

Welcome to our first 2025 issue, in which we continue to support diversity both within and across cultural borders. We continue to use dialogic non-blind review and to encourage a strong first-person authorial voice as a major priority of our core editorial principles. We encourage transparency and ask authors to avoid spurious claims of untenable notions such as 'objectivity'. Nunn et al, 2018 provide a detailed rationale for this in Transparency, Subjectivity and Objectivity in Academic Texts.

(<http://www.englishscholarsbeyondborders.org/esbb-journal-publications/english-scholarship-beyond-border-volume-4-issue-2018/>). This is closely connected to the use of the first person to take responsibility for all actions of the researcher/authors, and in my experience of editing the journal appears to lead to more realistic claims being made by authors when reporting their own actions as researchers transparently.

In our first paper, *The Cross-Cultural VR 3D Painting Initiative at HungKuang University: A Pilot Study on a General Education Course via Curation and VR Creation*, Gloria Shu Mei Chwo and Benedict Yu form a very interesting partnership from different disciplines. They report a groundbreaking project combining the expertise of an ESL expert with that of an expert in VR painting. They report benefits which are not only linguistic, but also artistic and intercultural.

The perception of a global mental health crisis has become a common factor in educational discussion. In *The Impact of Reflective Journaling on Student Well-being: A Case Study*, Ji Young Shim, Adrian Matt Zytoskee, & Bushra Khaliq Khan provide a very innovative approach that certainly succeeds in their context, and which is potentially translatable to all other contexts, given that it is holistic and context sensitive. They explored the effectiveness of reflective journaling in supporting student well-being in a first-year composition course. Their study breaks new ground in that it integrates practices from composition studies, medical education, and psychology with obvious benefits to students. More holistic approach to writing studies, and probably other disciplines as well, are clearly beneficial.

In another innovative and underexplored research area (in creative writing), *Employing Animated Film as a Mentor Text: A Creative Writing Perspective*, Baker, El-Sakran and Guzman-Cabrera describe a creative writing project using animated films to support student authors. Interestingly, we can perhaps assume that this approach resonates across cultural contexts as this project is a collaboration across three countries. ESBB is a strong advocate of this kind of border crossing among teachers and researchers. The project provides a context-sensitive balance between guided and free writing which might vary when translated elsewhere.

In a study on the attitudes of university majors in Social Sciences and Humanities, *Students' Attitudes toward Translanguaging Practice in EFL Classrooms in Vietnam*, Phan Thi Ngoc Le used a mixed-method approach. She reports that students had a positive attitude towards translanguaging in emotional, social, cognitive, and managerial engagement. It is well-known that this approach will make students feel more comfortable. Her finding that the mother tongue has a beneficial role in fostering the teaching and learning process is of interest to those wondering about adopting this approach in an age where English Medium Education is frequently being adopted.

In *Variances in Faculty and Student Perceptions Regarding the Integration of ChatGPT in Higher Education*, EL-Sakran and Ahmed make an interesting contribution to an increasingly common research topic, the use of AI in education. They identified a significant difference of perceptions between faculty

and students. It is perhaps no surprise that students are more supportive than faculty. They also noticed relational mistrust between faculty and students. They conclude that faculty need to become more technologically competent to be able to engage effectively to foster responsible and informed use. Expecting students not to use it is unrealistic.

Hendrikus Male in *Exploring Students' Attitudes towards Bilingual Classroom Instruction* investigates the impact of bilingual instruction on undergraduate students' learning. The students interviewed were positive about bilingual instruction finding it useful for understanding complex concepts. As in the translanguaging paper in this issue, the use of the mother tongue was said to boost confidence. Drawback appeared to be possible cognitive overload due to code switching. However, I also identified challenges, such as cognitive load due to frequent language switching and varying levels of language proficiency among students. Bilingual instruction also appeared to foster cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills.