

Editorial

This issue of the *International Journal of Action Research* inaugurates a new phase in the life of the journal. As announced in the last issue of 2016, the *International Journal of Action Research* will from now on be published by Barbara Budrich Publishers (Barbara Budrich Verlag). We thank again Rainer Hampp for these years of companionship with him as publisher, and reaffirm our commitment to continue, as stated in our guidelines, providing “a forum for an open and non dogmatic discussion about action research, both in present situation and in future perspectives.”

The issue presents five articles from different geographical and cultural contexts. It may be an expression of a growing interest in action research and in IJAR around the world, which is certainly welcome. On other hand, it also shows that we are dealing with a research practice that, while encompassing other realities, presents new challenges in terms of conceptualization. Furthermore, the diversity also refers to the accumulated experience with action research in a given region or field, and consequently the level of sophistication in terms of analysis. It raises important issues about our present sociopolitical context and action research, as well as about the very foundations of action research.

The first article explores how action research takes place within and between four contexts: adding practical value, improving institutions, developing professions, and contributing to theory. The authors, Gertjan Schuiling and Hans Vermaak, present and discuss a model developed in the course of two decades of practice, highlighting its relevance for creating a common language among stakeholders, dealing with tensions, and aiding in research design. At the same time, they argue that there may not be one best way of doing action research, and that the design of any action research project must be situated.

The paper by Joacim Rosenlund and Erik Rosell analyses the method of dialogue arenas applied in two environmental research projects. There are presented and discussed two of these dialogue arenas, understood as boundary zones: the first boundary was found in the research system between social science and natural science; and the second boundary refers to the practice system between the collaborating sectors. Among their conclusions is that, confirming the core idea of action research, the dialogue arena method can be used as a way to democratise research and close the gap between research and society.

Alboni Marisa Dudeque Pianovski Vieira describes the use of action research for teaching history of education in a transdisciplinary perspective. The premise is the necessity to overcome the positivist conception of history and history teaching, developing methodologies that not only make the discipline more attractive, but promote the development of the

students' awareness as subjects of their own history and, as a consequence, helping them to assume their role in society. As shown in the study, history, without losing its specificity, enabled the interaction between many disciplines, contributing to a transdisciplinary perspective. The studies raised ethical, social, political, economic, psychological questions in their relations with the complexity of contemporary life.

"The Action Research story of a student–teacher", by Nicolina Eriksson, Jan-Erik Romar, Ben Dyson, tells the movements of a student-teacher who uses action research for implementing an innovative teaching model in physical education in a Finnish school. Even if based on a rather simple experience, the paper allows us to follow the paths of someone that learns to deal with several concomitant roles: as professional (teacher); as a student-teacher, and as a researcher. There is much to be learned from someone who, at the beginning of the career, engages in action research, and at the end of the project recommends that action research by student–teachers could become a platform for the learning of academics. It may also be never too late to be reminded "that for the action research process to be successful, it requires a huge amount of time and commitment but the rewards can be educative" for everyone involved.

The last paper comes also from the field of education. Vahid Rahmani Doqaruni, Behzad Ghonsooly and Reza Pishghadam, use a mixed methods research to understand, as stated in the article's title "Teachers' beliefs about action research in second language education". The study was conducted with English teachers in Iran using a questionnaire and interviews. Among its findings, it is interesting to notice that while action research is widely known among teachers, it is little used and scarcely seen as a way for professional development. This kind of assessment on what people think of action research is also relevant in other areas, and the study may provide some insights for knowing what professionals know about action research, and how it was part – or was not part – in their education.

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