Riding waves of innovation and paradigm shifts: the past 20 years of AJET

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This is the fifth in a series of editorials that have reflected on and celebrated the past 40 years of the *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology (AJET)*. In this editorial we look back on the most recent 20 years of *AJET* and identify some of the key themes in *AJET* articles during that period. Overall, eight key themes are identified: 1) AI and automation in learning, 2) Assessment and feedback, 3) Equity, inclusion and ethics, 4) Learning analytics and data-informed insight, 5) Pedagogical integration, 6) Professional learning and academic development, 7) Self-regulated learning, and 8) Technology adoption. These themes were identified for the period 2008-2025, where we have used AI to assist in our analysis. The themes for the period 2005-2007 were identified manually through abstracts, titles, introductions, and conclusions. Overall, *AJET* has for the last 40 years provided a significant forum to discuss educational technologies and resulting innovations. Through it all, what has shone through over the past 40 years is a passion for evidence-based practice that provides the best learning outcomes for learners, initially across the whole education sector, and more recently with a specific focus on tertiary education.

Keywords: Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, AJET, history, innovation, paradigm shifts, editorial

Introduction

In this editorial we build on the previous two editorials published this year that have been reflections on 40 years of the Australasian Journal of Educational Technology (AJET): the first 10 years (Corrin et al., 2025a), and the second decade (Han et al., 2025). In between those two editorials, we also conducted somewhat of an experiment by getting a range of generative AI tools to re-write the first 10 years editorial, with interesting and at times surprising results (Corrin et al., 2025b).

In this editorial we explore and reflect on the last two decades of AJET, up until today. A great deal has happened in the educational technology space during this period, which relates to rapid changes and shifts in technologies themselves, but also to broader societal changes that have resulted in different uses of educational technology and as well as shifts in the scope of their use. These are the innovation and paradigm shifts referred to in the title. Examples include the widespread adoption and implementation of Learning Management Systems (LMS) during the first decade, the related rise in learning analytics and its subsequent development as a field of study in itself, the emergency response to COVID-19 necessitating a widespread move online, and most recently the emergence of generative AI since OpenAI launched ChatGPT in November 2022. In each case, the parameters around educational technology, and importantly around related pedagogy, have shifted significantly, which in turn has affected the type of research that is conducted. Furthermore, educational technology is no longer a niche or separate field that targets specific groups of students such as distance education students, but now applies to everyone involved in tertiary education. Similarly, digital literacies have become a

fundamental expectation on the part of both educators and students during the last decade in particular, rather than an area of interest.

Interestingly, in riding these waves of innovation and paradigm shifts, there is often a flurry of initial activity and exploration, not only in terms of topics, but also in terms of particular methodologies, before stabilisation occurs. Obvious examples include the large number of papers related to COVID-19 responses, and less obvious ones include papers structured around technology adoption models, or the emergence of the systematic review as a key submission type during COVID-19, which has endured ever since. As AJET Editors, it is up to us to decide when a particular methodology or topic has run its course, and when submissions about those topics or that use those approaches have reached saturation point and no longer add anything new to the field. These are not easy decisions to make, and in the first AJET editorial of 2026 we will ask this question in relation to generative AI focused papers.

Editorials do not often contain a methodology section. Given the dual purpose of this editorial, however, we thought including one would be appropriate and (hopefully) illuminating. This section gives you, the reader, some insights into how we positioned AI in relation to our analysis. We have used AI tools in our analysis of the large batches of published papers to identify themes and particular shifts in emphasis. This is contentious in itself, as many journals are still in the exploration phase of deciding when and how AI use is acceptable and ethical, and when it steps over the line. For example, the traditional academic research adage of replicability is no longer straightforward in the age of AI, as it is not always easy to explain the steps (or prompts) you have taken so that your research is replicable and so that others can test if it produces similar results in comparable contexts.

While the issues identified through our analysis relate to the broader field of educational technology affecting the whole sector, we also discuss various changes within the context of AJET itself. For example, we note when the journal decided to limit its focus to tertiary education only and decided to no longer accept papers that relate to primary or secondary education. Of course, a focus on pre-service teachers is still within scope. Other changes include the move from four to six issues per year (in 2013), having produced two years with five issues (2008-2009), and three years with eight (2010-2012); the introduction of compulsory keywords (2013), and the introduction of an Implications for Policy and Practice section (2020). Finally, we track the changes in the origins of submissions, which has significantly shifted over these two decades from Australia as the context for a large majority of published papers to a much more international mix of authors and tertiary contexts.

Methodology

In this editorial we adopted a structured approach to analysing trends across AJET articles for the period of 2005 to 2025. Given the scale of the corpus (a total of 1,206 papers), our analysis combined editor-led qualitative framing with the creation of a code book, followed by systematic, generative AI-assisted text analysis using ChatGPT (versions 5.1 and 5.2). The use of generative AI in this process was carefully considered especially having observed the variable, and sometimes questionable, outputs of different generative AI tools used during the development of our previous editorial on using AI to write an editorial (Corrin et al., 2025b).

First, a Scopus export was used to compile AJET articles from 2008–2025 (1,117 papers), including titles, abstracts, author keywords, publication year, and associated metadata (e.g. author affiliations, index keywords, volume number, issue number, number of citations). Since the Scopus export only went back to 2008, we incorporated a by-hand analysis of AJET articles from 2005–2007 (89 papers), focusing on author names, titles, and thematic notes, based on a scanned analysis of abstracts, introductions and conclusions. An iterative coding protocol was established prior to full-scale analysis. We developed an initial codebook and then piloted the coding protocol on a stratified sample of 20 abstracts spanning the 2008–2025 corpus. Following joint review, thresholds, particularly for secondary codes, were refined to improve analytic sensitivity. This was accomplished through a back-and-forth process of prompt engineering and human review of AI processing of smaller batches (10-15%) of the corpus to establish

stable interpretations. Once primary-code judgements were confirmed as acceptable by the editors in the pilot review, the protocol was locked and applied at scale. After locking in our protocol, AI was used to apply the codebook at scale, generating frequency tables, co-occurrence matrices, and draft narrative syntheses for editorial interpretation and refinement. Human oversight was maintained through calibration, threshold adjustment, and selective validation checks.

Because the 2005–2007 dataset did not include abstracts or author keywords, coding for those years relied on titles and thematic notes. This makes early-period classifications less information-rich than the abstract-based coding used for 2008–2025. Accordingly, analyses that depend on keyword-level detail (e.g., fine-grained keyword collapsing and technology-term extraction) must be interpreted as applying to 2008–2025 only, and this constraint is noted where relevant. The coding therefore reflects how contributions are framed in metadata rather than the full depth of each published paper. Findings are therefore presented as indicative patterns rather than definitive classifications of research content.

Trends, continuities, and tensions

The key trends identified during AJET's second decade (1995-2004) included: (1) the design and pedagogical effectiveness of interactive multimedia, (2) the rapid expansion of online and distance education, (3) evaluation frameworks and usability studies of emerging technologies, (4) professional learning and teacher development for technology integration, (5) the growth of collaborative and constructivist learning environments, (6) the use of cognitive tools to enhance learning processes, and (7) investigations into students' perceptions, experiences, and the wider social implications of technological innovation (Han et al., 2025, p. 4). In many ways, these themes have continued and expanded during the two subsequent decades, even if at times 'interrupted' by major emerging themes such as the rise of learning analytics and micro-credentials, and disruptions such as COVID-19 and the sudden widespread availability of generative AI tools.

2005-2007: manual coding and analysis

In the period of 2005 to 2007) some of the continuity in key themes included: teacher development around technology use and integration, constructivist learning environments and the student experience, and adoption and usability of emerging technologies. Emerging themes during this period included the development and increasing use of Virtual Reality tools, online assessment, accessibility, the role of the LMS as part of ICT infrastructure, e-portfolios, and the use of mobile devices (Pettit & Kukulska-Hulme, 2007).

During this period, AJET still continued to cover educational technology across all educational contexts, which included primary and secondary school education and which did not change until 2013 when the journal adjusted its focus exclusively to tertiary education (Dalgarno et al., 2015). However, during this period the vast majority of published papers already focused on tertiary education. The other interesting observation is that keywords began to be included in some articles, but they were not yet a requirement until 2013, and were more recently identified as a very important contributor to the impact a paper might have, as a result of academic search engine optimisation (Corrin et al., 2022).

With regards to professional learning, examples include a study about prospective science teachers as e-learning designers and the development of their ICT competencies. Findings in this study showed that student teachers' immersion in well researched, exemplary online learning designs may have helped them bridge the gap between their university theory classes and practicum experiences (Kearney, 2006). Another example, this time focused on schools in Queensland, Australia, asked the question: Are ICT integration initiatives (which includes professional development) making a significant impact on teaching and learning in Queensland state schools? The study by Jamieson-Proctor et al. (2006) showed uneven results at the time, with some localised success but no clear systemic impact. Interestingly, ICT (Information

Communication Technology) was the common and widely used term at the time, which has since been overtaken by the terms digital technology and digital literacy.

As for the theme of constructivist and collaborative learning environments and the student experience, a number of studies were published during this period, including one by Melrose and Bergenon (2007) on 'instructor immediacy' and its role in facilitating group work in online graduate study. Their study showed that the importance of 'instructor immediacy', a term which has since been replaced by 'teacher presence' (Wang et al., 2021), applies to three different stages: "first, beginning/ engagement; second, middle/ encouragement; and third, ending/ closure" (Melrose & Bergenon, 2007, p. 132). Another example was an article about the use of specific wiki software as part of facilitating a collaborative online learning environment. The findings in this study by Choy and Ng (2007), in the context of Hong Kong higher education, indicated that the extent of training provision, the wiki pedagogy, and participants' readiness for and awareness of their roles in a collaborative online learning environment were major factors affecting the effective use of the wiki, so here again we see the theme of professional development and training emerge as an important element in the success of educational technology adoption and pedagogy.

As noted, emerging themes in this period included the introduction and integration of virtual reality (VR) based learning environments. In a study by Chwen (2006), in a Malaysian training context, a distinction was made between two types of VR system: the immersive system and the non-immersive system. Overall, Chwen (2006) identified a range of issues that were in need of further investigation at the time including: "(i) identifying appropriate theories and/or models to guide its design and development, (ii) investigating how its attributes are able to support learning, finding out whether its use can improve the intended performance and understanding, and investigating ways to reach more effective learning when using this technology, and (iii) investigating its impact on learners with different aptitudes" (p. 39). These are transferable to many emerging technologies in their early stages, including generative AI in the current context. Virtual reality has since been significantly expanded to include AR (Augmented Reality), XR (Extended Reality) and MR (Mixed Reality) (Cochrane & Farley, 2017). Online assessment was another strong emerging theme, and at the time, Byrnes and Ellis (2006) identified a risk that assessment was being overlooked in online learning environments and design and that this crucial area was not given the attention it needed. They were certainly correct and foreshadowed the increasing importance, and at times urgency, that online assessment has acquired, for example as part of the COVID-19 response (Montenegro-Rueda et al., 2021) and in relation to a range of academic integrity concerns in online environments (Thomson et al., 2023). Of course, this urgency has returned with a vengeance in the age of generative AI (Corbin et al., 2025).

Accessibility began to emerge as an important consideration in terms of equity in education during this period. Seale's (2006) article on accessible e-learning practice in higher education explored how accessibility models at the time translated to accessible e-learning practice. She made an important argument that "focusing solely on the drivers of accessibility (accessibility legislation, guidelines and standards) is not an effective strategy for developing and changing practice" (p. 268). Instead, she urged us to focus on understanding how stakeholders' responses to accessibility are influenced by the context in which they are operating. A more recent AJET article (Sanchez Diaz et al., 2024), to which Seale also contributed, shows that accessibility in online environments is still very much an ongoing concern.

Although LMSs had been part of the education landscape for a while (WebCT Vista appeared to be the default at the time), they were becoming an increasingly integrated part of tertiary education in particular, yet there were still many implementation issues as well as pedagogical issues in using LMSs effectively. For example, Benson and Palaskas (2006) analysed the institutional introduction of an LMS and all the complexity that entails at various levels, including governance, management and technical support, but also learning and teaching related matters such as professional development of teaching staff, and support of staff and students. On a

micro-level, Garrote and Pettersson (2007) explored lecturers' attitudes about the use of LMS in engineering education in a Swedish higher education context. Their major concern was the workload involved in the initial educational design of the site, which then led to a recommendation of sufficient resources and adequate professional development: sound familiar? While LMSs are now very much integrated 'business as usual' across tertiary education, there has more recently been considerable debate about their ongoing purpose and value (Willems et al., 2023).

E-portfolios were becoming increasingly popular in this period, and while they have never reached the saturation that was expected at the time, they still play a role in contemporary tertiary education. Lambert and Corrin (2006) described the implementation of e-portfolios at the University of Wollongong in Australia at the time and noted that their integrated e-portfolio tool (in Blackboard) had allowed for a centrally managed but faculty-focused customisation process. They further stressed the need for research into learning designs related to e-portfolios as well as assessment. While AJET has continued to publish papers about e-portfolios since (e.g. Beckers et al., 2016), the momentum appears to have waned considerably in recent years.

Finally, in this period, the use of mobile devices for educational purposes began to gain momentum (pre-iPhone). For instance, Pettit and Kukulska-Hulme (2007) from The Open University (UK) reported on a study of alumni of a global Masters program, which explored the role of mobile devices in enabling individuals to engage in learning conversations, which is directly linked to the earlier-mentioned collaborative learning in online environments. While the devices may have changed across the years, there is ongoing interest in the role of mobile devices as part of educational technology (Narayan et al., 2019).

An interesting early hint at the emergence some years later of the field of learning analytics as a major (paradigm?) shift in educational technology research, *AJET* published an article by Shane Dawson in 2006, which reported on a study about the development of learning communities based on data captured in online learning environments: "As discussion interactions are automatically captured and reported, the data provides an indication of the degree of community developing among the student population at a specific snapshot in time" (p. 495). Dawson went on to become a key figure in the development of learning analytics as a specific field of study, first through the establishment of the Society for Learning Analytics Research (SoLAR) in 2011, and then through the establishment of the *Journal of Learning Analytics* in 2014 (Gasevic et al., 2014).

Overall, in this period, the vast majority of papers published in *AJET* were still from authors and researchers based in Australia. For example, for the period 2006-2007, of the 58 articles published in *AJET*, 34 were from authors based in Australia, with a sprinkling of papers originating from other contexts: Canada (5), Singapore (3), UK (3), Aotearoa/New Zealand (2), Malaysia (2), Türkiye (2), Hong Kong (1), Macedonia (1), Taiwan (1), Japan (1), USA (1), Finland (1), and Sweden (1).

As a comparison, we looked at the 10 most recent *AJET* issues, in which a total of 64 articles were published. The largest proportion of authors were still based in Australia (23), yet there was much more diversity amongst the authors of the rest of the papers: China (5), Canada (4), Türkiye (3), USA (2), Spain (1), Vietnam (1), Japan (1), Malaysia (1), Ethiopia (1), Taiwan (1), Czech Republic (1), United Arab Emirates (1), India (1), Israel (1), Italy (1), Finland (1), Belgium (1), and South Korea (1). Interestingly, cross-cultural collaborations have also significantly increased: Australia/Canada (2), China/Australia (2), China/USA (1), Taiwan/China (1), India/Australia/Greece/Cyprus (1), Colombia/Mexico (1), Philippines/South Korea (1), China/Singapore (1), Australia/Vietnam/Singapore (1), China/UK/Australia (1), and Spain/UK (1).

2008-2025: AI-supported coding and analysis

The eight main themes we identified over the period 2008-2025 included the following: 1) AI and automation in learning, 2) Assessment and feedback, 3) Equity, inclusion and ethics, 4) Learning analytics and data-informed insight, 5) Pedagogical integration, 6) Professional learning and academic development, 7) Self-regulated learning, and 8) Technology adoption. We can see some continuity with previous periods amongst these themes (e.g. professional learning) as well as some new and emerging themes (e.g. AI and automation in learning). Figure 1 shows the number of papers directly related to those themes in different time periods as indicated:

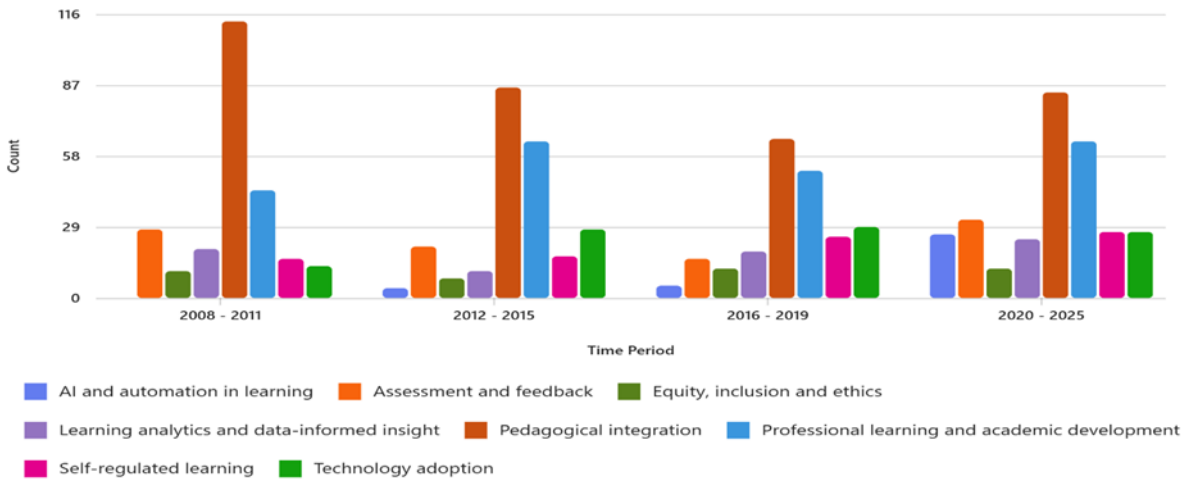

Figure 1: Number of AJET articles per theme across year blocks

We used AI support to slice the data in a number of different ways. Figure 2 shows the percentages of each theme in the overall number of papers that fell into the identified set of themes. This gives an indication of the currency of each theme in relation to other themes.

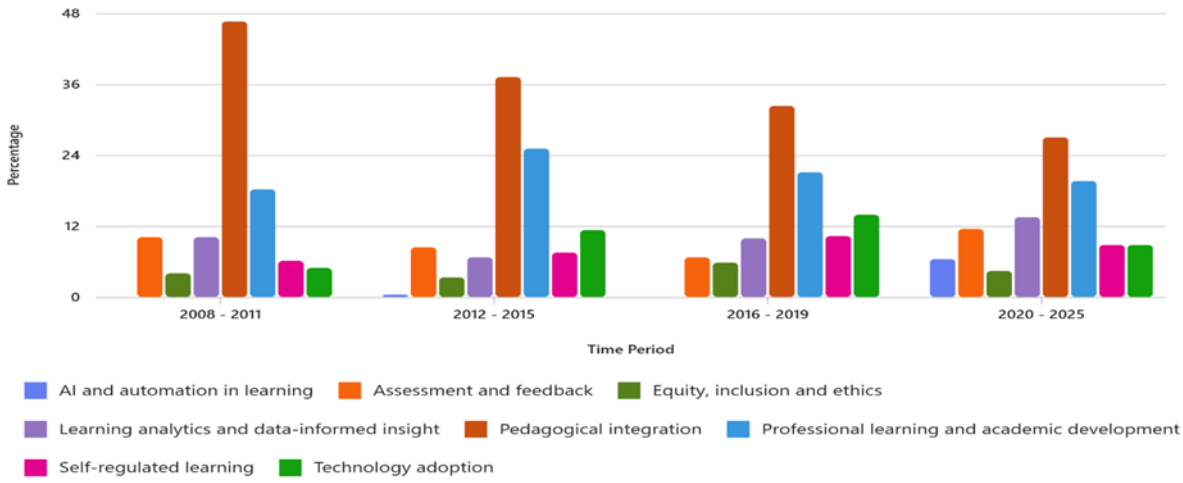

Figure 2: Percentage of the AJET articles related to particular themes compared to other themes

It is interesting to see that despite emerging themes such as learning analytics and AI and automation in learning, many of these the more general themes, such as pedagogical integration and professional learning, have remained consistently strong themes over time. In particular, two themes (i.e., pedagogical integration and professional learning) have been strong themes across the whole 40 years of AJET. Similarly, equity and inclusion, and technology adoption have remained consistent themes across the different time periods, albeit to a lesser extent. Of course, some of these themes have strong

connections to each other, and separating them in the way that we have done here potentially creates artificial barriers where they may not be any. For example, technology adoption often has direct links to pedagogical integration and a need for professional learning in the process. For this reason, we looked for salient combinations of themes as well, and Table 1 shows the number of articles where two particular themes were combined in the 2008-2025 time range.

Table 1: Number of AJET articles with combined themes in the 2008-2025 period

Theme 1	Theme 2	Number of articles (out of a total of 1117)
Pedagogical integration	Professional learning and academic development	341
Pedagogical integration	Learning analytics and data-informed insights	231
Learning analytics and data-informed insights	Professional learning and academic development	182
Pedagogical integration	Self-regulated learning	167
Self-regulated learning	Professional learning and Academic development	132
Pedagogical integration	Assessment and feedback	131
Self-regulated learning	Learning analytics and data-informed insights	130
Technology adoption	Learning analytics and data-informed insights	125
Pedagogical integration	Technology adoption	113
Assessment and feedback	Professional learning and academic development	107
Technology adoption	Professional learning and academic development	103
Pedagogical integration	Equity, inclusion and ethics	101
Assessment and feedback	Learning analytics and data-informed insights	93
Equity, inclusion and ethics	Professional learning and academic development	78
Technology adoption	Self-regulated learning	72

As noted in previous editorials (Corrin et al., 2025a; Han et al., 2025), and not entirely surprising, adoption of educational technology has been an ongoing theme throughout the 40 years of AJET. It is not surprising because riding waves of innovation often quickly turns to implementation of new technologies once the early adopters are done with them. In other words, ascertaining their potential reach and impact in each case, and how they can be incorporated into the learning design and pedagogical objectives in a sustainable manner are key concerns of educational technology and continue to be so. An article published this year, by Yalçın et al. (2025), illustrates this point. In their study, they explore the role of emotions in technology adoption, which they demonstrate influence behavioural intentions. The findings of their study "underscore the importance of fostering positive emotional experiences and enhancing online learning self-efficacy to promote effective LMS adoption" (p. 32). Another example is an article from a decade earlier (Wong, 2015), which explored technology acceptance in pre-service teachers of primary mathematics in Hong Kong, and found perceived usefulness to be more influential than perceived ease of use. In Wong's study, ease of use was found to rely heavily on facilitating conditions rather than computer self-efficacy. During this period, as well as in decades prior, there were many other AJET articles that have reported on technology adoption and the factors that influence it (97 to be precise in the 2008-2025 period, as Figure 1 shows), and this trend will continue, as technology adoption is a fundamental part of the educational technology field.

The same can be said for two other key themes that have made up a significant part of AJET articles over the last 40 years: pedagogical integration (348 articles in the 2008-2025 period) and professional learning and academic development (224 articles). Again, the strength of these themes is not entirely surprising since technology adoption relies in many ways on the ability to envisage the role of a particular technology in achieving learning outcomes for students (pedagogical integration) and in just as many ways on the ability of educators to use and adopt particular technology in their learning designs and teaching practice. A good example of pedagogical integration is an article by Zhao and Todd (2025) in this AJET issue, which reports on a qualitative case study that examined the perceptions and PowerPoint slide design practices of three Business English teachers at a Thai university, drawing on affordance theory, cognitive load theory, and the cognitive theory of multimedia learning. The authors conclude that "the instructional value of PowerPoint depends on teachers' pedagogical priorities, emphasising the need for a purposeful alignment between slide design and teaching objectives". Throughout this period, the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) framework has often been used to explore pedagogical integration (e.g., Koh & Divaharan, 2013; Redmond & Lock, 2019), and it continues to be a popular framework to frame relevant research studies in this respect.

As noted, professional learning and development, or alternatively called professional training or academic development depending on the emphasis, has also been a mainstay of AJET articles. A 2013 article by Lau and Yuen is a good example of the ongoing concern with professional development around educational technology, and the development of digital capabilities and digital literacy. Specially, Lau and Yuen explored the effects of educational technology training workshops on perception changes of mathematics teachers in Hong Kong. Their conclusion was that "a "one size fits all" does not appear to work and a more teacher-based training model is deemed necessary to engage all teachers in technology integration in education" (p. 595). More recently, Sánchez-Caballé and Esteve-Mon (2022) analysed the level of digital competence of university teachers at one Spanish and one Polish university, using a self-perception questionnaire based on the DigCompEdu framework. They identified a need, as many similar studies have done, for improved digital teaching competence, thus making a strong argument for ongoing professional development around educational technology. The urgency around the need for professional learning and development rides the waves of different types of educational technology, and in recent years, it has gained considerable urgency again with the widespread availability of generative AI (e.g., Jha & Atif, 2025, in this AJET issue, and Lodge et al., 2023).

Of course, AI and automation in learning has become a major theme in recent years (26 published articles in the 2020-2025 period, compared to four in the five years prior), as generative AI could be said to have ushered in a paradigm shift in educational technology, and in education more broadly. This is reflected in the vast number of submissions AJET is currently receiving that relate to the theme of generative AI in tertiary education. This has now reached a point where we, as AJET editors, have begun to discuss what might constitute a saturation point. In other words, how many articles about generative AI is enough, and at what point is nothing new being added? The first editorial of 2026 will discuss this in depth, but for now we have not reached that point yet. As with the introduction of other major educational technologies, the initial period is characterised by the development of both conceptual and practical frameworks for adoption and pedagogical integration. Recent articles by Gümüş and Kara (2025) and Furze et al. (2024) are good examples of that. The idea that this might constitute a paradigm shift is reinforced by the fact that articles about generative AI touch on a wide range of sub-themes that we have discussed in this editorial as well, including implications for the wider tertiary education sector (Knight et al., 2022), AI literacy (Medina-Gual et al., 2025), and of course assessment (Huang et al., 2024).

Assessment and feedback is an ongoing theme, which has attracted steady attention throughout AJET's 40 years, as one of the key pedagogical elements of educational technologies. An early example in the 2008-2025 period was a study by Klisc et al. (2009), which explored the effect of assessment on the outcomes of asynchronous online discussions. Their findings indicated that the incorporation of assessment resulted in higher levels of discussion outcomes than if no assessment was used. Other examples include an evaluation of semi-automated, collaborative marking and feedback systems, from

the perspectives of academics (2011), and more recently, a scoping review of assessment of learning outcomes related to generative AI (Weng et al., 2024). In the latter, the authors suggest "five future research directions: innovative assessment designs, collaborations among assessment approaches, new learning outcomes, relationships between assessment approaches and learning outcomes, and quantitative or mixed research studies" (p. 37).

Prior to the emergence of generative AI, learning analytics and data-informed insights was probably the most impactful theme in educational technology during the 2010-2020 decade (as demonstrated by 50 articles focused on it in the 2008-2019 period). Of course, the 24 articles published since clearly suggest that learning analytics is still a key theme, not least because it has strong links to AI. Learning analytics provide the promise of more deliberative and evidence-informed learning design, particularly in online learning environments. The large amount of data generated about what happens in the learning environments we design can be captured and potentially used to develop tailored responses to improve student outcomes. This continues to be an exciting prospect in educational technology research, as a number of recent papers make clear (Corrin et al., 2020; Kitto et al., 2021; West et al., 2020).

Equity, inclusion and ethics is another mainstay theme in AJET, and its relevance and importance is reflected in a 2019 special issue on digital equity (Willems et al., 2019). An earlier example in the 2008-2025 period includes a study by Wood and Willems (2012) on the widening participation agenda in Australia through improved access to and within 3D virtual learning environments, particularly for students with disabilities. The article also highlights other remaining challenges at the time with regards to the goal of improving outcomes for under-represented learner groups. A more recent article by Stone (2022) argues for the need to keep online learning firmly in the mainstream, while taking an evidence-informed approach to ensuring the quality of its design and delivery. In her view, this has the potential to enhance student equity on a much broader scale.

The final theme we identified in the 2008-2025 period was self-regulated learning (SRL). A sizeable number of articles focused on this topic during this period (85 in fact), at a rate that seems to be slightly increasing in recent years. Most recently, Ky and Lian (2025) critically examined the role of AI tools, specifically ChatGPT PDF, in supporting self-regulated learning in the context of academic literacy, and they argue that AI tools "should be integrated within a comprehensive framework that promotes self-efficacy, metacognitive reflection and a deeper understanding of academic literacy" (p. 74).

AJET at forty: Looking back to look forward

This concludes our looking back through the most recent 20 years of AJET by looking back at some of the key trends and developments in educational technology research and practice. The emergence of generative AI in recent years suggests a significant paradigm shift, and there are good reasons to call it that, as the initial impact on the tertiary education sector has been immense, and is ongoing. However, looking back through 40 years of innovation and change in the sector has also allowed us to recognise some of the continuities, and they are important to focus on going forward, as they provide vital clues on how to respond to disruption in the sector. Of course, in the field of educational technology, technological innovation and disruption go hand in hand, so if any field is prepared to respond to and indeed drive such innovations and disruption it is this particular field, and AJET has for the last 40 years provided a significant forum to address such disruptions and the implications of such innovations. Through it all, what shines through is a passion for evidence-informed practice that provides the best learning outcomes for learners, initially across the whole education sector, and more recently with a specific focus on tertiary education. Judging from the ever-increasing number of submissions AJET receives, the journal plays a vital role in providing a platform and forum space to explore new technologies, to integrate them into appropriate pedagogies, and to ensure accessibility for as many learners as possible. We invite you to join AJET in riding new waves of innovation and paradigm shifts in educational technology in the next 40 years and beyond.

Author contributions

Henk Huijser: Conceptualisation, Investigation, Writing - original draft, Writing - review and editing; **Chris Deneen**: Conceptualisation, Data analysis, Writing – original draft; **Linda Corrin**: Writing – review and editing; **Feifei Han**: Writing – review and editing.

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