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Introduction to JALT's inaugural special issue

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I am very pleased to see this inaugural special issue of JALT being published. May it be the first of many to come! It is a very worthy first special issue that originated in EDU2019, an inspiring, international conference that took place in Athens, Greece, in May this year, and that was organised by the distinguished guest-editors of this issue, Dr Margarita Kefalaki (President of the Communication Institute of Greece) and Dr Fotini Diamantidaki (its Vice-President of Research and Academic Affairs).

In their excellent Preface to this special issue on *International Perspectives and Interactions in Education*, Fotini Diamantidaki and Margarita Kefalaki connect the seven well-chosen articles via the educational key concept of knowledge. Please allow me my own brief meditation on knowledge and how it relates to this special issue. Knowledge as actionable information is cumulative and as educators, we are on a mission of continuous learning and teaching, with the hopeful result of increased knowledge in our learners. It has been classified as know-how (or tacit knowledge), know-what (or explicit knowledge), know-who (or social capital) and know-why or care-why.

This multi-layered concept of knowledge can also be seen in the creation of this special issue. Fotini and Margarita have long decided to render their impressive tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. This, in itself, is not special, as, although we always have more tacit than explicit knowledge (the philosopher Michael Polanyi famously said that 'we can know more than we can tell'), everybody who is reading these lines, in one way or another, is constantly creating explicit knowledge to varying extents. It is special that Margarita and Fotini took on the arduous job to organise a conference with more than 100 participants from 21 countries, during which 'socialisation' (in Knowledge Management guru Nonaka's sense of the word) took place and during which we shared our tacit knowledge with one another. This special

issue of JALT is but one form in which the tacit knowledge of educational practitioners from around the world who met at EDU2019, has been rendered explicit. Another two articles from EDU2019 will also appear shortly in the fourth regular issue of JALT (in December, 2019). Fotini and Margarita are also the Editors of the *Journal of Education, Innovation, and Communication* (JEICOM), in which other contributions from the conference have appeared separately, and contributions from future conferences (EDU2020 will be in May, 2020) and beyond, will continue to appear.

The relationship between tacit and explicit knowledge in academic writing may be quite obvious. But the other two aspects of the above-mentioned, multi-layered concept of knowledge (know-who and know-why / care-why) are not less important. I got to know Margarita and Fotini through a mutual friend, Ailson De Moraes (who teaches at Royal Holloway, University of London), and I am honoured to have all three of them on the Editorial Board of JALT. I continue to be amazed by the generosity of their knowledge-sharing, and it is thus unsurprising that we are all involved in open-access, online journals that do not charge anybody anything, and that mutually support each other (JEICOM and JALT).

Why go through all the trouble? The editors of this special issue are passionate about Education and continuous learning via knowledge-creation. Nelson Mandela said that education 'is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world', and we are all involved in this, in humbler ways than the great leader. Thus, tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge, know-who and know-why are all beautifully present in this special issue of JALT that I highly recommend to you. It is the inaugural document of a co-operation between the Communication Institute of Greece, JEICOM, JALT, and Kaplan Singapore (as the sponsor of JALT). It is our hope that our co-operation will thrive, with many more such special issues in years to come.

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