

Note from the Editor-in-Chief

We would like to begin by thanking our authors, reviewers, and editorial team for their continued commitment to the *Journal of Studies in the English Language*. Their time, expertise, and willingness to engage critically with submitted work remain the backbone of the journal. This has been especially important this year, as we have had an exceptional number of submissions. Submissions have increased from 56 manuscripts in 2024 to 378 in 2025, reflecting both the growing visibility of the journal and the expanding global interest in research on English language studies. While this growth is encouraging, it has also brought new and complex challenges for editorial practice.

One of the most pressing issues we have encountered concerns the prevalence of AI-generated and AI-paraphrased content in submitted manuscripts. In many cases, the levels detected go well beyond what could reasonably be attributed to false positives or limited language editing. This is not a problem unique to *jSEL*, but one that academic publishing as a whole is currently grappling with. For editorial teams, it raises difficult questions: how to protect scholarly integrity without adopting an accusatory stance toward authors, how to distinguish legitimate support tools from inappropriate content generation, and how to ensure fairness and transparency in decision-making. These tensions have become an unavoidable part of contemporary academic gatekeeping, and they demand careful, principled responses rather than reactive ones. Accordingly, this issue brings together a set of studies that resists speed, automation, and shortcutting, and instead foregrounds sustained scholarly engagement.

The first paper addresses the growing importance of learner beliefs in shaping language learning and classroom interaction. Phakhawadee Chaisiri and Chayachon Chuanon (Khon Kaen University, Thailand) examine this issue in “Promoting Growth Language Mindsets and Willingness to Communicate: A Six-Step Instructional Model in a Thai EFL Course.” The study is timely for English language studies, where affective and psychological factors are increasingly recognised as central to communicative development rather than peripheral concerns. By proposing a structured instructional model, the paper contributes practical insight into how mindset-oriented pedagogy can be embedded within EFL classroom practice.

The second paper speaks to a growing need to understand international student mobility beyond traditional English-dominant destinations. Xinrui Wang and Sirirat Na Ranong (Thammasat University, Thailand) examine this issue in “Chinese Students’ Intercultural Academic Adaptation at a Thai University.” By focusing on Chinese students’ academic experiences in a non-Western context, the study broadens intercultural research in English language studies and challenges assumptions derived from Anglophone settings. The findings offer a nuanced account of how material, social, and subjective dimensions interact in shaping academic adaptation, with implications for institutional support and teaching practice.

The third paper addresses ongoing debates about the role of multilingual practices in EFL classrooms. Warangrut Duangsaeng and Saneh Thongrin (Thammasat University, Thailand) explore this issue in “Translanguaging in Practice: Insights from a Thai University EFL Classroom.” By shifting attention from attitudes to actual classroom practices, the study contributes empirical depth to translanguaging research in English language studies. Its findings highlight how flexible language use can support comprehension, participation, and learner confidence, while also raising important considerations for teacher preparation and institutional language policy.

The fourth paper turns attention to the often overlooked working conditions of online and home-based ESL teachers. Ariel Ramos (Cebu Technological University, Philippines) examines this issue in “Through Their Lenses: A Photovoice Exploration of Online and Home-Based ESL Teachers’ Pitfalls in the Philippines.” By adopting a critical realist perspective and a participatory visual methodology, the study foregrounds teachers’ lived experiences rather than institutional narratives. The findings highlight structural pressures shaping online ESL work and underscore the need for more sustainable and context-sensitive support systems in English language education.

The fifth paper addresses growing concern about the psychological demands of English-medium instruction in professional and disciplinary contexts. Nguyen Huu Hoang (Academy of Journalism and Communication, Vietnam) examines these issues in “English-Medium Instruction Motivation and Anxiety in Business Administration: A Mixed-Methods Study at a Vietnamese University.” By tracing changes in motivation and anxiety over time, the study highlights how EMI experiences in business education differ from more general academic settings. The findings underscore the need for discipline-sensitive EMI policies that attend to the intersecting pressures of language use, content learning, and professional identity formation.

The sixth paper returns to core theoretical questions in translation studies, focusing on how key concepts are defined and operationalised in local research traditions. In “Exploring Literal Translation as a Source-Text Oriented Translation Strategy from the View of the Thai Target Language,” Wiriya Inphen (Thammasat University, Thailand) examines how the notion of literal translation has been used and interpreted in Thai scholarship. By systematically reviewing prior studies and grounding the analysis in the concept of translation equivalence, the paper brings greater conceptual clarity to a term that is often used loosely. The study contributes to more precise theorisation of translation strategies and highlights the importance of definitional rigor in translation research.

The seventh paper contributes to ongoing methodological discussions in applied linguistics, particularly around how to capture change and development over time. Junlong Li, Heath Rose, and Nana Jin (University of Oxford, United Kingdom; Shenzhen University, China) address this challenge in “Incorporating Visualisation in Qualitative Retrospective Interviews to Elucidate Temporality: A Methodological Illustration of L2 Motivational Dynamics.” Responding to limitations of retrospective interviews, the study demonstrates how visualisation tasks can support learners’ reflection on motivational trajectories. The paper offers a practical methodological blueprint for researchers interested in temporality, motivation, and dynamic perspectives on second language learning.

Looking ahead to 2026, JSEL will implement clearer and more explicit policies regarding the use of generative AI in manuscript preparation, while maintaining a zero-tolerance stance toward AI-generated content that compromises authorship, originality, and scholarly accountability. At the same time, the patterns we have observed across this year’s submissions suggest a strong preference for straightforward survey-based designs, sometimes used with limited samples or in ways that constrain what the findings can meaningfully show. Survey-based studies continue to have value, but the field also benefits from work that pushes beyond descriptive confirmation of well-established patterns. We therefore call for more submissions that engage more thoughtfully with innovative methods, richer data sources, and theoretically grounded analyses that offer genuine conceptual or empirical advancement. It is through such work that the field—and the journal—can continue to move forward.

Neil Bowen
Editor-in-Chief