

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present the first volume of the 10th issue of e- Kafkas Journal of Educational Research. Our goal with this issue is to provide you with a diverse selection of insightful and thought-provoking articles from esteemed researchers and scholars in the field of education.

This issue contains nine articles, each offering a unique perspective on current educational research topics. Our contributors have explored the complexities of education and presented innovative ideas and research findings that are sure to provoke discussion and debate.

- Kaymakçı, G., Çelik, C. & Görecek Baybars, M. (2023) conducted a phenomenological study to determine the mental models of gifted middle school students about earthquakes. The study was conducted on 41 gifted students from three different provinces in Turkey. The researchers developed an "Earthquake Mental Model Test" to determine the students' mental models about earthquakes. The findings revealed that the mental models of the students regarding the earthquake were gathered under the themes of natural disaster-energy-destruction, natural disaster-earth's crust movement-destruction, natural disaster-destruction, energy-protection, quake, quake-destruction, earth's crust movement, earth's crust movement-protection, and earth's crust movement-destruction.
- Özbey, N. & Özmantar, M. F. (2023) conducted a multiple case study to determine material features determinant in teachers' mathematical activity preferences. The study was conducted with three secondary school mathematics teachers, and six consecutive semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. The data were analyzed by thematic analysis method. The findings showed that teachers' activity preferences had a complex structure and pointed out that instructional decisions were not only shaped on a pedagogical basis and were not only concerned with students' mathematical development. The evaluations of the teachers concluded that the predictions about the affordances and constraints of the materials were decisive in the activity selection.
- Kurtulmuş, Z. & Şamlı, H.Ö. (2023) conducted a descriptive research study using the document analysis method to determine how preschool teachers handle mathematics learning processes in their mathematics activity plans and which contents they include. The study examined 200 mathematics activity plans applied by 10 preschool teachers working in preschool education institutions. The findings revealed that preschool teachers planned mathematics activities mainly in large group activities and integrated them into their activity plans. On the other hand, they also found that teachers included concepts such as number/counting and quantity more in their mathematics activity plans and they planned mathematics activity plans as classroom activity plans. In addition, they included family participation activities in mathematics activity plans.
- Su Tonga, E. & Şahin, S. (2023) conducted a meta-synthesis study to investigate the interaction in synchronous and asynchronous distance education processes. The aims of the study were to determine for what purposes interactions were established in synchronous and asynchronous distance education processes, through which features and functions interactions can be increased in distance education, and what factors adversely affect this process when interactions are established. The study revealed that interaction plays a crucial role in the learner's academic performance, attitude and motivation, participation in the lesson, and the acquisition of instructional goals and behaviors.
- Altunbey and Çelikler (2023) conducted a study to investigate the impact of educational games on 7th-grade students' awareness of household waste and recycling. The study involved 96 students from two secondary schools in Rize and Çayeli of Rize province. The experimental groups played four instructional plays - "Who Won the Cup?", "I Got it?", "Reflection", and "Ring!" - while the control groups used instructional program activities of the science lessons. The "*Household Wastes and Recycling Knowledge Test*" was used to measure the knowledge level and awareness of the students before and after the experiment. The results showed that the instructional plays were effective in increasing the students' knowledge and awareness of household waste and recycling. Additionally, the students reported that the plays helped with learning, raised

awareness, developed affirmative emotions, and ensured effective learning. In summary, the research suggests that instructional plays can be a valuable tool for enhancing students' knowledge and awareness of household waste and recycling while also promoting effective learning and positive attitudes.

- Feyman Gök and Ölmez's (2023) study aimed to explore preschool teachers' perspectives on the use of social media for professional development. The research utilized a qualitative case study approach, and the participants were twenty-five preschool teachers. A semi-structured interview form consisting of eight questions was used to gather data, which were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The findings revealed that preschool teachers use social media platforms effectively for professional development. While social media was considered to have a significant contribution to their professional development, teachers emphasized the importance of being cautious against disinformation. It is recommended that teachers receive media literacy training and be mindful of children's rights and ethical principles when using social media for professional purposes.
- The study conducted by Kurtça and Gezgin (2023) aimed to investigate the effectiveness of virtual reality technology in teaching pedestrian skills to children with intellectual disabilities. The study utilized a single-subject research model called multiple probe design with inter-participant probe trial. Three intellectually disabled children aged between 11 and 15 participated in the study. The results showed that all participants learned pedestrian skills and continued to use the skills they learned even after one, three, and five weeks after the completion of the instruction. Moreover, all participants were able to apply their skills to the real environment. Social validity data collected from the participants and their mothers indicated that teaching with virtual reality applications is not only interesting and fun, but it can also be used for different educational purposes. This study provides evidence that virtual reality technology can be an effective tool in teaching pedestrian skills to children with intellectual disabilities, thus helping them to lead more independent lives.
- Başaran and Candan (2023) conducted a qualitative grounded theory study to determine the educational philosophy of Doğan Cüceloğlu, a Turkish psychologist and academician who recently passed away. The researchers collected data by analyzing Cüceloğlu's speeches and writings on education using the document analysis method. The collected data were examined by coding and making inferences from Cüceloğlu's sentences to answer the questions of why, what, and how to teach. The findings revealed that Cüceloğlu's educational philosophy was existentialism in terms of the purpose and content of education, and progressivism and existentialism in terms of the method of education. Overall, Cüceloğlu's perspective on education reflected an existential understanding. This study fills a gap in the literature by shedding light on the educational philosophy of a prominent educator in Turkey.
- Orhan and Mirici's (2023) study focuses on dynamic assessment (DA), an approach that has gained attention in the fields of psychology and general education, but is still considered a relatively new approach within the field of second language acquisition. DA is an instructional approach that aims to guide learners through hints or prompts, based on the framework of sociocultural theory. This study provides a review of the fundamental principles and constructs associated with DA, including the theoretical framework, the zone of proximal development (ZPD), mediation, and internalization. The authors compare dynamic assessment with non-dynamic assessment and discuss criticisms of DA. They also discuss the potential advantages of DA for language teaching and learning processes. The study concludes with final remarks and implications for educators and researchers in the field of language acquisition.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of education research has become even more evident. We hope that the articles in this issue will serve as a valuable resource for researchers, educators, and policymakers who are dedicated to improving education and addressing the inequalities that exist within it. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the recent earthquake that struck Kahramanmaraş and surrounding areas in the southern region of Turkey. Our thoughts are with all those affected by this tragic event.

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the authors who contributed to this issue, as well as our dedicated reviewers who worked tirelessly to ensure the quality and rigor of the articles. We also thank our readers for their continued support and interest in our journal.

We hope that you find this issue informative and engaging, and we welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali İbrahim Can GÖZÜM

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