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For details on submission of manuscripts, subscriptions and access to the AJET online archives, please see <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/>

For editorial inquiries, contact the Editor, Associate Professor Catherine McLoughlin, School of Education (ACT), Australian Catholic University, PO Box 256, Dickson ACT 2602, Australia. Email: C.McLoughlin@signadou.acu.edu.au, Tel: +61 2 6209 1100 Fax +61 2 6209 1185. For review process, production matters and subscriptions contact the Production Editor and Business Manager, Dr Roger Atkinson, 5/202 Coode Street, Como WA 6152, Australia. Email: rjatkinson@bigpond.com, Tel: +61 8 9367 1133.

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## Editorial

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### Best Education Research Article in an Open Access Journal, 2005

We are very proud and delighted to begin AJET Editorial 22(2) by congratulating Dr Sugata Mitra and his colleagues at the Centre for Research in Cognitive Systems, NIIT Limited, New Delhi. The Communication of Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association have given their Annual Award, *Best Education Research Article in an Open Access Journal* [1] to Sugata and colleagues Ritu Dangwal, Shiffon Chatterjee, Swati Jha, Ravinder Bisht and Preeti Kapur [2] for their paper in AJET 21(3) [3].

In making an editorial nomination for this paper we stated:

The quality of this article is grounded in its unique context and innovative approach to making educational technologies serve some of the poorest and most disadvantaged children in India. It draws to our attention an unusual combination of discovery learning and peer group learning, based upon a very economical and simple, unsupervised, teacher-less deployment of computer technologies. Though in use for some years, the "hole in the wall" computers have only recently become a subject for formal academic research. Whilst Sugata Mitra and colleagues do not provide notable advances in investigative techniques or interpretative frameworks, they do provide what we believe is an inspirational research example, stimulating others to find ways to research and deploy 'hi tech' to serve the poorest of learners.

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## ASCILITE 2006 - SYDNEY



WHO'S LEARNING? WHOSE TECHNOLOGY

3-6 December. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/sydney06/>

We have quoted AERA SIG Communication of Research previously in another publication [4], very much appreciating a modest, succinct statement on their website that summarises their aims:

...we hope to do what little we can to promote free access world wide to scholarship in education [5]

We are very pleased to record AJET's warm appreciation of the work by the AERA SIG Communication of Research.



### Awards 2006

for exemplary use of electronic technologies in teaching and learning in tertiary education  
<http://www.ascilite.org.au/awards.html>

### Idle Moment No. 12: Citation frequencies

The frequency of citation of a journal article in other publications is a matter of considerable interest for authors, editors and publishers. Each citation of an article provides evidence that other researchers have found the article to be relevant, significant and interesting. Tables 1 and 2 below present a very modest start we have made on studying citation frequencies for articles published in AJET and in ASCILITE Conference Proceedings. Reading lists of references and counting the numbers of AJET and other citations is a somewhat dreary kind of task that can be undertaken only during idle moments [6], for example between overs during a Test Match broadcast, so it will not be a fast track project.

Table 1: Frequency of references cited in AJET and ASCILITE Conferences

Publication	No. Papers [11]	No. papers citing at least 1 ref from		Total no. refs [11]	No. AJET refs	No. ASC Conf refs	Av. no. of refs per paper		
		AJET	ASC				All	AJET	ASC
ASC 05[7]	86	25 29.1%	28 32.6%	1696	41 2.42%	65 3.83%	19.7	0.48	0.76
ASC 04[8]	119	31 26.1%	43 36.1%	2207	48 2.17%	84 3.81%	18.5	0.40	0.71
AJET 05[9]	30	13 43.3%	10 33.3%	1003	30 2.99%	17 1.69%	33.4	1.00	0.57
AJET 04[10]	21	9 42.9%	6 28.6%	588	19 3.23%	10 1.70%	28.0	0.90	0.48

Table 1 provides a starting point for continuous annual monitoring of any trends amongst AJET authors and ASCILITE Conference authors to increase or decrease their use of references from our publications. We

hasten to reassure potential authors that the number of AJET or ASCILITE Conference citations that appear in reference lists has no bearing upon the review process. Reviewers are expected to assess whether an article's references constitute a relevant, appropriate and comprehensive set, without regard to AJET's citation counts. On the other hand, it would be prudent for prospective authors to check recent volumes of AJET, to help them assess whether submission of their own article to AJET is appropriate, and to become familiar with our format and other details. Also, there's no harm done if authors try to match up their reference lists with the expectations that may be held by potential reviewers, who may well be AJET authors themselves. We do advise authors that:

Our review panel comprises researchers and practitioners drawn from the reviewer lists for ASCILITE Conferences, from our list of AJET authors, and from ASCILITE and ASET membership generally, together with some researchers and practitioners with appropriate experience and expertise invited from other sources. [12]

Table 2 marks the start of an ongoing comparative study. It records the 9 most frequently cited journals and proceedings for the previous two years of AJET, and for ASCILITE 2004 Proceedings.

Table 2: Frequency of journal and proceedings citations in AJET, 2005 and 2004, Vols 21 and 20, and in ASCILITE 2004 Proceedings

Publication		AJET [13]	JALN [14]	ASC Conf [16]	ETRD [17]	BJET [18]	ET [19]	HERDSA Conf [20]	DE [21]	JECR [22]
AJET 2005 (30 paps, 1003 refs)	No. refs	30	30[15]	17	16	15	10	4	9	5
	No. paps	13	6	10	7	10	2	4	5	4
AJET 2004 (21 paps, 588 refs)	No. refs	19	5	10	7	5	4	6	1	2
	No. paps	9	4	6	5	2	2	3	1	2
ASC 04 [8] (119 paps, 2207 refs)	No. refs	48	9	84	18	5	10	17	12	6
	No. paps	31	7	43	13	5	8	13	8	5



AusWeb 2006  
1-5 July  
<http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/>

Table 2 cannot be represented as a 'good result' for AJET and ASCILITE Conference Proceedings, because it is the result to be expected from good 'exposure' to these publications. Good 'exposure' arises because many of the authors writing for these publications are ASCILITE members, or will have professional contacts with members, with access to printed as well as electronic copies, and related factors. On the other hand, from our perspective, Table 2 is 'not bad', because AJET and ASCILITE clearly 'outcite' other journal and proceedings reading and citing by our authors [23]. The high number of JALN citations may be discounted because two thirds of the AJET 2005 citations of JALN were due to one article [15].

Whilst AJET and ASCILITE Proceedings articles 'outcite' others, the two provide only a relatively small share of the total number of citations, and the majority of articles contain no citations of AJET or ASCILITE Proceedings (Table 1). Similarly, the 'top 9' account for only a relatively small share of total citations. For example, in AJET 2004 and 2005, 'top 9' citations (Table 2) account for only 12.2% of citations (194 in total of 1591). Putting a 'positive spin' on that observation, we can say that AJET authors draw their citations from a wide and diverse range of sources. Or, in 'negative spin' mode, we could say that diversity arises because many authors draw only upon a narrow, less than systematic, selection from the educational research literature.

The 'top 9' citations (Table 2) suggest that for AJET and ASCILITE authors, the most valuable publications from our kindred societies are HERDSA's Conference Proceedings [20] and ODLAA's journal, *Distance Education* [21]. Although not formally counted in our study to date, and not in the 'top 9', *AusWeb* [24] is well-cited. From the very large number of international, commercial or non-OA journals that relate to educational technology [25], only four, ETRD [17], BJET [18], ET [19] and JECR [22] enter the 'top 9' (Table 2) at this stage of our study.



10-13 July 2006, The University of Western Australia, Perth WA  
<http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2006/>

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Another study being initiated concerns the ability of Google Scholar [26] to count the number of citations of AJET articles. Readers may note a preliminary finding: of 49 citations of AJET articles made in AJET 2004-05, only 15 (31%) have been counted by Google Scholar to date (7 June 2006), although it has recorded 49 (96%) of the 51 articles in AJET 2004-05.

### Idle Moment No. 13: Numbers of references per article

What is the appropriate number of references for an AJET article? Figure 1 records the distribution of numbers of references per AJET article, for the period 2004 to mid-2006. The source data is Table 1's source data, plus counts for AJET's 2006 issues to date. Again, we hasten to add that reviewers are expected to assess whether an article's references constitute a relevant, appropriate, soundly based and comprehensive set, rather than looking for conformance with any particular number.

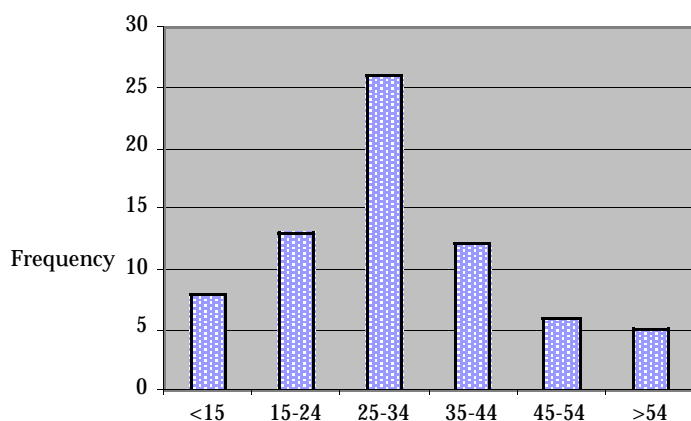


Figure 1: Number of references per AJET article [65 articles, 2004-mid06, Vols 20, 21, 22(1), 22(2)]

Roger Atkinson and Catherine McLoughlin  
*AJET Production Editor and AJET Editor*

### Endnotes

1. AERA SIG Communication of Research (2006). 2006 Awards. <http://aera-cr.asu.edu/awards/> [viewed 28 Apr 2006]
2. <http://www.hole-in-the-wall.com/>
3. Mitra, S., Dangwal, R., Chatterjee, S., Jha, S., Bisht, R. S. and Kapur, P. (2005). Acquisition of computing literacy on shared public computers: Children and the "hole in the wall". *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 21(3), 407-426. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet21/mitra.html>

4. Atkinson, R. (2004). Technology interactions: Scholarly publishing. *HERDSA News*, 26(3), 19-21. <http://www.users.bigpond.net.au/atkinson-mcbeath/roger/pubs/herdsa-newslet26-3.html>
5. AERA SIG Communication of Research. Open access journals in the field of education. <http://aera-cr.asu.edu/ejournals/>
6. The last *Idle Moment* was recorded in AJET Editorial 21(2), <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet21/editorial21-2.html>. For an explanation of idle moments in the life of an editor, see Editorial 19(3), <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet19/editorial19-3.html>
7. *Proceedings ASCILITE 2005*. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane05/proceedings.shtml>. The frequency count included both full and short papers.
8. *Proceedings ASCILITE 2004*. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/contents.html>. The frequency count included both full and short papers.
9. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet21/ajet21.html> (containing 4 issues)
10. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet20/ajet20.html> (containing 3 issues)
11. The number counted excludes posters in the case of ASCILITE Conferences, and excludes editorials in the case of AJET. The total number of references includes all kinds of sources - books, book chapters, reports, journal articles, etc.
12. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/about/ref/author-advice.html#review>
13. AJET. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet.html>
14. JALN. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*. <http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/jaln/index.asp>
15. 20 of the 30 JALN citations are due to one paper, Hammond, M. and Wiriyapinit, M. (2005). Learning through online discussion: A case of triangulation in research. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 21(3), 283-302. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ajet21/hammond.html>
16. ASCILITE Conferences. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences.html>
17. ETRD. *Educational Technology Research & Development*. <http://www.aect.org/>
18. BJET. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0007-1013&site=1>
19. ET. *Educational Technology*. <http://www.bookstoread.com/etp/>
20. HERDSA Conferences. <http://www.herdsa.org.au/conferences.php>
21. DE. *Distance Education*. DE. <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/01587919.asp>
22. JECR. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*. <http://www.baywood.com/journals/PreviewJournals.asp?Id=0735-6331>
23. Table 2 is based on manual counts and may be subject to minor errors. The count of conference proceedings citations did not include conferences held outside the Australasian region and further counts may show 'near top 9' frequencies for others, particularly the Ed-Media series of conferences.
24. AusWeb. <http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/>
25. For one list of journals relating to educational technology, see AJET's list at <http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/about/ref/edtechpubs.html>
26. Google Scholar. <http://scholar.google.com/> (search string: author:"firstname familyname" )



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