JALT Editorial 6(1): Fully automated luxury communism or Turing trap? Graduate employability in the generative AI age

Jürgen Rudolph[A]	A	Director of Research, Kaplan Singapore
Shannon Tan[B]	B	Research Executive, Kaplan Singapore
Tania Aspland[C]	C	Professor and Vice President, Academic, Kaplan Business School Australia

Introduction

A 1552 edition of the Poor Laws in medieval Britain stated: "if any man or woman, able to work, should refuse to labour and live idly for three days, he or she should be branded with a red hot iron on the breast with the letter V and should be judged the slave for two years of any person who should inform against such idler" (cited in Susskind, 2021, p. 219). These idle paupers' large V brand on the breast stood for 'vagabond'. The enslaved vagabonds were to be fed bread and water. Owners were allowed to make their slaves work by chaining and beating them. Vagabond slaves were allowed to be bought and sold, and vagabond children could be claimed as 'apprentices' and be held as such until the age of 24 if a boy, or the age of 20 if a girl (Davis, 1966). This extreme historical example shows that work was seen as an important aspect of the lives of the poor. In later centuries, prison-like workhouse facilities were established for the poor, with work, confinement, and discipline as deterrents (Sparrow, 2016). George Orwell (1933) theorised already 90 years ago: "I believe that this instinct to perpetuate useless work is, at bottom, simply fear of the mob. The mob (the thought runs) are such low animals that they would be dangerous if they had leisure, it is safer to keep them too busy to think".

The role of work changes remarkably when we enter the world of the rich and powerful. Through the ages, work was often seen as unbecoming for the elites. For instance, a law in the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes stipulated that nobody could hold office unless they had kept away from work for ten years (Aristotle, 2006; see Susskind, 2021). In *The praise of idleness*, Bertrand Russell (2004, pp. 3, 13) argued in 1935 that "a great deal of harm is being done in the modern world by belief in the virtuousness of work" and "that the road to happiness and prosperity lies in an organised diminution of work". In Russell's (2004) view, the leisure class contributed majorly to 'civilisation'. He opined that no one should be obliged to work more than four hours a day, with the remaining time free to devote oneself to the arts, sciences, literature and the like (Russell, 2004).

In 1930, John Maynard Keynes (2013) predicted that technological advances would enable employees – at least in countries such as the US and the UK – to work only 15 hours a week. Similarly, Hannah Arendt was well ahead of her time when she stated that we live in a "society of labourers which is about to be liberated from the fetters of labour, and this society does no longer know of those other higher and more meaningful activities for the sake of which this freedom would deserve to be won" (cited in Susskind, 2021, p. 225). A 1960s counterculture slogan was "Let the machines do all the work" (cited in Graeber, 2018, p. 258), and a newer version is one of "fully automated luxury communism" (Bastani, 2020).

The concept of Fully Automated Luxury Communism (FALC) envisions a society where all needs, not just basic ones, are met, eliminating the need for human labour due to advancements in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and advanced computing. This idea is becoming more feasible as many wealthy nations already guarantee their citizens' basic needs. FALC emphasises the dramatic reduction or elimination of labour for human benefit, arguing that people in affluent societies could work far less and potentially thrive more (Bastani, 2020). The realisation of this vision does not require a Star Trek-like world, but it does necessitate significant societal and technological advancements (Lowrey, 2019).

In some classic texts, work was portrayed as divine punishment. According to Greek mythology, there was no need to work in the Golden Age. However, after Prometheus stole fire from the Gods, Zeus punished all of mankind with work (Balme, 1984). In Genesis, Adam and Eve roamed naked in the bountiful Garden of Eden. However, after Eve and Adam ate the forbidden fruit, God condemned them both to hard labour – Eve, metaphorically, through painful childbirth, and Adam, literally, by making him toil for his sustenance (Susskind, 2021). The God of the Old Testament

reprimanded and punished Adam as follows:

> "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground; for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return" (*Genesis*, chapter 3. 17-19).

In his classic *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, Max Weber* (2011) observed that Catholics could confess their sins to their priest and the Church would absolve them and rescue them from damnation. Unfortunately, confession was not an option for Protestants, leading to tremendous tension as they never knew whether they would be condemned to burn in hell for eternity or go to heaven. For Protestants, the best option was their famed work ethic: tireless and continuous work through which they could try to prove that their souls were worth saving (Susskind, 2021; Weber, 2011). In the 20th century's revival of Puritanism, work came to be increasingly valued as a form of self-discipline and self-sacrifice. Buckminster Fuller's quote is instructive: "We keep inventing jobs because of this false idea that everyone has to be employed at some sort of drudgery" (cited in Graeber, 2018, p. 239).

Clearly, work is an iridescent concept. Historically, there are instances where work was deemed necessary for the poor or for salvation, but undesirable for the privileged. Our future may see a world with significantly less work (Bastani, 2020; Susskind, 2021), a development accelerated and exacerbated by generative AI. As a consequence, inequalities can be reasonably expected to become larger. In recent years, the world's richest one per cent owned close to half of all the world's wealth, more than double the combined wealth of a staggering 6.9 billion people (Credit Suisse, 2022; World Economic Forum, 2020). On the other extreme of the spectrum, nearly 22,000 children die each day due to living in poverty (Adams, 2017). The world's small elite of less than 3,000 billionaires has seen its fortunes grow more during the first two years of the recent pandemic than they have in the whole of the last 14 years combined (Oxfam International, 2022).

For many people, work has been miserable for a variety of reasons. Entertainingly, the late anthropologist David Graeber (2018), in his book *Bullshit jobs. A theory*, distinguished between bullshit (BS) and shit (S) jobs (our apologies for the faecal language). A BS job is defined as a "form of paid employment that is so completely pointless, unnecessary, or pernicious that even the employee cannot justify its existence even though, as part of the conditions of employment, the employee feels obliged to pretend that this is not the case" (Graeber, 2018, pp. 9-10). If a BS job disappeared tomorrow, it may make no difference to the world and even make it a better place. While BS jobs (that Graeber hilariously differentiates into flunkies, goons, duct tapers, box tickers, and taskmasters) are pointless, they differ from S jobs.

The latter "typically involve work that needs to be done and is clearly of benefit to society; it's just that the workers who do them are paid and treated badly" (Graeber, 2018, p. 14). S jobs "tend to be blue collar and pay by the hour", whereas BS jobs "tend to be white collar and salaried" (Graeber, 2018, p. 15). Graeber polemically hypothesises that the social value of work is "usually in inverse proportion to its economic value (the more one's work benefits others, the less one is likely to be paid for it)" (Graeber, 2018, p. 196; see Rudolph, 2018).

From an ecological perspective, a mass reduction of working hours along the lines of Keynes, Russell and FALC, could be a major contribution to saving the planet. However, work appears to be commonly viewed as an end in itself, and there seems to be a consensus "that not working is very bad; that anyone who is not slaving away harder than he'd like at something he doesn't especially enjoy is a bad person, a scrounger, a skiver, a contemptible parasite unworthy of sympathy or public relief" (Graeber, 2018, p. 215). The perception of holding a BS job as morally superior to no work at all is ironically shared by both the political right and left, with 'more jobs' being perhaps the only political slogan that both sides can agree on. This leads us to the paradox of work: while most people hate their jobs, their "sense of dignity and self-worth is caught up in working for a living" (Graeber, 2018, p. 241; see Rudolph, 2018).

With increasing automation, the question of what to do with the 'surplus workforce' will become ever more pertinent, and we will have to reconsider the meaning of work – and the meaning of life. A universal basic income (UBI) has advocates from across the political spectrum, and pilot basic income programmes have been conducted in various countries (Weisstanner, 2022). The idea of a UBI is not new, with one of the American founding fathers, Thomas Paine (1990), wanting it to be large enough for everyone to "buy a cow, and implements to cultivate a few acres of land" – worth about half of the salary of a farm labourer at the time (Susskind, 2021). Apart from UBI, concepts such as Conditional Basic Income (CBI) and Universal Basic Services (UBS) are worth considering (Bastani, 2020; Susskind, 2021).

During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the economic impact has exhibited significant disparities. The adverse effects on employment have disproportionately affected lower-paid blue-collar workers, as evidenced by a study indicating that individuals in the bottom 20 per cent of earners in the US were approximately four times more susceptible to job loss at the onset of the pandemic compared to their counterparts in the top 20 per cent of earners (Susskind, 2021). With generative AI, white-collar knowledge workers (e.g. translators, web designers, coders, copywriters, human resources professionals, accountants or lawyers) may be most adversely affected. ChatGPT and other generative AI could replace several roles, including junior reporters, speechwriters, researchers, marketing personnel, and legal professionals involved in document processing and summarisation. Generative AI technology can handle data entry, transcription tasks, simple customer service inquiries, translation services, and content creation, indicating a shift in the future job market where AI could replace roles currently filled by lower-paid foreign workers or outsourced

service providers (Thio, 2023).

The expertise acquired from extensive education or substantial experience in a particular field or organisation could potentially be integrated into a generative AI tool, thereby reducing the threshold for entry (Turner, 2023). Large language models (LLMs) can already do many jobs better, faster and cheaper than humans. The generative AI revolution that started with the launch of ChatGPT-3.5 last November has proved many experts wrong. It was a common expectation that AI would first come for physical labour like truck driving or factory work, followed by the easier parts of cognitive labour. It was hypothesised that AI could one day do coding and, in the more distant future, perhaps creative work. It is simultaneously fascinating and scary that generative AI has gone in the opposite direction and proved the experts wrong. This is demonstrated by text-to-image apps like Midjourney that create high-quality creative pictures, ChatGPT's use in fiction writing (Sharples & Perez, 2022) and the impressive coding abilities of GPT-4.

Initial studies indicate significant enhancements in work tasks due to generative AI utilisation, leading to over 30 per cent time savings and superior output quality, which, coupled with GPT-4's impressive test scores, explains the growing yet discreet adoption of AI among students and professionals (Mollick, 2023a). Due to the potential of AI to boost productivity by 30 to 80 per cent in high-value tasks, there is the danger of staff lay-offs. AI, initially disrupting the education sector with the introduction of ChatGPT, has now evolved to a point where it is indistinguishable from human input, raising questions about its use in academic tasks (Rudolph et al., 2023a, 2023b). While generative AI technology promises personalised tutoring and the potential to enhance classroom learning and reduce educator workload, the current application of AI in education is inconsistent and needs a strategic approach to fully harness its benefits (Mollick, 2023a).

The advent of generative AI has reignited concerns about job displacement, with a 2023 Goldman Sachs report estimating that AI could replace a quarter of all human work, potentially leading to the loss or degradation of 300 million jobs in the US and EU (Kelly, 2023). The report suggests that AI could lead to a labour productivity boom similar to the advent of electricity and personal computers, but it also highlights the risk of increasing income inequality. Sectors such as office administration, legal, architecture, engineering, business, financial operations, management, sales, healthcare, and art and design are expected to be impacted by automation. The report also warns of the need for serious discussions about managing AI to prevent adverse effects on all classes of workers, including wage losses and rapid growth in income inequality (Kelly, 2023).

Martin Ford identifies three job categories that are likely to be relatively immune to AI disruption: genuinely creative roles that involve novel ideas and strategies, jobs requiring sophisticated interpersonal relationships, and roles that demand mobility, dexterity, and problem-solving in unpredictable environments (Morgan, 2023). However, even these professions are far from immune to AI's influence, as many jobs have aspects that could be automated. The future of work may involve a shift towards more interpersonal skills, with AI handling more routine tasks (Morgan, 2023). *The Future of jobs report 2023*, recently published by the World Economic Forum (2023), provides a comprehensive examination of worldwide employment trends. A major insight from the report is the anticipated substantial expansion of the education sector, potentially generating more than three million jobs for vocational and tertiary education instructors. The report also underscores the necessity for individuals to refresh many of their skills, with a growing emphasis on cognitive abilities like analytical and creative thinking, resilience, and adaptability (World Economic Forum, 2023).

Our Editorial's title asks whether we are headed for FALC or the Turing trap. Alan Turing, a founding father of AI, was a tragic figure. He was a brilliant mathematician and a war hero who was instrumental in defeating Nazi Germany through his codebreaking and encryption work for the British Government and Cypher School (Hinsley, 1993). In 1952, however, he was convicted of "gross indecency" due to his homosexuality, and he was 'chemically castrated' through injections that rendered him impotent; two years later, Turing committed suicide (Peralta, 2022). In 2009, then-British prime minister Gordon Brown apologised and described the treatment of Turing as "appalling" (*BBC News*, 2009). The concept of an imitation game, which later gained fame as the Turing test, was introduced by Turing (1950). According to this proposition, the measure of a machine's intelligence would be its capability to engage in a dialogue that is indistinguishable from human interaction (Rudolph et al., 2023b).

Erik Brynjolfsson (2022) cautions against a "Turing trap", where societies become overly focused on scaling and human-like capabilities in AI, potentially leading to automation that displaces human jobs rather than enhancing human capabilities. This could result in wealth and power concentration, leaving those without power unable to improve their circumstances. The risks of generative AI spreading errors or misinformation are significant, as is the potential for societal backlash if knowledge workers perceive their jobs as threatened.

The elimination of meaningless tasks by means of generative AI could be seen as freeing, allowing for a focus on more meaningful work. However, as more tasks become automated, the meaning behind these tasks (such as writing recommendation letters for our students) may be lost, leading to a potential crisis of meaning (Mollick, 2023b). Stefan Popenici (2023) persuasively highlights the importance of imagination in higher education and the need for courage among political leaders and educators to bring about change in higher education communities that contemplate the power of our shared humanity.

With the current generative AI revolution, a world with significantly less work seems a distinct possibility. That raises lots of questions, with which we end this section of our Editorial. These questions will require much debate amongst all stakeholders of higher education, given its current strong employability focus. What is the purpose of work? What is the purpose of higher education? What

does it mean to live a meaningful life? What happens to higher education if there is much less work left? Would this make higher education obsolete or is it still meaningful? If knowledge work is particularly threatened by generative AI, should our students still invest lots of time and money to acquire higher education? Are educators' roles under duress or will teachers rather flourish in the age of generative AI?

An overview of issue 6(1)

The issue at hand is by far our largest issue ever. This was certainly not intended, but JALT has become exponentially more popular in the first half of this year, and article submissions have increased by leaps and bounds. There are nine articles on generative AI and higher education: one commentary, five research articles, two EdTech articles and a brief article. In this bumper issue, there are a total of 21 research articles, including five articles in a special section on ecopedagogy, one commentary, interview, and brief article each, three EdTech articles and four book reviews.

Articles on generative AI

Our latest issue kicks off with a Commentary by Mills, Bali and Eaton, entitled "How do we respond to generative AI in education? Open educational practices give us a framework for an ongoing process". Mills et al. propose using open educational practices inspired by the Open Educational Resources (OER) movement and digital collaboration practices that emerged during the pandemic. These practices involve leveraging online communities across institutions and disciplines, utilising social media, listservs, groups, and public annotation for educators to share ideas, reflect on emerging responses to AI, and crowdsource curation of learning materials. Licensing resources for reuse and collaboration with students facilitate student-centred approaches and contribute to discussions about AI's future. These practices should be considered provisional and subject to reflection and revision based on core values and educational philosophies, allowing agility in changing technology. Mills et al. provide examples from Spring 2023 and advocate recognising and supporting these open practices to foster collaborative and equitable responses to AI across institutions and power dynamics.

The second article on generative AI is Sullivan, Kelly, and McLaughlan's "ChatGPT in higher education: Considerations for academic integrity and student learning". Sullivan et al. explore the disruption of AI tools like ChatGPT in higher education, analysing news articles from Australia, New Zealand, the US, and the UK. The authors delve into university reactions, academic integrity dilemmas, the limitations of AI outputs, and the potential for enhancing student learning. The public and university responses have been mixed, mainly focusing on academic integrity and innovative assessment. Yet, there is an underrepresentation of debate about AI's potential to boost participation and success for disadvantaged students. The authors conclude by emphasising the need for academia to adapt to this new AI-influenced landscape.

The second article on generative AI is Rasul et al.'s "The role of ChatGPT in higher education: Benefits, challenges, and future research directions". It examines the potential benefits and challenges of using ChatGPT in higher education in the context of a constructivist theory of learning. The authors present five advantages, including facilitating adaptive learning, personalised feedback, aiding research, automated administrative services, and innovative assessment creation. They also identify five challenges: academic integrity, reliability, inability to assess and develop graduate skills, limitations in learning outcome evaluation, and potential biases and misinformation. The paper recommends the cautious use of ChatGPT in academia to maintain an ethical, reliable, and effective application, proposing several measures to improve students' learning experiences.

Third, Firat's study, "What ChatGPT means for universities: Perceptions of scholars and students", provides diverse insights from scholars and PhD students across four nations, revealing nine key themes that frame the potential effects of AI on education. These include assessment, evaluation, ethics, digital literacy, and the changing role of educators. Firat notably encourages future exploration of AI's ethical implications and strategies for managing privacy. Highlighting the importance of weighing the risks and benefits of AI integration in education, the research significantly contributes to discussions about AI's role in education. It underscores the need for responsible, ethical adoption.

Fourth, Limna et al.'s paper, "The use of ChatGPT in the digital era: Perspectives on chatbot implementation", studies Thai educators' and students' perceptions of ChatGPT in education. Participants appreciated its potential to provide instant feedback, answer queries, and support students, while educators saw it as a tool to reduce their routine tasks. However, concerns emerged about the chatbot's accuracy, potential loss of teacher-student interaction, and issues related to privacy and data security. These insights could guide educators and policymakers in implementing ChatGPT in higher education settings.

Fifth, Khademi's contribution, "Can ChatGPT and Bard generate aligned assessment items? A reliability analysis against human performance," examines the potential applications of ChatGPT and Bard in assessment and teaching. Specifically, the paper measures the reliability of ChatGPT and Bard in rating the complexity of writing prompts against trained human raters using Intraclass correlation (ICC). The results show that ChatGPT and Bard have a low reliability compared to human raters.

Sixth, Xames and Shefa's paper, "ChatGPT for research and publication: Opportunities and challenges", explores the opportunities and challenges in adopting OpenAI's ChatGPT for scholarly research and publication. The authors argue that ChatGPT has far-reaching implications for academic research and publication and investigate its current use in contemporary research. They outline the opportunities that ChatGPT could offer, including making the research and publication process more efficient. They also discuss challenges and concerns such as AI authorship, unintentional plagiarism, and threats of international inequalities. The

authors conclude with optimistic expectations for ChatGPT adoption in research in the future.

Seventh, Rudolph, Tan, and Tan's "ChatGPT: Bullshit spewer or the end of traditional assessments in higher education?" discusses ChatGPT and its use cases. The article provides a brief history of OpenAI and its recent shift to a commercial business model. The authors conducted an early literature review and experimented with ChatGPT to explore its relevance for higher education, focusing on its implications for learning, teaching, and assessment. They position ChatGPT within current Artificial Intelligence in Education (AIEd) research, discussing student-facing, teacher-facing, and system-facing applications and providing recommendations for students, teachers, and higher education institutions.

Finally, another EdTech review by Rudolph, Tan, and Tan titled "War of the chatbots: Bard, Bing Chat, ChatGPT, Ernie and beyond. The new AI gold rush and its impact on higher education" explores the rapid developments in the chatbot space and how they impact higher education. It compares selected chatbots in the English and Chinese-language spaces and provides their corporate backgrounds and brief histories. Rudolph et al.'s article systematically compares the chatbots across a multi-disciplinary test relevant to higher education, concluding that there are currently no A-students and no B-students in this bot cohort. The article provides four types of recommendations for key stakeholders in higher education: faculty in terms of assessment and teaching & learning, students and higher education institutions.

Research articles on diverse topics

In addition to the aforementioned nine pieces on generative AI, there are many other interesting pieces in this issue. Bommenel, Ek and Reid's paper "Using teaching and learning regimes in the international classroom to encourage student re-subjectification" addresses the challenge of increased diversity in academic backgrounds among multinational student groups. The authors use the Teaching and Learning Regimes (TLRs) concept to explore the encounter between different assumptions, rules, relationships, and practices that influence teaching and learning in higher education. They argue that TLRs are a tool for teacher reflection and can be applied in the classroom through student-teacher interaction. The authors analyse written student reflections as expressions of the Self, drawing on Michel Foucault's work. They conclude that reflection on TLRs can be helpful for students but also run the risk of promoting conformity in the neoliberal university.

Next, Hardy et al.'s empirical study, "The role of online tourism education and its impact on student wellbeing during a 'COVID-pause'", investigates if online education can enhance psychological well-being during a pandemic. The study, involving a free online Graduate Certificate course offered by the University of Tasmania and the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania for residents affected by COVID-19, used a web-based survey and focus groups. The findings indicate that online higher education in tourism can promote well-being during prolonged crises. Participants reported achievement and well-being, with the hybrid model fostering a sense of community.

Trotter and Qureshi's study, "Student perspectives of hybrid delivery in a transnational education context during Covid-19", investigates students' experiences at a TNE branch campus in the UAE during the transition to hybrid delivery due to the pandemic. Using open-ended survey questions, they gathered insights about the hybrid model's effectiveness, areas of improvement, and student suggestions. Despite successfully implementing the hybrid model, issues regarding technology, engagement, support, and the benefits of remaining online emerged. Students also offered solutions to enhance future hybrid delivery quality.

Millican, Templeton, and Hill's paper, "Exploring the impact of disruption on university staff resilience using the dynamic interactive model of resilience", investigates COVID-19's impact on university staff in South West England, using the Dynamic Interactive Model of Resilience (DIMoR) to assess protective and risk factors. Their mixed methods study, involving an online survey and individual interviews with 159 staff members, underscores the importance of considering individual and broader contexts when evaluating resilience, as well as the role of proximal and distal influences. The authors propose that the DIMoR can guide understanding and future responses during disruptions.

Teo's research article, "Understanding the Uzbekistani higher education context through the lens of reorientation", aims to create a research-based framework for graduate professional development to help university graduates adapt to a changing labour market. The framework consists of four pillars: acculturation, career skills, astuteness, and competence; with 16 categories under each pillar representing different skills and abilities graduates can acquire. The author consulted with relevant parties and analysed data from surveys, interviews, and scholarly articles to develop the framework. Graduates, their supervisors, and higher education institutions can use the framework to better prepare students for life after graduation.

Chung and Chapman's study, "Intent to transfer learning amongst adult learners with differential learning orientations", analyses the intent of adult learners in Singapore's SkillsFuture training programmes to apply their learning to their workplaces. Using cluster analysis, they identify three learning orientation profiles: Idealists, Self-Actualists, and Pragmatists, based on learners' motivation and intent to transfer learning. Differences emerged in aspects like completion rewards, enrolment choice, support received, and perceived relevance of the programmes, providing insights to enhance the SkillsFuture initiative and similar programmes. The research discusses implications for policy and strategy to maximise the initiative's workplace benefits.

Or's paper is titled "Towards an integrated model: Task-Technology fit in Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 in education contexts". The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) model is widely adopted for exploring new technological systems, demonstrating its effectiveness in predicting users' intentional use. While initially aimed at commercial

applications, numerous studies have since applied the model to educational technologies such as e-learning, learning management systems, mobile learning, e-books, and instructional tools. Or's paper revisits previous research based on the model and suggests a fresh research model that combines the Task-Technology Fit theory with UTAUT2, aiming to investigate the acceptance of educational technology.

Sönmez and Çakır's "A study on enhancing writing motivation using collaborative technologies" examines the impact of wiki-supported, blog-supported, and traditional classroom writing activities on the writing motivation of secondary school students. The researchers used experimental research methods and a quasi-experimental design with pre-test-post-test control groups. Data was collected from two experimental groups and one control group before and after the experiment, and a two-factor ANOVA for mixed measures was used to analyse the data. The results showed no statistically significant differences in writing motivation between the three groups. The study suggests that changing motivation is not solely dependent on technological tools.

Next, Khan, Ramanair, and Rethinasamy's study, "Perceptions of Pakistani undergraduates and teachers of collaborative learning approaches in learning English", creates and validates questionnaires for a Collaborative Learning Approach (CLA). They examine perceptions of English as a Secondary Language (ESL) students and teachers on CLA and the challenges in its implementation. By adapting items from existing CLA questionnaires for the Pakistani context, they developed five-point Likert scale questionnaires. After validation by ESL experts and a pilot study with 60 students and ten teachers, the questionnaires demonstrated good to excellent reliability.

Shabitha and Mekala's paper, "Impact of integrated writing tasks on thinking and writing skills of Indian ESL learners", investigates how task-based language teaching can enhance thinking and writing skills. They suggest writing tasks should stimulate learners' working memory and offer relevant, engaging content-generation opportunities. Testing this with structured writing tasks administered to postgraduate students in India, they found a significant correlation between task variables, students' thinking, and writing skills. They advocate for real-life related tasks that align with students' cognitive domains, emphasising task-based language teaching's role in developing thinking and writing skills.

Shah and Calonge's paper, "Refugees' experiences with online higher education: Impact and implications through the pandemic", investigates refugees' experiences with online higher education during COVID-19, exposing inclusivity challenges and unforeseen issues. They identified three key themes from a literature scoping review: COVID-19's impact on refugees and online higher education, the multiple barriers refugees face, and socioeconomic status and mental health influence. The research suggests refugees have limited opportunities and access to online higher education, affecting their education, social integration, financial stability, and mental well-being, underscoring the need for policy and practice changes.

Gono and de Moraes's study, "Student appraisals of collaborative team teaching: A quest for student engagement", examines team teaching's role in enhancing student learning and fostering diverse ideas. It underscores the benefits of team teaching, including improving critical thinking skills and student engagement. The findings emphasise the role of student motivation, clear communication, and active participation for deeper learning. The study underlines potential challenges, such as miscommunication, which can create mixed messages and hamper learning and engagement. This research aids understanding of student learning and highlights the importance of effective knowledge delivery.

The next two research articles transport us to Nigeria. Alordiah, Omumu, and Omenebele's study, "Investigating why students in Nigeria perceive education as a scam," uses semi-structured questionnaires to understand why some Nigerian students view education sceptically. Findings suggest that perceived financial advantages of the uneducated, graduate unemployment, and dissatisfaction with societal values and the curriculum contribute to this perception. The authors propose government actions to create graduate jobs and a more practical curriculum. The study provides evidence supporting the negative slogan but calls for further research across other Nigerian states for validation.

Owan, Owan and Ogabor's (2023) study "Sitting arrangement and malpractice behaviours among higher education test-takers: On educational assessment in Nigeria" examines exam misconduct behaviours under three different seating arrangements. The authors observed numerous instances of cheating, such as copying, script exchange, and peer discussion. Results showed that malpractice behaviours varied depending on seating arrangements and were not significantly gender-dependent, although males exhibited a higher rate. Owan et al.'s study reveals a significant reliance of cheating on the seating arrangement, suggesting examiners should strategically combine gender separation and inter-class sitting to curb exam fraud and improve performance assessment.

Hill, Derbyshire, and Merlane's paper, "Exploring undergraduate experiences: A hermeneutic phenomenological study of academic internships in nursing, midwifery, and health at a northeast higher education institution in the UK", examines UK healthcare students' experiences participating in innovative internships during their summer break. This pioneering research offers insight into professional health education internships, with findings having international relevance. These insights could shape and broaden opportunities for healthcare students looking to work within higher education institutions worldwide.

Finally, Ermol's research, "The effects of the SNAPPS model on clinical learning experiences for Physician Assistant students", investigates the impact of the SNAPPS six-step clinical teaching model on the clinical learning experiences of PA students. The study used a Solomon-four group design with a pre- and post-training survey. Findings indicate a significant effect on domains such as Control of Session, Communication, and Evaluation. Although the SNAPPS

groups seemed to reflect more critically on their learning experiences, further research is required to comprehend the potential benefits and limitations of SNAPPS in clinical experiential learning settings.

Special section on ecopedagogy

The special section on ecopedagogy is guest-edited by Eunice Tan, Jürgen Rudolph, and Stevphen Shukaitis. It had its origins in a University of Essex – Kaplan Singapore symposium in mid-2022. We start the section with Strauß's paper, "Narrating future(s) with others: teaching strategic sustainability management in a relational key". It examines the potential of a relational approach to future scenario planning for sustainability management education. It highlights the need for a transformational shift in how humans relate to each other and the natural world to achieve sustainability. The article describes a course design that uses narratives to sensitise students to the nature of reality and enable them to shape current and future realities with others. It also emphasises the role of aesthetics in developing transformational capacities. The article concludes by reflecting on the limitations of relational course designs in cultural settings dominated by individualism, nature/culture divide, and anthropocentrism.

Next is Kefalaki's "Education for sustainable development (ESD) in the Greek education system". She discusses the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in secondary schools in Greece through a literature review and interviews with educators. The paper argues that ecopedagogy can offer a critical perspective on ESD and suggests contemporary approaches for integrating sustainability education into the curriculum. It also highlights the challenges and needs of the Greek educational system to promote sustainable development education. Kefalaki provides ideas for stakeholders and the government to take action towards a better environmental future.

The following study by Muangasame and Wongkit, "Ecopedagogy as an educational approach for vulnerable rural communities", focuses on implementing environmental studies or ecopedagogy in Thailand's Sapphaya community to develop sustainable tourism. The article discusses six practical steps in learning experiences of ecopedagogy within the community. A qualitative approach was adopted from Participatory Action Research with three stages of investigation to develop and reflect on the knowledge gained. The study aims to raise awareness of the impacts of tourism on the environment and change tourists' behaviour to become more responsible while enjoying tourism activities in the destination.

Next, Lorenz and Guan's study, "Engaging students in cross-disciplinary module design: a case study on the co-creation of a sustainability module in Singapore", involves students in creating a learner-centric sustainability module, incorporating economic, environmental, and social pillars and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Using multidisciplinary groups, students considered sustainability and pedagogy from an educator's perspective. Despite challenges like time constraints and knowledge gaps,

surveys and group reports showed positive outcomes, including a changed perception of pedagogy and a sense of accomplishment. The study confirmed the students' ability to create a well-designed, cross-disciplinary sustainability module.

Finally, Tan, Wanganoo, and Mathur's "Generation Z, sustainability orientation and higher education implications: An ecopedagogical conceptual framework" explores the sustainability orientations and educational outcomes of Generation Z, the new generation of adults entering the workforce and becoming leaders. There has been little research on the collective dimensions of ecopedagogy, Gen Z perceptions, and policy implications in higher education. The paper critically reviews the literature on Gen Z and proposes an ecopedagogical conceptual framework for further empirical research.

Interview

Rudolph and Tan interviewed Stephen Preskill. Preskill is a professor emeritus at Wagner College and specialises in American educational history and leadership studies. He was also an elementary and middle school teacher for nine years. The interview is titled "Learning leadership personified. An interview with Professor Stephen Preskill". It explores Preskill's latest book *Education in black and white*, and discusses Myles Horton's and other learning leaders' anti-racism, dialogical approach, and exemplary lives. Preskill discusses the heirs of Horton and the pitfalls of charismatic leadership. The interview also systematically discusses Preskill's other books, some of which were co-authored with Stephen Brookfield, who had been previously interviewed in JALT (Brookfield et al., 2019, 2022). Preskill also talks about his positive experiences as a lifelong learner and advises on dealing with academic writing difficulties.

Ed-Tech

In an earlier section on generative AI, we already summarised Rudolph et al.'s two contributions to the EdTech section. The remaining contribution by Grafton et al. is titled "Development and operationalisation of a mixed reality interactive virtual patient application for online nursing Objective Structured Clinical Examinations". In a 2020 Bachelor of Nursing Clinical Health Assessment skills course in Singapore, face-to-face classes were abruptly cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To adapt, innovative strategies were quickly implemented to allow students to complete clinical skills laboratories and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) online. Grafton et al.'s paper focuses on developing and implementing a mixed-reality interactive virtual patient application used for online OSCEs.

Book reviews

The final section encompasses four book reviews. Mihaylov examines the book *Hopeful pedagogies in higher education*, edited by Seal (2021) and begins with a personal account of her experience as a mid-career educator. The book

is a compilation of contemplations on incorporating critical pedagogy within a neoliberal higher education framework. Its primary inquiry pertains to whether the purpose of education should prioritise personal and social transformation or social mobility and career results. Mihaylov evaluates the book's structure, highlights its effectiveness in practical implementation, and addresses its limitations.

Sutton provides an additional two book reviews. He first examines Seelow's (2023) *Games as transformative experiences for critical thinking, cultural awareness, and deep learning: Strategies & resources*. The book aims to utilise games in education to create positive and progressive transformative learning experiences and focuses on achieving pragmatic learning outcomes. Sutton praises the book for its insightful content on game description, rules, learner reactions, learning outcomes, and critical appreciation, which can positively impact learner motivation and engagement. Sutton recommends the book for its well-structured approach and emphasis on gradually improving learners' learning and well-being.

In his second book review in the current issue, Sutton lauds Sayan Dey's book *Green academia: Towards eco-friendly education systems*, a critique of Western-centric knowledge systems and a call for the integration of eco-centric indigenous knowledge into mainstream education. The book argues that the current education system, shaped by colonialism and capitalism, commodifies knowledge and neglects the environment. Dey proposes a shift towards 'green academia', which values and incorporates indigenous knowledge systems, and advocates for a more sustainable, eco-friendly approach to education.

Finally, Rudolph reviews Stephen Preskill's book *Education in black and white. Myles Horton and the Highlander Center's vision for social justice*. It is beautifully written and chronologically organised, providing a critical history of Highlander and Myles Horton's involvement. Preskill's book is not a hagiography, as he highlights Horton's insufficient credit for Highlander's influential female leaders and missed opportunities to support them better. The book contains fascinating themes that encourage critical reflection, and it is highly recommended for adult and higher education practitioners. It provides early examples of successful student-centred pedagogies and how radical ideas have become accepted but acknowledges that the struggle continues, as seen in the Black Lives Matter movement.

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