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Introduction to the second issue of JALT

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While history tells us that it is nothing new when both leaders of nations and captains of industry blatantly lie, one would have thought that the Internet makes fact-checking easier for all. However, in an era of data inflation, many appear to miss the forest for the trees, with populist backlashes across continents and conspiracy theories abounding. Amongst much other pseudoscience, perhaps most unbelievably and a quintessential sign of the times, there are substantial 'flat Earth' societies – as if we would not have the ability to photograph our blue planet from outer space and as if there had never been a Galileo Galilei some 400 years ago!

In a confusing – and confused – 'post-truth' era, it is critically important that we know both about our knowledge and our ignorance, and think for ourselves. We should constantly question what we think we know, and as Harari (2014) emphasises, the great discovery that launched the Scientific Revolution was the discovery of our collective ignorance regarding the most important questions.

In an increasingly complex world, knowledge, alas, has become paradoxical. With our knowledge increasing at breakneck speed, we should understand the world better and better, but the very opposite is happening. Our new-found knowledge leads to faster economic, social and political changes which adversely affects our capacity to understand the present or forecast the future (Harari, 2016).

With knowledge doubling every two years, we know vastly more than we did a century ago. However, with the paradoxical explosion of knowledge, our ignorance is paradoxically expanding even more so: every answer breeds new questions, and we do not know anything relative to what could be known. As Kelly highlights: "The gap between questions and answers is our ignorance, and it is growing exponentially" (2016, 283-284).

The danger of information overload is that we lack the wisdom to know that we do not know. As Isaac Asimov wrote: "The saddest aspect of society right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom" (cited in Kaku, 2012, 405). Unlike information, wisdom is not likely to be dispensed via blogs and Internet chatter. Perhaps we would all heed Laozi's advice: "To attain knowledge, add things every day. To attain wisdom, remove things every day" (cited in Kirov, 2015).

In the context of the paradoxical explosion of knowledge and ignorance, it sure sounds like a truism that lifelong learning has never been more important. In a shrill cacophony of noise, it is our sincere hope that our journal contributes to critical thinking about Higher Education, and we remain skeptical of any dogmas and ideologies.

JALT's second issue consists of three peer-reviewed articles, an ed-tech review, four contributions of a more journalistic nature and eight book reviews. The structure of the inaugural issue has thus been maintained. However, the second issue is thicker (hopefully only in the good sense of the word!), as it contains more contributions – a welcome, though most likely unsustainable trend. A new feature is an interview with an educational thought leader (Bror Saxberg), and we were so happy with the extensive interview that we are considering more such interviews with leaders in higher education for future issues.

The peer-reviewed section gets underway with a fascinating contribution by Barrett and Ben. Their article investigates whether students' concerns about inter-rater reliability are justified in a quantitative case study, and investigates five rater errors that can largely be addressed via the design of marking rubrics.

We also feel very privileged to have a contribution by Stephen Downes whose leadership (together with George Siemens) in the first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

ever is the stuff of legends. In his contribution, Downes critically evaluates the Canada School of Public Service's online programme development and delivery strategies. The third and final contribution to the peer-reviewed section by Shelley and Goodwin is a more conceptual contribution that questions the overemphasis on quantitative assessment of 'remembered facts' in MBA education. Shelley and Goodwin describe an experiential learning programme that has done away with the teaching of content and that is conducted within an Applied Social Learning Ecosystem (ASLE).

The ed-tech review by Christopher W. Harrris focuses on Gnowbe, a mobile, micro-learning platform that enables learning-by-doing on-the-go. The non-peer-reviewed section with more journalistic contributions is kicked off with a wide-ranging interview with Bror Saxberg from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. We have been admirers of Bror Saxberg's deep insights and uncanny ability to connect the dots ever since he was the Chief Learning Officer of Kaplan. We hope you will have at least as much intellectual fun as we did in conducting and editing the interview.

Nigel Starck makes another excellent contribution on "Capitulation, occupation, incarceration, regeneration, education: how Singapore has rediscovered its World War 2 legacy". Matt Glowatz (who like Starck had already contributed to the first issue) discusses the so-called Synergy Pod – Kaplan's interactive classrooms that come with a comprehensive blended learning platform – and how it has assisted him in making his classes more interactive and participative. Concluding this section is another contribution by Christopher W. Harris on the fate of the lecture – is it dead or does it just smell funny (to borrow from Frank Zappa)?

The issue is concluded by eight book reviews. There are two books dealing with matters of language, one on the right use of language and another on classic languages, namely: *Write to the Point* by Sam Leith; and an edited book on *Forward with Classics. Classical Languages in Schools and Communities* (both have been reviewed by Nigel Starck). While Palmer's *The Courage to Teach* (reviewed by Leo Kee Chye) focuses on psychological aspects of the teacher, the anthology *Cosmopolitan Perspectives on Academic Leadership in Higher Education* (reviewed by Michael D. Evans) looks at the big, global picture of academic leadership.

Two book reviews take a closer look at educational research: Mills and Gay's *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications* (reviewed by Nelson Ang) and Leedy and Ormond's *Practical Research. Planning and Design* (reviewed by Jürgen Rudolph). Finally, Jürgen Rudolph has two more book reviews to his name – both books carry provocative titles and live up to them: Parker's *Shut Down the Business School* and Graeber's *Bullshit Jobs. A Theory.*

Once again, we would like to thank our wonderfully-supportive Editorial Board that has been further strengthened since the first issue; Nic Lim and LuXian Brueschweiler from the exciting tech-start-up Outside for improvements to our website; Associate Prof. Rhys Johnson, COO and Provost for Kaplan Singapore, for his faith in us; Dr Nigel Starck for his deeply-appreciated proofreading of the issue; Associate Prof. Peter Waring, Dean of Murdoch University Singapore, for hosting an inspired Symposium on Applied Learning and Teaching (which is expected to lead to submissions for the third issue) and agreeing to host another one in the second half of 2019; 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.

We are excited to end this year with a new baby (the second issue) and look forward to the new year for which there are already three symposia and one conference (EDU2019 in Athens, Greece) in the pipeline, all potentially leading to JALT contributions. Finally and importantly, we welcome all feedback and ideas and aspire to continuous improvement for JALT.

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