



Introduction to the inaugural issue of JALT

Jürgen Rudolph

Senior Lecturer and Academic Partner Liaison, Kaplan Higher Education Singapore

Christopher W. Harris

Executive Dean, Academic & Industry Engagement, Kaplan Higher Education Singapore

Eric Yeo Zhiwei

Lecturer and Academic Partner Liaison, Kaplan Higher Education Singapore

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2018.1.1.1>

We are excited to see the first issue of JALT published. Having had the idea for an open, online journal in 2016, we all underestimated the amount of work involved in getting this inaugural issue out into the open and it has been a steep and ongoing learning curve. Although we all work for a for-profit private education institution (whose unconditional support of JALT is gratefully acknowledged), the journal is a labour of love of the three editors, our contributors and our Editorial Board, and we are most thankful for, and humbled by, all the wonderful support received.

Preparing the journal also made us reflect on the various forms of 'open access'. There is a confusing jargon around open access (OA) journals, and there is gold, green, gratis and libre OA, amongst other terminology. So it may be meaningful to state unequivocally that JALT is of the gratis variety, i.e. all material in this issue and future ones is free to read, while the authors' and the journal's copyright are protected.

It is useful to demarcate JALT vis-à-vis other forms of OA. If permission barriers are removed, this is called libre OA. Some journals charge institutions or authors an 'article processing charge' which can be part of gold OA. We solemnly swear that we will never do such a thing! JALT is also different from green OA where oftentimes initial versions of a paper are uploaded in an institutional or subject repository.

JALT's inaugural issue consists of three peer-reviewed articles, an ed-tech review, a journalistic contribution and three book reviews. Future issues will have a similar structure, though we intend to be flexible about where this journey, now that it has started, will take us.

The peer-reviewed section has an unintended technological theme with contributions from three continents, very much aligned to the journal's global agenda and audience. The section kicks off with Chris Harris & Sheena Fu's contribution on the learner experience in blended learning courses in an Asian context. Their findings question the widely-held view that learners in high teacher-dependency cultures like Singapore find blended and online learning inferior to traditional modes. The second article by Matt Glowatz and Orna O'Brien is on the

use of the technological, pedagogic and content knowledge (TPACK) framework in higher education and discusses research findings as to how academics make use of technology to teach at the university level. The third and final contribution to the peer-reviewed section by Rob Burton and Angela Hope critically evaluates the application of Simulation Based Education (SBE) in nursing and wider health professional education via an impressive review of the literature. Incorporating simulation, they propose to apply an Expansive Learning philosophy to curriculum design in their aspiration to deliver a quality and highly practical specialist education in this growth industry.

Jürgen Rudolph's ed-tech review explains the spirit of this section (that avoids any irrational infatuation with technology, and approaches technological innovation in higher education in a reflective, yet practical vein) and discusses a particular student response systems called Mentimeter which can be used for free, but is also available in a paid version (freemium concept). Nigel Starck, in an entertaining contribution, discusses the phenomenon of opsimathy, i.e. mature-aged students pursuing lifelong tertiary learning. The issue is concluded by three book reviews: (1) on the private education industry in Singapore (reviewed by Stephen Shukaitis), (2) mass intellectuality in higher education and (3) small teaching (the latter two reviewed by Jürgen Rudolph).

We would like to thank our wonderfully-supportive Editorial Board; Mazlan Hasan and Safinah Hameed at Upnext Edu for the Design; Associate Prof. Rhys Johnson, Provost for Kaplan Singapore, for his faith in us; Dr Nigel Starck for his unrivalled proofreading skills; Associate Prof. Peter Waring, Dean of Murdoch University Singapore, for hosting a forthcoming Symposium on Applied Learning and Teaching (which, indubitably will lead to quality submissions for the journal); and our academic colleagues near and far for trusting us enough to share this with your networks and students everywhere for engaging in higher education and letting us, your teachers, research on your behalf.

Finally and importantly, we welcome all feedback and ideas and aspire to continuous improvement for JALT.