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## Editorial

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**Biographical notes:** Fernando A. F. Ferreira is an Adjunct Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Santarém, Portugal, and an Adjunct Research Professor at the University of Memphis, USA. He holds a PhD in Quantitative Methods Applied to Economics and Management from the University of Algarve, Portugal. He is the President-Elect of the *International Association for Scientific Knowledge* (IASK) and Co-Chairman of the Global Management and Teaching and Learning International Conferences. He is an Editorial Board Member of the *International Journal of Innovation and Learning* (IJIL) and *International Journal of Intercultural Information Management* (IJIM). He has authored peer-reviewed papers and made many conference presentations.

Mario Muñoz Organero obtained his MSc in Telecommunications Engineering (1996) from the Polytechnic University of Catalonia and his PhD in Telecommunications Engineering (2004) from the Carlos III University of Madrid, Spain. He is an Associate Professor at the Carlos III University of Madrid. His research has included topics related to open architectures for e-learning systems, open service creation environments for next generation networks, advanced mobile communication systems, pervasive computing and convergent networks. His main current interest is in e-learning and m-learning technologies. He has participated in European-funded projects such as E-LANE, and in Spanish-funded projects such as MOSAIC learning and Learn3.

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Information technologies are changing many of the ways and processes in which human resources contribute to the maximisation of results inside a company in a globalised world and turbulent markets. One particular issue of importance is the impact that information technologies have on the way we learn in a life-long learning process. Educators and learners require a growing awareness of the capitalised importance that this continuous education and training have not only for the individual growth but also for the organisation's outcomes. Improving the learning process including the latest

trends in teaching and learning methods and techniques is, therefore, a requirement in our rapidly changing society.

Representing some of the best papers presented during the 2009 IASK Teaching and Learning International Conference, held in Porto, Portugal, the contributions included in the present special issue of the *International Journal of Learning and Change* are mainly focused on *active learning, changing measures, critical reflection, cultural values and development, learning strategies* and *technology-based learning*.

Based on a theory-practice paradigm, the first contribution, entitled 'Teachers as theorists', by Karima Kadi-Hanifi, follows and opens the mind of the author about a very important but many times forgotten art of a teacher: the ability to reflect on the learning process. The paper captures some ideas about the author's approach to teaching and learning, mainly in the area of language learning, but constitute a source for deeper reflections about important attitudes that every teacher should have (despite external factors such as politically inspired pressures). Some references are also provided to support the author's ideas.

In a strategic-based learning process, the second study, entitled 'Talking to learn and learning to talk: teacher and learner talk in the secondary foreign languages classroom', by Rachel Hawkes, is a good resource for understanding the process of teaching and learning a second language and the importance of socio-cultural aspects. The paper not only presents a theoretical framework but also illustrates the results of practical cases and some interesting conclusions are also highlighted. The author is able to guide the reader in an easy-to-read descriptive way to the results of the study.

Still in a classroom context, the third paper, entitled 'Questioning profiles in secondary science classrooms', by Patrícia Almeida and Francislê Neri de Souza, uses audio recording of classes in high school science classrooms to analyse student and teacher patterns of questions raised in class. The paper characterises teachers and students' questioning profiles in science classes, compares the questioning profiles found in contemporary high school science classrooms to those found some decades ago, and discusses the role of current high school science classroom questioning patterns in the promotion of active learning. The results seem to be considerably relevant for understanding what is happening in the transformation of a teacher-based education system towards a student-based education system. The paper captures important and relevant data that can be taken into account to detect what is being implemented in a wrong way.

In a learning style context, the fourth research paper, entitled 'Creating the conditions for educational change: learning styles and gender', by Rosa María Hervás Avilés and Ángela Hernández Moreno, analyses the way in which secondary students in Murcia, Spain, make use of different learning style typologies and studies some of the correlations between gender and learning styles. The conclusions are the result of the analysis of more than 1,000 students and show significant differences between male and female students. The results show differences with similar studies done in other parts of the same country (*i.e.*, Spain) and highlight the importance of the awareness that the teacher should have about such issues.

Developed in Portugal, the fifth study, entitled 'Adult education, narratives and cultural values', by Fátima Barbosa and Maria do Rosário Amaral, provides some ideas and reflections about the use of narratives and short stories in adult education in order to promote cultural values. The paper finds out a very important group of people to which narratives and short stories related to cultural issues can be of special interest: immigrants

with special integration needs. Some interesting references are captured (although quite specific to Portuguese students) that provide a good inside about previous examples that justify the points presented in the paper.

Following the same line of cultural values, but in a technology-based learning context, the sixth paper, entitled 'New technologies and learning environments: a perspective from formal and non-formal education in Baja California, Mexico', by Julieta Zamora López and Francisco Javier Reynaga Arriaga, provides some data about the use and acceptance of ICT in two different environments in Mexico. The study gathers some data from observation and interviews and provides some interesting information about the current situation in Mexico. Some of the implications of the use of new technologies in real environments are identified and, therefore, the paper provides interesting material especially for teachers and researchers in similar countries.

The opportunity conceived by the *IJLC* editors, to disseminate part of the research presented during the 2009 IASK Teaching and Learning Conference, is greatly appreciated, and we hope to see you all in the forthcoming edition of this international event.