

Foreword

With this issue I formally succeed Prof David W. Chan as the editor of *Educational Research Journal (ERJ)*. It is perhaps appropriate that we also remember Prof Peter T. Tam (the founding editor who served in 1986 and from 1988 to 1990) as well as Prof Lam-fat Lo (the editor in 1987 and from 1990 to 1993) who previously held the post that I now step into.

I would like to thank David for all that he has done since 1994 (a total of seventeen years!) for the journal. David has been an excellent editor, taking the journal from strength to strength, and also seeing it through a period of transition by making every effort to attend to the needs of readers and increasing the number of issues to two a year since 1998.

ERJ has come to be seen as a very respectable journal in the field due to the work of so many editors and editorial boards over the years; I feel honored to have been appointed to continue such work. I will build upon the commitments of all previous editors. Like all my predecessors, I wish to encourage a wide range of submissions that represent the increasing diversity of theoretical and research interests of the community of scholars with whom we have been privileged to work for many years.

In this issue, I report on a three-week residential program organized by the Faculty of Education of The Chinese University of Hong Kong for Guangdong English teachers from mainland China and discuss possible ways to sustain and expand the professional learning community among the Guangdong teachers themselves and with teachers in Hong Kong as suggested by the participants. Hussain Alkharusi from Oman discusses the utility and applicability of hierarchical linear modeling techniques in the educational assessment

research. When investigating the language learning strategy of Hong Kong Putonghua learners, Yin-bing Leung and Anna Hui identify three frequently used categorical strategies, namely compensative, metacognitive and affective used by these learners. Chung-sing Hui and Ping-kwan Fok report ways in which Liberal Studies panel chairs in Hong Kong — being the frontline decision makers and executors — implement small group teaching in the classrooms. Hee Kyung Hong and Jae-Eun Chae review the role of reforms in student loans policies in contributing to the expansion of higher education in Korea from a historical perspective. Yim-ping Lee and Albert Kang describe the impact of a professional development model on developing networks of practitioners among teacher-leaders to support school curriculum initiatives in Singapore.

This is my first issue as the editor of *ERJ*. Putting together this issue of the *ERJ* has definitely not been a solo effort. I could not have managed without daily help from Carmen Leung, Wai-kit Fung, Cherry Mui and colleagues in the Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Without them, I doubt that you would be holding this issue in your hands. My sincere thanks and appreciation go out to them.

I hope you all find many things of interest in this issue, and I invite you to write to me with comments, suggestions, and critiques because it is only with the assistance of the readership that we can continue to improve the service to the profession that the *ERJ* is dedicated to provide.

Barley S. Y. Mak
Editor