Highlights from the SIG20/26 conference 2018

The Joint 2018 conference of the EARLI Special Interest Groups 20 (“Inquiry Learning”) and 26 (“Argumentation, Dialogue and Reasoning”), took place successfully at Jerusalem, from October 9th to October 12th, and was hosted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The conference was organized by the local organizing committee (Christa Asterhan, Baruch Schwarz, Edith Bouton, Yifat Kolikant, Efrat Firer) in collaboration with the international organizing committee (On behalf of SIG 26: Baruch Schwarz, Armin Weinberger, & Freydis Vogel / On behalf of SIG20: Bram De Wever, Ingo Kollar, & Yiannis Georgiou).

The theme of this year’s conference was “Argumentation and Inquiry as Venues for Civic Education”. In line with the theme, many contributions opened up current research perspectives on argumentation and inquiry and specifically looked at how both can contribute to societal change and debates. The conference was well attended and brought together more than 200 researchers from both SIG20 and SIG26!

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**Figure 1.** Christa Asterhan, Chair of the local organizing committee at her introductory speech

**Figure 2.** Panoramic view of the conference delegates during the opening ceremony

**Figure 3.** Baruch Schwarz (SIG26 coordinator), with Christa Asterhan and the members of the local organizing committee

**Figure 4.** Members of the international organizing committee: Armin Weinberger (SIG26), Freydis Vogel (SIG26), Bram De Wever (SIG20), Ingo Kollar (SIG20) and Yiannis Georgiou (SIG20)
A rich scientific programme

The conference programme consisted of 10 parallel sessions with an average of four presentations in each session. In total over 150 contributions were presented in different formats (symposia, paper presentations, poster presentations, ICT demonstrations, and keynote speeches). The presentations were grouped in 44 scheduling categories based on various research areas of inquiry-based learning and argumentation.

Invited Keynotes

During the conference, four keynote speeches were held by four famous scholars:

- SIG 20: Cindy Hmelo-Silver (Indiana University Bloomington) delivered a keynote on Technology-supported inquiry learning across time and space
- SIG 20: Eleni A. Kyza (Cyprus University of Technology) delivered a keynote on Learning and teaching through inquiry for responsible citizenship
- SIG 26: Robin Alexander (University of Cambridge) delivered a keynote on Dialogic pedagogy in a post-truth world
- SIG 26: Hugo Mercier (CNRC) delivered a keynote on Evolution and development of the social functions of reason
Social events

The conference programme included also social events, which gave the participants the opportunity to interact in a more relaxed setting. In particular, the first day of the conference concluded with an opening reception. In addition, in line with the short but intense tradition of prior joint EARLI SIG 20 and SIG 26 meetings, the conference delegates had a terrific conference dinner at a beautiful location in the Judean hills on Wednesday, October 10th. Finally, on Thursday, October 11th, the conference delegates had the opportunity to participate in an exciting tour to the very unique city center of Jerusalem - holiest to all three monotheistic religions, built on four thousand years old stones and stories, beloved home to people from many different cultures.

Figures 11-16. Some moments from the conference social events

Future SIG20-26 conferences

The successful cooperation between EARLI SIG 20 and 26 will continue; both SIGs will collaborate for organizing at least the two upcoming SIG meetings. Due to alternating responsibility for the joint conference, the 2020 conference will be organized by the EARLI SIG 20 coordinators, while the 2022 conference will be organized by the EARLI SIG 26 coordinators.