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Letter From the Editor

For Issue 2 of Volume 21 of the IFOTS journal, I sat down as usual to pen a Letter from the Editor. Reviewing all articles, I again noted a pattern forming an emerging theme among them. Even after two decades of editing our IFOTS journals, I am still awed when recognizing this phenomenon. Our *forum* certainly offers valuable connections toward mutual learning across cultures and countries. The authentic voices of our contributors' to the journal share experiences from many settings, some close and some far away from one another, and this makes for insights that can lead to transforming our perspectives and praxes.

Certainly, from its inception in 2004, the IFOTS journal has humbly and proudly published diverse viewpoints, welcoming and valuing the views of authors and readers from around the globe. The present issue addresses a theme of a connectivity that can aid us in *navigating the changes* in our education profession and the world, which are currently in such a state of flux. Why does such a capacity seem so essential, you may ask? Read on.

Given this current state of affairs and given recent conversations with peers, I feel compelled to emphasize an utter necessity for a discerning discourse in our profession about the crucial need to acknowledge the diversity of our respective *lifeworlds*. As the ones educating, we have accepted the responsibility for *educare* and/or *educere*, the Latin root concepts of what we call education. Definitions and interpretations vary depending on one's education philosophy – but that is another argument to have altogether (<https://www.self-directed.org/tp/educare-educere-explore/>). Integral to the kind of discerning discourse I uphold to you here, is our foremost responsibility to understand *Self* if we are to understand others.

In such discourse, I suggest, not only do we need to examine the veracity of the allegedly *objective truth-finding* through re-search by scientists (i.e., via socially agreed upon systematic processes and formats of investigation). We also ought to present our experiences and perceptions by unveiling our practices, emotions, and spirit. Hearing, reading, and contemplating what we do, what we feel, and what we intuit can lead us to deeply grasp insights, including from those existing in *lifeworlds* different from our own. And to be able to do so, a rich and critical examination of our own world perspectives is fundamental (Strohschen, 2022). With a nod to my mentor (Stanage, 1987), I refer you to phenomenology for a deeper dive into this point (Kant, 1781; Husserl, 1908). To delve into those premises, check out the resources for further reading below.

In this issue, we read about research studies, practices, and experiences formed by and within varying *lifeworlds* of students and teachers in Bangladesh, Canada, China, Namibia, the UK, and the USA. Found in these contributions is the theme of deliberately seeking connection – between educators, between disparate theories, between children and teacher, between teachers and administrators, and between technology and humans. Specifically, you will read about such connections within the contexts of professional development and peer mentoring; theory building for a unifying framework for lifelong, holistic, inclusive, and socially empowering education; cross-border academic mobility partnerships between two higher education institutions; Learning Management Systems tethered to principles of the UTAUT Theory; language education and AI

analyzed from the vantage points of Pedagogy and Andragogy; and Social Emotional Learning in pre-and post-pandemic environments, illustrated by young children.

Benefiting from our contributors' insights, we must first recognize our paradigmatic assumptions (Brookfield, 2017; Zacharias, 2021; Köhler, n.d.) to be able to explore those of others. If we wish to weave new patterns in our praxes, we ought to be poised to examine *our* world with our head, heart, and hand. Within and beyond this Steinerean (Dahlen, 2017) holistic framework of cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial capacity building, we then might be able to understand the thinking, feeling, and doing of Self and others in *their* lifeworld a bit more (Krishnamurti, 1969). And, we can do so by examining our own approaches through different lenses, as for example those of our colleagues and peers. Toward that end, this issue of our IFOTS journal offers us support to embrace a *flux mindset*, wherein we see the unpredictability and uncertainty of our respective *lifeworlds* as opportunities for growth - together.

Gabriele Strohschen. Ph.D

Editor in Chief

Chicago, USA

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