



EDITORIAL

It is our privilege to publish volume 20.1 of the New English Teacher (NET) journal, which is currently indexed in SCOPUS, ACI and TCI. NET has always striven to present its readership with both theoretical and pedagogical ideas on current issues in ELT. The journal publishes two issues annually and aims at publishing articles on a wide range of topics relevant to current ELT enquiry. This includes second and foreign language learning and teaching materials development, curriculum design and development and professional development, language testing and assessment, language program evaluation, identities in second and foreign language learning and teaching, critical pedagogy, and teacher training and professional development. NET welcomes submissions in three categories: research articles, academic articles, and book reviews.

In a period marked by rapid digital transformation, evolving learner needs, and increasing pressure on higher education systems to demonstrate relevance and impact, English language teaching and research are being reshaped in profound ways. The articles in this issue collectively respond to these realities by offering empirically grounded insights into curriculum design, digital pedagogy, assessment practices, teacher development, and learner engagement across diverse Asian EFL contexts.

To begin with, this issue opens with a CEFR-based evaluation of a B1-level ELT textbook used in Thai tertiary education by Rachnee, Niwat, and Siriluck. This study provides an important foundation for the issue by demonstrating how international proficiency frameworks are localized in real classrooms. While the textbook is shown to support communicative language teaching and B1-level progression, the authors also draw attention to persistent challenges such as content overload, limited recycling, and uneven cultural representation—issues that resonate strongly with curriculum planners and teachers across the region.

Building on this curricular focus, Asha, Faizah, and Laura's article shifts attention to assessment by examining the relationship between formative assessments and final examination scores in an advanced grammar course. Using data from nearly 300 undergraduates across two programmes and cohorts, this study highlights how portfolios, reflective writing, quizzes, and oral presentations function differently in predicting learning outcomes. Notably, the inconsistent role of oral presentations across cohorts raises critical questions about task design and assessment validity.

Next, the focus moves from assessment to pedagogy through a qualitative investigation of social constructivism and Visible Thinking in virtual drama classrooms in Malaysia. This study by Zaamah, Laura, and Jebakumari illustrates how online learning environments, often seen as limiting, can be transformed into interactive and student-centred spaces through structured thinking routines and collaborative drama activities. Despite technical constraints, the findings show how lecturers facilitate meaningful engagement and cognitive development.

Turning from classroom interaction to programme-level evaluation, the fourth article by Nantikarn, Monthon, Rungsima, and Preechaya presents a needs analysis of an MA in ELT curriculum in Thailand. By comparing the perceptions of current students and alumni, the study not only confirms

the programme's strengths but also identifies future risks such as technological disruption and shifting educational policies. This contribution extends the issue's discussion beyond individual courses to the sustainability of higher education programmes.

Alongside this, two studies examine how digital technologies reshape language learning. Treenuch, Tatchakrit, and Noor's RPG-based learning study first demonstrates how gamified online environments can increase learner motivation, autonomy, and engagement, even as technical barriers and differing gaming literacies remain challenges. Similarly, the Chaoxing-based flipped classroom study by Shimeng Pan, Changhan Li, and Lu Zhu in China shows how a digital platform can significantly enhance students' critical thinking, particularly in analysis and inference, while also identifying the need for more targeted instructional support for evaluation and explanation skills.

At the same time, digital innovation is also explored in a Thai business English context through a study on digital game-based learning for vocabulary development. By combining experimental data with learner reflections, Umaporn and Kittitouch confirm that game-based tools can support vocabulary growth, learner enjoyment, and self-directed learning beyond the classroom.

Moving from technology to human factors, Patsawut Sukserm's article applies exploratory factor analysis to identify what Thai university students perceive as the attributes of effective English teachers. The five-factor model—including instructional competence, learner-centred adaptability, and teacher well-being—provides a valuable empirical framework for professional development and institutional evaluation.

In a related vein, teachers' voices are foregrounded in the study by Hathaichanok Komintarachat and Chutamas Sundrarajun on the balance between grammar and communication skills in the EFL curriculum. While grammar remains dominant due to assessment pressures and parental expectations, teachers clearly recognize the importance of communicative competence, pointing to the urgent need for curriculum and assessment reform.

Meanwhile, the effective and creative dimensions of language learning are addressed in the study on drama-based reading instruction by Ratchadaporn. This research demonstrates that while students generally respond positively to learning through drama, careful task design is essential to prevent cognitive overload and frustration.

Finally, the issue returns to learner autonomy and self-regulation through the study on genre-based self-regulated learning for speaking by Pearlada and Kasma. By integrating genre awareness with learner-controlled strategies, this classroom-based research shows how Thai EFL students can become more confident, independent, and effective speakers.

Ahmad Syairofi and Emi Emilia complement these empirical contributions in the book review of *Metacognition in Language Teaching* by Mark Feng Teng offers a timely theoretical lens through which to interpret many of the studies in this issue. The emphasis on strategic awareness and self-regulated learning echoes the broader pedagogical shift toward empowering learners in complex learning environments.

Taken together, the articles in this issue demonstrate that contemporary ELT research in Asia is increasingly interconnected—linking curriculum, assessment, technology, pedagogy, and teacher development into a coherent and forward-looking research agenda. We hope this issue will serve not only as a record of current scholarship but also as a catalyst for further innovation and dialogue in English language education.

We, the editorial team, sincerely appreciate your interest in our journal and anticipate receiving your academic work for publication in future editions. Thank you very much for your future contributions to the NET Journal.

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