unique places in the World, whether natural or man-made, of universally outstanding value or cultural significance as World Heritage. These places are considered heritage of all mankind, rather than just heritage of a particular area, country, or region. Such sites can be rich sources of information not only for the people of the region, but also for the general public, and are often associated with lively tourism. The aim of this paper is to characterize the UNESCO World Heritage site of Vlkolínec, one of the most visited UNESCO sites in Slovak Republic, and to use the settlement of Vlkolínec as an example to describe how the site attributes can be used in geographical education. In the first part of the paper, we describe the natural potential of Vlkolínec, characterize the settlement's development from the end of the 18th century to the present, and describe historical landscape structures whose existence in Vlkolínec was the reason for its inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In the school year 2018/2019, we conducted a survey among students in the 2nd stage of primary school in Liptov region on their knowledge about the UNESCO site of Vlkolínec. Based on the results of the survey, we designed and realized a project with eighth class primary students at the Slovak UNESCO World Heritage site of Vlkolínec.

The ninth paper of this issue is about "An Evaluation of Social Studies Textbooks in Turkey: A Content Analysis for Curriculum and Content Design" written by Necati TOMAL and Murat Bayram YILAR from Turkey. The objective of this study is to evaluate the content of social studies textbooks, which are written and taught based upon the social studies curriculum adopted between 1968-2018, in terms of the curriculum and content designs, and some general educational principles. For this purpose, document analysis, one of the qualitative research methodology, was used in this study. Accordingly, 12 social studies textbooks for different levels of class written based upon the social studies curriculum adopted in 1968, are the primary document resources of the research. The curriculum, upon which the textbooks are based, was also

used as resource. For data analysis, content analysis technique was used. The results obtained from the study show that the generally-adopted approach to develop the content of social studies textbooks was single-disciplinary approach before 2005; however it was replaced by interdisciplinary approach then, with the impact of changing curriculum. Another study result shows that the content of social studies textbooks was developed based upon the disciplines of history and geography in general, and also citizenship to a limited extent before 2005. However, as it is determined, many other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, economics, science and technology in addition to those specified above, have a major impact on the content of textbooks since this date. Also, the relevant results indicate that the knowledge content was much richer in textbooks before 2005; however, in the current social studies textbooks, the knowledge intensity has decreased as the knowledge variety has increased in time. It has been determined that the social studies textbooks are developed by considering the chronology and from near-to-far principles in general so far.

The last paper of this issue is about “High School Students’ Views and Attitudes towards Geography Courses in Turkey” written by Erol SÖZEN from Turkey. Geography, which is very important in understanding the place we live on, should be an area of interest for students rather than just a course. Geography education is an important subject in Turkey that has been offered in various institutions from pre-school to post-graduate education. The first geography course curriculum began to be implemented in 1924 in the history of the Republic. Geography course curricula (GCC), as in other courses, have also been changed since 1924. With the amendment of 2005, the GCC has reached a very different structure than the previous curricula and has entered into the application with many changes and innovations. The Geography Curriculum had new revisions and innovations in 2018 as well. Despite these changes, the curriculum’s structure has not been changed. Students centered instruction, constructivist approach, and active learning strategies were the heart of the curriculum. The aim of this study was to determine the views of high school students studying in Düzce province about in-class learning-teaching activities, material use in geography courses and their attitudes towards geography courses based on these, and to examine this subject in terms of various variables (gender of student, gender of the geography teacher, whether the course is liked, school location, class level and school type). Survey model was used in this study. For this purpose, a scale was developed for the study. A 25-item “learning process in geography course, material use and student attitude” scale consisting of three factors including developed. The study group consists of 568 students studying in various high schools in Düzce during the 2018-2019 academic year. Statistical analyzes were performed using SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science for Personal Computers) software. The results indicated that even though the 2018 revised curriculum implemented active learning, constructivist approach, and student centered program, teachers utilize traditional instructional methods according to students. Teachers mainly use textbooks and they hardly use instructional materials. Results also indicated that teachers only use traditional

assessment methods. The use of student portfolios, group work, and student projects hardly exist in classrooms.

Looking forward to meet you in December 2019 issue of RIGEO.

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