



# Editorial *Open Praxis* Volume 14 Issue 4

**INÉS GIL-JAURENA** 

**EDITORIAL**



## **ABSTRACT**

This *Open Praxis* issue includes four research papers, one innovative practice paper and one book review. It also includes some words from the editor in the period 2012–2022, Dr. Inés Gil-Jaurena, who steps down in her role and will be replaced in 2023 by a team led by Dr. Aras Bozkurt.

## **CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:**

**Inés Gil-Jaurena**

Editor for *Open Praxis*.  
Universidad Nacional de  
Educación a Distancia – UNED,  
ES

[editor@openpraxis.org](mailto:editor@openpraxis.org)

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This *Open Praxis* issue includes seven articles: four research papers, one innovative practice paper and one book review, authored by 11 researchers from 4 different countries: Canada, South Africa, Turkey and USA.

In the first paper (*Quality education beyond borders: An international content analysis for transnational distance education*), Rebecca Elizabeth Heiser, from Canada, explores a common concern in open and distance education –quality–, in this case in relation to the internationalization dimension. Through the analysis of five quality frameworks in the field, she identifies a set of 27 indicators that consider internationalization aspects. In a global world, the author highlights that transnational issues are not sufficiently addressed in quality frameworks and suggests the need to integrate these aspects at institutional levels.

In the second research paper (*Lecturers' experiences of the blurring of time and space boundaries during the Covid-19 pandemic at a South African ODeL University*), Katharine Naidu and Mphoentle Puleng Modise present a qualitative study that explores how the pandemic influenced the relation work-home. Guided by the boundary theory, they have interviewed 15 lecturers at a distance education university in South Africa. The findings relate how the pandemic led to very demanding situations outside work hours and it accelerated the blurring of the work-home boundaries. The authors suggest some recommendations to overcome the generated discomfort and keep providing quality services.

In the third paper (*The Relationship Between Personality Traits and e-Learning Autonomy of Distance Education Students*), Mehmet Firat presents a quantitative study developed at a distance education university in Turkey that explores the relation between 5 personality traits –extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness– and e-learning autonomy, also considering gender aspects. The findings contribute to the literature and discussion about these topics, where different studies have led to diverse results.

In the last research paper, Alex Redcay, Nicole Amber Pfannenstiel and Daniel Albert, from the USA, present *The development and validation of the zero cost textbook satisfaction scale (ZSS)*, a measurement tool to assess student satisfaction with Zero Textbook Costs (ZTC) resources. They provide all the necessary elements to understand the validation process, including the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The scale is available as an appendix with a CC BY-NC-ND license.

The innovative practice paper (*Filling the Knowledge-to-Action Gap with Open-Access Pedagogy: Increasing Student Engagement with an Alternative Assignment Model*), by Jennifer L. Briere, Ishita B. Zaman and Sophia Haotong Wang, from Canada, reports on their experience in a Psychology course, where they have introduced a new assignment to cover all the 6 levels of the Bloom taxonomy and to disseminate student's productions in open access mode. The authors thoroughly described the context and framework, the characteristics of the assignment and the learning outcomes. The paper will be of interest to other practitioners willing to develop meaningful and engaging activities with the students.

The last contribution, by Krista Croghan, from the USA, is a book review of *Inclusive Design for a Digital World: Designing with Accessibility in Mind*, written by Regine M. Gilbert and published in 2019 by Apress, that would be of interest to anybody concerned with making online content more accessible and inclusive.

As always, we thank all the authors and reviewers who have contributed to this *Open Praxis* issue, and we encourage all our readers to register in <https://openpraxis.org> to get informed about new issues and announcements.

Being my last issue as editor, I would like to briefly express my thoughts and feelings after this 11-year period as editor of *Open Praxis*. Back in 2011, the editorial project we presented with the support of the UNED for the relaunch of *Open Praxis* as the ICDE scholarly, peer-reviewed and open access journal was selected by ICDE, and it included three main aspects: editorial process, scientific quality and dissemination (Gil-Jaurena & Malik, 2011). After three years of regular publication (Gil-Jaurena, 2016), I highlighted some achievements that have later also led and characterized the project: scientific and ethical standards, global reach and global contributions, increased impact, visibility and dissemination, and recognition in the field of open and distance education. I especially value this last aspect, in particular the recognition

among the academic community, researchers and practitioners who have supported *Open Praxis* over the years as authors, reviewers and/or readers.

Several milestones have marked the development of *Open Praxis* since 2012. The first one is the publication of the first issue in 2013, which was dedicated to Openness in Higher Education (Gil-Jaurena, 2013) and marked the way for the new stage. One of the articles from that issue (Peter & Deimann, 2013) was selected for the special issue of the journal *Distances et Médiations des Savoirs (DMS)* along with contributions from other journals in the field (Gil-Jaurena, 2018).

Another milestone was the support we obtained from OpenAIRE in 2015, which allowed us to undertake some technical improvements to the journal, including the publication of papers in html and xml formats and not just pdf since 2016, and the inclusion of the ORCID information.

Finally, since 2021 *Open Praxis* is hosted by Ubiquity Press and there has been a renewal of the journal graphic design and website.

In the meantime, *Open Praxis* has been included in different indexes, databases, and repositories, such as DOAJ, ERA, ERIC, ERIH Plus or ESCI. Other relevant databases remain a challenge for the new editorial team. The impact in terms of citations in academic publications has grown substantially, from 170 citations in 2013 to 1700 citations in 2022 (source: Google Scholar).

Also, on a more regular basis, *Open Praxis* has collaborated with ICDE for the selection and publication of the ICDE Prizes for Innovation and Best Practice in the field of open and distance education in the 2013, 2015 and 2021 editions, and with the Open Education Global Conference (formerly OpenCourseWare Consortium (OCWC) Conference) for the publication of selected papers in six special issues of *Open Praxis* from 2014 to 2019.

Over the last years, as I have already mentioned, the contribution of the *Open Praxis* community has been invaluable. I would like to thank, through this general statement, all the people who have been involved and committed in some way to the development of *Open Praxis*: the Editorial Board members appointed at different periods, the Consultative Editor Beatriz Malik, the different professionals who have supported the technical aspects, the staff of the ICDE Secretariat, the ICDE Board, the UNED Rectorate, other journal editors in the field with whom I have been able to exchange and who have given me guidance, and of course to the hundreds of authors and reviewers who have contributed to the 40 issues, and to all the readers who have consulted the papers and contributed to their dissemination.

Finally, I would like to thank ICDE for their trust and support over the years and welcome the new editorial team, lead by Dr. Aras Bozkurt. I know I am leaving *Open Praxis* in good hands and I wish them and the journal a very successful period.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

## AUTHOR AFFILIATION

Inés Gil-Jaurena  [orcid.org/0000-0001-7045-0689](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7045-0689)

Editor for *Open Praxis*. Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia – UNED, ES

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