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## Editorial 16.2

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Welcome to first standard issue of the *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice* for 2019. In this issue, we have six papers that explore approaches to developing students' communication skills, demonstrate examples of practice-based analyses of higher education, and thinking skills and networked learning.

The first two papers of this issue focus on approaches to develop and assure improvement in students' communication skills. Writing from the UK perspective, and highlighting the value of speaking and listening skills for both academic performance and graduate employability, **Heron** argues for the need to explicitly teach and assess students' oracy skills in higher education. Heron's paper illustrates how two academics in an undergraduate Business course embedded attention to oracy skills into content, pedagogy and assessment to address this gap. Shifting the focus to written communication, **Grainger, Christie and Carey** showcase a tool, the Continua Model of a Guide to Making Judgements (GTMJ), to improve students' assessment literacy in pre-service teacher education. When used in combination with a dialogic approach between students and staff, the authors suggest this tool improves students' understanding of the expectations related to the written components of assessment. It also assists the assessors in establishing and sharing threshold standards when making judgements about student performance in written assignments.

Drawing on practice theory, the next two papers provide sophisticated analyses of practice in two different higher education contexts. **Keevers, Price, Leask, Sultan, Lim and Loh** use practice theory and Participatory Action Learning (PAL) to challenge dominant conceptions of quality assurance, partnership and power relations between 'home' and 'host' institutions in transnational education arrangements. By expanding the focus of quality assurance activities to include the sessional teaching staff in shared projects to create truly transnational teaching teams in equitable intercultural partnerships and educational experiences. With a similar concern for intercultural experience, **Xu** uses the lens of practice theory to investigate the experiences of Chinese students studying in an Australian university context. Challenging the stereotypes of Chinese learners, Xu frames and illustrates their learning in terms of 'entanglements, co-construction, and the relationality of practices' as one way of developing new insights for considering the learning needs of Chinese students.

The next two papers present research investigating postgraduate research students from the perspective of their induction into membership of a research community. **Reneland-Forsman and Magnusson** report on an authentic learning experience designed to connect research students into a multi-country network of researchers via a series of webinars. The focus of the paper is their model for educational practice, designed to stimulate a cohort of research students to engage with and develop 'scholarly thinking'. The model they present supported them to identify and analyse students' scholarly thinking and to understand how such thinking is expressed in the qualities of a student's communication in the context of discussion between a network of researchers. Their analysis identified two critical aspects for stimulating students' thinking in a research discussion context, which informed their design of a webinar explicitly intending to socialise and train students in academic discourse, developing professional identity.

A small-scale qualitative study by **Watson Todd and Louw** explores the experience of four doctoral research candidates within a Thai university. Building on the claim that a PhD involves both experiential learning of the process of research and socialisation into the community of researchers, the authors report salient issues identified through Individual Networks of Practice to guide analysis of the interview data. The paper highlights the unique aspects of individual student experiences and what is common: peers and faculty as key agents within a student's social network.

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