

Notes from the Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to the 16th issue, volume number 2, of *New Waves-Educational Research and Development (NWERD)*! This is an historic occasion as NWERD produces two issues in one year—a special issue together with a regular issue. In this regular issue, in addition to the feature article and research articles, a new section has been added to the New Waves Journal—Book Reviews. Further, in addition to the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and EBSCO databases, NWERD has now been included in the Electronic Journals Library, EBSCO, OCLC-WorldCat, and Proquest data bases, adding more widespread visibility of NWERD and our CAERDA community.

This issue's feature article is written by Dr. Guofang Li, a well-known scholar who was an invited speaker at the Chinese American Educational Research Association's annual meeting in San Francisco in May 2013. The article is based on the key-note speech she presented during the CAERDA conference. This is an opportunity for CAERDA members who did not have a chance to attend the invited speakers' session to read her important and substantive message. Dr. Li's article, titled "Social Class, Culture, and Asian Social Positioning: Rethinking Education and Power," highlights the influence of social class, culture, and Asian social positioning on Asian immigrants' educational experiences. It not only presents a holistic account of Asian Americans' educational experiences but also provides us with the macro-structural and cultural perspective for Asian Americans to rethink our positioning in the society and in educating our next generation.

In the research articles section, we have included four articles on topics ranging from K-12 education to teacher education to professional development, that address geographical contexts spanning from the

United States to China to Korea. In the first article, Henan Cheng utilizes a comprehensive analytical framework to assess the overall strengths and weaknesses of the Changxing Voucher Program in comparison with traditional Chinese public schools. Her study indicates that the overall strengths of the Changxing Voucher Program outweigh its weaknesses and it "appears to favor the principles of equity and social cohesion at the expense of freedom of choice and efficiency." As this program was the first of its kind in China, the findings and its implications are of great value to the future development of the voucher program in China.

The second article, by Woong Lim and Ji-Won Son, examines an international collaborative project in which pre-service and in-service teachers in two countries—the United States and South Korea—collaborated in curriculum planning and exchanged peer feedback through asynchronous communication tools. The study found that participants broadened their global perspectives and deepened their mathematics instruction at the end of this international collaborative project. The finding has implications for math teacher educators in creating and providing international collaborative experiences for teacher candidates to strengthen their content instructional experience as well as to develop global perspectives, which may contribute to their appreciation of student diversity in their future classrooms.

The third article, by Ran Hu, focuses on English as Foreign Language (EFL) reform at the secondary school level in China. Hu investigates English vocabulary and reading comprehension instruction at three secondary schools under the most current English curriculum in Beijing, China. The findings indicate that, under the current curriculum,

vocabulary and comprehension remain the most important aspects of English reading instruction at the secondary school level. More importantly, this study provides Chinese EFL teachers' perspectives on vocabulary and comprehension and their instructional activities, which has been sparsely reported in the literature. Thus, Hu's study has implications for curriculum reform and related policies, English teacher preparation, and future research on ways to improve EFL students' achievement in vocabulary and comprehension. The fourth article also relates to language learning and curriculum but with a focus on the role of needs assessment in developing a sound Putonghua curriculum for non-Chinese-speaking academic staff at the University of Macau. In her study, Luo presents the process and findings of her needs analysis study as well as the resulting recommended curriculum. As the Chinese (Mandarin) language is gaining growing popularity in China's neighboring countries in Southeast and East Asia as well as in other parts of the world, including the United States and Great Britain, this study provides relevant implications for developing appropriate curricula based on the analysis of learners' needs. The recommended curriculum can also be a helpful resource to Putonghua-language teaching programs, especially aimed at the adult learner.

I am delighted to introduce our journal's Book Review section. This is a new forum for CAERDA members to contribute to the NWERD journal by introducing its readers to critical reviews of books whose topics are of professional interest. Thanks to Dr. Guofang Wan, our founding book review editor, who selected three highly relevant books to review for us in this issue. They include *Finnish Lessons: What can the World learn*

from Educational Change in Finland? by Pasi Sahlberg; *World Class Learners: Educating Creative and Entrepreneurial Students* by Yong Zhao; and *Teacher Education around the World: Changing Policies and Practices* by Linda Darling-Hammond and Ann Lieberman. I am confident that you will enjoy and profit from reading the reviews. Dr. Wan invites you to submit reviews of other relevant books to consider for publishing in future issues of the NWERD journal.

In closing, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the CAERDA Board Members for their enduring and strong support of the NWERD journal. I extend my sincere gratitude as well to Drs. Wen Ma and Chuang Wang, our current president and former president of the CAERDA, respectively, and both of whom were former Editors-In-Chief of NWERD. They have continued to provide expert guidance and advice to me and to all of us engaged in producing the NWERD journal, including this present issue. The NWERD journal's successful online presence requires considerable expertise and support to consistently situate and disseminate its research publications through our website. Our Webmaster, E. Shen, has provided timely and consistent technical support and advice to ensure the smooth operation of the journal's online system, for which I am greatly appreciative. Lastly, my special thanks go to the members of the NWERD's Editorial Board for volunteering their valuable time to provide insightful feedback in the multiple rounds of the review process, which helps ensure the high quality of each journal issue.

Binbin Jiang
Editor-in-Chief