20 Years of INFORMS Transactions on Education

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Editorial

20 Years of *INFORMS Transactions on Education*

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In September 2000, *INFORMS Transactions on Education* (ITE) published its first issue, composed by founding editor Erhan Erkut. Now, 20 years later, ITE has published 60 issues, including more than 350 articles. Under the editorships of James Cochran, Salwa Almar, and Armann Ingolfsson, ITE has evolved into a well-appreciated and greatly utilized open-access journal having one of the highest average full-text downloads per article among all INFORMS journals. ITE has been included in Scopus and in the journal ranking list for the Chartered Association of Business Schools.

In 2016, I became editor-in-chief after having been area editor of classroom games for three years. But my story with ITE started much earlier... Back in January 2008, I was extremely busy preparing some new courses for the spring semester. It was my first appointment as a faculty member at KU Leuven in Brussels (Belgium). I had to teach an introductory course on operations management to second-year bachelor business engineering students. My former professor, Marc Lambrecht, was so kind as to share his slides of a similar course with me. Going through these slides, I was asking myself the questions that probably every starting teacher has: How can I get the attention of the students? How can I make them like my course (and, especially, like me)? How can I make my students become enthusiastic about operations management? The answer suddenly hit me in the form of one of Marc's slides that contained nothing else but a link: https://pubsonline.informs.org:443/pb-assets/inventory.html.

Not knowing what to expect, I clicked on the link. An animated simulation started in which customers visited a store, resulting in decreasing stock, which was continuously replenished by irregularly arriving trucks. At the same time, the inventory level was being plotted, resulting in a so-called sawtooth graph. It turned out that many concepts (economic order quantity, re-order point, deterministic constant demand, stochastic demand, deterministic lead times, stochastic lead times, etc.) from my course could be illustrated through this surprisingly simple but appealing simulation. Today, I still use this simulation regularly in my classes on inventory management. Each time, I see my students' eyes blink when they first see the simulation and recognize the sawtooth graphs, which, by that time, I have drawn on the blackboard many times. My students become fascinated. Every year, again, I'm looking forward to showing this simulation.

After this "discovery," I rather quickly found out that this link (and simulation) was published in a paper by Dobson and Shumsky (2006). The paper also presented exciting simulations for teaching queueing and Little's law. It was published in *INFORMS Transactions on Education*, an open-access journal that turned out to be a gold mine for any teacher in operations research (OR), operations management (OM), management science (MS) and analytics. During my 13 years as a teacher, I regularly used ITE's search engine to find and use articles related to topics that I was teaching. Without exception, all material from ITE enriched my classes and boosted the attention, interest, and engagement of students.

And I got inspired. Inspired by case studies and classroom games published in ITE. I started developing my own classroom games on teaching mixed integer programming and shared them with the world through publication in ITE (Beliën et al. 2011, 2013). Even today, I regularly receive emails from colleagues worldwide who I have never seen or spoken to and who share their experiences with using my game in their classes and thank me for having shared it. To be honest, I do not often—not to say never—receive such emails on my research papers. I started to realize that these ITE publications have a tremendous impact. They enable me to improve education worldwide for students I have never seen or contacted. What a great feeling of satisfaction!

In 2013, I became a candidate for promotion. As part of the evaluation of my teaching, some questions that I had to address were related to teaching innovation: "What innovations did you introduce in your

teaching? What concrete initiatives did you take to enhance your own teaching and that of colleagues or externals?" You probably already have guessed what my answers were. Not only did I develop innovative games to teach integer programming, I could also refer to specific publications of these games in ITE and worldwide usage of these games. It came as no surprise that I got the promotion. I came to the conclusion that a simple ITE publication can have much more impact than a publication in a top-tier research journal, not only for the intended audience (OR/MS/OM/ analytics teachers), but also for their students and, above all, for personal job satisfaction.

With this 20-year celebration, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of you who turned ITE into a success story: editors, editorial board members, administrative staff, authors, reviewers, and readers. At the same time, I would like to invite you, reader of this article, to engage in the next chapter of ITE. If you are a reader, please continue reading and consider submitting a paper to ITE in the near future. If you are a reviewer or author, please continue reviewing and writing and consider applying for an editorial board position at ITE. If you are a board member, please continue to strive for a high-quality review process and take further initiatives to make ITE known to the world.

References

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