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EDITORIAL

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Mary Gobbi

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# Perspectives, stakeholders, and competences

## Editorial

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*“It is a narrow mind which cannot look at a subject from various points of view.”*

*George Eliot, Middlemarch (1871)*

George Eliot, the pen name of Mary Anne Evans, a British Victorian author, aptly reminds us- as individuals- to look at the world around us from different points of view. Eliot implies that we should intentionally seek, and be open to, these different points of view, perspectives, or experiences. Like the witnesses to a crime, or the participants at a football match, where we stood, what we perceived, as well as our sensory/intellectual capacities, allegiances, and prior experiences shape our ‘world view’ and recall of the same event and set of circumstances. Whether as educators, researchers, leaders, practitioners of our field of study, or university administrators, we endeavour to be ‘open minded’. Indeed, it is a characteristic we strive to enable and promote within our student populations and research endeavours. We find the ingredients to ‘open mindedness’ in the current Tuning generic competences, that include the capacities to be critical and self-critical, to appreciate diversity and multiculturalism; to learn; adapt to new situations and be creative. History shows us those moments in ‘natural’ philosophy when paradigms shifted- whether it was Archimedes, Newton, Galileo, Descartes, or Einstein. Some new ideas are so different and challenging that they threaten the status quo and establishment, generating resistance and persecution. Some innovators, like DaVinci, find ways to be covert about their ideas as their contemporaries do not have the capacity to ‘think the unthinkable’ and as J. William Fulbright wrote,

We must care to think about the unthinkable things, because when things become unthinkable, thinking stops and action becomes mindless.

Paradoxically, while ‘thinking the unthinkable’ is associated with moments of inspiration, creativity, critical reflection, problem solving, quality improvement and genius, it is also initiated through times of crisis, disaster, or desperation. Within the last few decades, what previously might have seemed ‘unthinkable’, namely outcome and competence-based education, stakeholder engagement in course design and evaluation, student-centred, personalized approaches to education, new technologies, and experiential and work-based learning, they are now on the agenda. We need to question why it is taking some parts of the Academy so long to make these shifts. Is it a power dynamic, or is it because they are challenged by the perspectives that may emerge? Is it economic drivers and costs that may disturb the reimbursement models of professors? Sometimes the academics are not provided with the tools necessary for their professional competence, so they can effectively deal with the new perspectives, their implementation, and impact. Perhaps it is because engagement with stakeholders generates new relationships and forms of knowing. Furthermore, in the presence of many ‘voices’ and ‘views’, that can be disparate, and sometimes produce a cacophony of sound, how can, or does, the academy judge their salience, determine their worth and authenticity to evaluate these inputs and make decisions?

The papers in this edition offer some suggestions to address these queries when they deal with many stakeholders and a multiplicity of voices. Struck by the shifting sands and tensions of many case studies reported here, is it timely to ask whether our models of competence are still relevant and fit for purpose? Different definitions are found in the papers; so perhaps it is time to review our constructs of competence, informed by the evidence of the last twenty to thirty years and the impact of the pandemic. Let us perceive competence with an open mind, wisdom, and pragmatism.

This edition of the Journal contains the last ‘formal’ special section on COVID-19. There are other papers in the pipeline, but they will be integrated within the usual edition format from May 2023. I am sure that like us, you would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to Professor habil. Anca Greere for her detailed, scholarly, and precise editorship of the special section. You will see in Professor Greere’s editorial a resume of the key themes that have emerged from the papers in both this edition and the previous two editions. It has been a pleasure and honour to collaborate with Professor Greere, whose humour, sense of realism and aspiration have been truly appreciated by the editorial team. We wish her well with her future endeavours. We are fortunate that she will continue to be a reviewer in her specialist subject area. Anca is Professor of English Linguistics and

Translation Studies, Director of the European Master's in Translation Studies and Terminology, at the Department of Applied Modern Languages, Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania. Our thanks are also offered to Babeş-Bolyai University for their support during the period of Professor Greere's Section Editorship.

Readers, this tenth edition (Volume 1) of the Journal starts the count down towards the tenth anniversary of the first edition, published in November 2023, under the pioneering influence of the then editor Paul Ryan. The first edition was entitled *New Profiles for New Societies* and focused on:

the impact of new, quality educational programmes on societal developments, discussing whether building new profiles and new generations of graduates is the road to build new societies.

It is sometimes timely to reflect on the past to inform our future, and so next year we shall highlight issues raised during the last decade with their moments of success, trials, and tribulations. Let us look forward to the second decade of the Journal and 2033 with a sense of hope and optimism.

One success is the significant rise in papers submitted to the Journal, this has led to some unfortunate delays in our turnaround times. If any readers would like to consider being reviewers, please send a mini curriculum vitae to the editor. Thank you. Keep well and safe, especially to our friends in conflict zones and those experiencing natural disasters.

*Editorial Team*  
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