

Note from the Editor-in-Chief

This second issue of 2025 brings together ten papers that reflect the range and vitality of current research in English language studies. The articles explore internationalized postgraduate classrooms, cross-border education in Thailand, translanguage in testing contexts, and the speaking mindsets of Thai undergraduates. They also extend to literary and cultural studies of ecofeminism, fragmented identities, exploitation, and masculinity. Several papers engage with pressing global debates, including the role of AI in education and the continued growth of English-medium instruction. A recurring theme is learner agency, shown in students regulating their own strategies, whether in prompting with AI, managing speaking anxiety, or adapting to life abroad. Yet the studies also reveal that self-regulation alone is insufficient. As Bowen and Thomas (2022) argue, learners require more knowledgeable others to help them navigate the social and pragmatic dimensions of language learning. These papers highlight that effective education arises from the interplay of individual effort, teacher mediation, and broader sociocultural context. Other contributions examine the growth of English-medium instruction and how students across the region negotiate language, access, and identity. Together, these studies highlight the value of Southeast Asian perspectives in enriching global discussions. Thus, we are excited to present this issue and the new insights it offers to readers and researchers around the world.

Our first paper, “*An International Experience in an English Class Is...*”: *An Examination of Postgraduate Students Perspectives*, is by Daron Benjamin Loo (Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia). It explores how postgraduate students engaged in academic writing lessons that were framed around internationalization. Drawing on responses from 107 participants, the study shows how students valued cultural diversity, developed writing skills, and used their native languages as learning resources. Its contribution lies in challenging the assumption that English-medium courses are automatically inclusive; instead, it argues for instructor-led design that recognizes linguistic difference. This echoes challenges reported by Bowen et al. (2023) and Thomas et al. (2023), where university lecturers in Thailand grapple with conflicting mandates between language and content teaching roles. By aligning student experiences in Singapore with regional teaching realities in Thailand, we can see how the study highlights that internationalization can both enrich and complicate writing pedagogy.

The second paper, *Fragmented Identities and Feminist Schizoanalysis: Reimagining the Self in Contemporary American Fiction*, by Pushpraj Singh and Ekta Rana (St Teresa International University, Thailand), explores how contemporary American fiction represents the fractured self. Through readings of Morrison, Gay, and DeLillo, the study shows how narrative form—nonlinear time, broken syntax, shifting voices—mirrors trauma, memory, and dislocation. Its key contribution is methodological: combining schizoanalysis with feminist psychoanalysis to demonstrate how identity is constructed through rupture rather than coherence. This dual frame reveals fragmentation not as disorder but as a mode of survival and resistance, especially for marginalized subjects marked by gender, race, and history. The work situates American literature within global critical debates, but its authorship in Southeast Asia underscores how scholars in the region engage directly with theoretical innovation. By bridging Deleuze, Guattari, Kristeva, and Irigaray with close textual analysis, the study highlights the capacity of literary scholarship in Thailand to extend poststructuralist and feminist criticism. It shows how voices from underexplored academic contexts can advance the global conversation on narrative, identity, and resistance.

The third paper, *A Corpus-Based Analysis of Lexical Characteristics Across English News Categories for L2 Pedagogical Use*, by Rattavit Loesnopchaimongkhon, Chanapa Phommopakorn, Pancheewa Chernchom, and Piyapong Laosrattanachai (Kasetsart University, Thailand), examines 3,000 BBC and CNN news articles across twelve categories to find patterns in vocabulary use. The study profiles lexical coverage, CEFR levels, variation, and density, showing how categories differ in accessibility for L2 learners at beginner, intermediate, and advanced stages. Health and Sports texts align closely with A1–A2 levels, while Fashion and Nutrition contain a higher proportion of advanced vocabulary, providing challenge for more proficient learners. The contribution lies in linking corpus-driven insights to pedagogy, offering a systematic way for teachers and learners to select authentic materials that match proficiency levels. Beyond the quantitative findings, the study demonstrates how applied corpus linguistics can be mobilized in Southeast Asian contexts to address practical classroom needs. By situating English learning in relation to real-world news discourse, it underscores the importance of context-specific vocabulary knowledge and provides a model for other corpus-based studies that bridge linguistic research and language teaching.

In Journey of Myanmar Postgraduate Students: Overcoming Language Barriers and Academic Challenges during Study Abroad Programs in Thailand, Pa Pa Soe and Pattrawut Charoenroop (National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand) explore the experiences of 33 Myanmar students pursuing postgraduate studies in Thai universities. Using interviews and thematic analysis, the study reveals how students encountered two primary difficulties: limited English use among locals and their own lack of Thai proficiency, which created a sense of exclusion (see also Bowen & Louw, 2025); and unfamiliar academic practices that demanded new approaches to study and writing. Yet students also showed resilience, drawing on strategies such as learning Thai, using translation tools, engaging in peer support, and dedicating more time to self-study. The contribution of this work is twofold. It broadens scholarship on international student mobility by shifting attention from Anglophone destinations to a regional, non-English speaking context. At the same time, it captures the specific historical and sociocultural dynamics of Myanmar–Thailand relations, which shape how students adapt to life and study. By centering Myanmar voices at a time of political upheaval, the study highlights how cross-border education in Southeast Asia is tied to larger struggles of displacement, opportunity, and resilience.

The fifth paper, *Translanguaging Practices in VSTEP Preparation Courses: Pedagogical Implications for Vietnamese EFL Contexts*, by Pham Minh Toan (Van Hien University, Vietnam), examines how teachers use bilingual resources in preparing students for the Vietnamese Standardized Test of English Proficiency (VSTEP). Drawing on survey data from 164 instructors and follow-up interviews, the study finds that translanguaging is employed most often for assessment-related functions such as clarifying instructions and explaining criteria, while its use in affective or content-related contexts is more limited. The contribution lies in extending translanguaging theory into high-stakes testing environments, showing how teachers adapt bilingual practices under institutional pressures that favor English-only approaches. This work highlights the emergence of “assessment-mediated translanguaging,” where pedagogical decisions are shaped not only by classroom needs but also by the demands of test validity. In the Vietnamese context, this research provides insight into how policy–practice tensions influence teacher agency and language use. More broadly, it raises theoretical questions about how translanguaging functions when constrained by institutional frameworks, suggesting the need for refinements to current models that often assume flexible, unrestricted language use.

In *Exploring the Ecofeminist Landscape: A Comparative Analysis of Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and Gita Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night**, by Martina Athokpam and Shuchi Kaparwan (National Institute of Technology Mizoram, India), examine how ecofeminist theory works across different cultural and postcolonial contexts. The study highlights how Atwood's protagonist embodies cultural ecofeminism, merging with the Canadian wilderness as an act of resistance against industrial modernity and patriarchal control, while Hariharan's characters draw on socialist ecofeminism to critique colonial legacies and neoliberal exploitation in post-independence India. Its key contribution is to demonstrate how ecofeminism is not monolithic but adapts to distinct national and historical settings. By placing Canadian and Indian texts side by side, the study bridges Global North and Global South discourses, revealing how both environments and women's bodies become contested spaces of power, resistance, and renewal. This comparative lens underscores the ability of literary analysis to connect feminist and ecological struggles across borders. It also shows how voices from South Asia reinterpret ecofeminism to reflect lived realities of gender, class, and postcoloniality, adding new dimensions to an otherwise Western-centered field.

The seventh paper, *Decoding Speaking Mindsets of Thai Undergraduates using Q-Methodology*, by Nobphawan Sukklang and Jeffrey Dawala Wilang (Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand), investigates how 19 science and technology undergraduates conceptualize their ability to improve spoken English. The study identifies three perspectives: belief in effort and practice, reliance on self-regulation while acknowledging talent, and apprehension linked to classroom speaking. These findings reveal an "effort-threat gap," where students value persistence yet still hesitate to speak due to fear of mistakes and negative evaluation. The contribution lies in extending language mindset research beyond dichotomies of fixed and growth, showing how contradictory beliefs coexist and shift according to classroom affordances. Methodologically, the study demonstrates the usefulness of Q-methodology in capturing complex, layered learner perspectives that conventional surveys often miss. In the Thai context, the work highlights the particular challenges of students in non-English majors, who approach English instrumentally but struggle to reconcile effort with anxiety. The paper points to the need for supportive pedagogy that reduces threat, fosters resilience, and aligns cultural values of effort with safe opportunities for spoken practice.

In *Exploitation in Duong Thu Huong's Novel Without a Name and Viet Thanh Nguyen's The Sympathizer*, by Liu JingJie and Rohimmi Noor (Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia), analyzes how characters in these two novels embody different dimensions of exploitation during and after the Vietnam War. Using Marxist theory as a framework, the study highlights how soldiers and civilians alike are exploited economically, ideologically, and within rigid military hierarchies. In Huong's novel, the protagonist Quan experiences deprivation, coerced loyalty, and ideological manipulation, showing how revolutionary ideals were often accompanied by exploitation from within the Viet Cong system. Nguyen's narrator, meanwhile, confronts the layered exploitation of exile, espionage, and cultural dislocation, exposing how ideological control extends across borders and into diasporic life. The paper's contribution lies in showing how literature from Vietnam and its diaspora critiques war not only as geopolitical conflict but also as a system of class oppression and ideological constraint. By placing these texts side by side, the study foregrounds Southeast Asian perspectives on militarization, identity, and survival, offering a critical counterpoint to Western narratives of the Vietnam War. It demonstrates how Vietnamese voices engage Marxist theory to reflect on lived histories of exploitation and resilience.

The ninth paper, *Constructing Thai Masculinity through Beer Advertising: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Chang Commercials*, by Arthitphong Hinthonglang, et al. (Mahasarakham University, Thailand), investigates how two Chang Beer advertisements construct and circulate ideas of masculinity. Using multimodal critical discourse analysis, the study shows how verbal, visual, and auditory cues work together to promote an ideal of masculinity tied to refinement, discipline, prestige, and cultural identity. Narration and typography highlight values such as "respect" and "perfection," while imagery of Muay Thai rituals and traditional instruments tie masculinity to Thai heritage. At the same time, elite social settings and controlled gestures convey composure, leadership, and class status. The contribution lies in showing how advertising not only sells products but also reproduces hegemonic masculine norms that align consumption with national identity. This case study foregrounds how Southeast Asian media texts embed ideology in branding, illustrating how commercial narratives function as cultural scripts. It also calls attention to the silences in representation, particularly the marginal roles given to women, which underscores how gendered hierarchies are reinforced in Thai advertising.

Our final paper is *From Prompting to Proficiency: A Mixed-Methods Analysis of Prompting with ChatGPT Versus Lecturer Interaction in an EFL Classroom*, by Widi Andewi et al. (Bakti Nusantara Institute, Indonesia). It compares the effectiveness of ChatGPT-based prompting with traditional lecturer feedback over an eight-week period. The findings show that students using ChatGPT achieved greater gains in writing, proficiency, and self-efficacy, and also developed more sophisticated prompting strategies over time. Yet the study also exposes risks: over-reliance on AI, shallow engagement, difficulties verifying accuracy, and anxiety over academic integrity. Its contribution lies in foregrounding prompting as a literacy to be taught rather than assumed, showing that effective AI use requires deliberate instruction. This echoes recent calls to treat prompts not as technical tricks but as part of academic skill-building (Bowen & Watson Todd, 2025). The paper highlights that while AI can amplify practice and feedback, blind reliance may produce an illusion of competence and hinder deeper learning. By situating this in the Indonesian EFL context, the study underlines the need for balanced integration of AI, where technological immediacy is tempered by pedagogical guidance and critical evaluation.

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