



## Editorial

*e-FLT* kicks off Volume 7, marking the seventh year of its existence, with the simultaneous publication of this issue (No. 1) as well as its Annual Supplement on the Teaching and Learning of Asian Languages (Suppl. 1). Not only do the articles in this issue originate from six different countries around the globe, namely Canada, Malaysia, Colombia, Austria, Thailand and Australia; the range of languages covered in the articles – English, Spanish, Russian and Japanese – provides a fine reflection of our journal's determination to look beyond the much-researched ESL or EFL classroom and encourage a greater interest in the teaching of other languages.

The first article of this issue, by John L. Plews, Yvonne Breckenridge and Maria-Carolina Cambre, recounts and interprets the experiences and professional growth of Mexican foreign language teachers who participated as Spanish language monitors in a Canadian professional development programme. The study employs a narrative-based interpretive approach to analyse and frame their report and discussion of the results. Such an approach, as the authors argue, is better suited for the examination of more social, personal and psychological dimensions of language teaching.

In the second article, Larisa Nikitina describes a student project in which learners of Russian as a foreign language at a Malaysian university created digital videos in the target language on topics of their choice. The article provides an account of the project's underlying pedagogical principles, based on the constructivist paradigm to learning, its implementation, students' output, and their evaluation of the project.

The third article by Julio César Gómez, a contribution from Colombia, investigates if structured reading classes intended to encourage the development of high order skills can help enhance students' critical thinking ability. Using an experimental design with a control and an experiment group, the study did not reveal any significant improvements in the critical thinking skills of the experimental group relative to the control group's performance.

Following this, in the fourth article, Hans Platzer reports on a study which examines the English language exit standard for Austrian upper secondary school leavers. Placement tests conducted at three Austrian tertiary institutions reveal that this exit standard, set by educational authorities, is not attainable by the majority of school leavers. The author thus calls for the re-examination and revision of Austrian educational standards for English at the upper secondary level.

In the fifth article, Attapol Khamkhien investigates the language learning strategy use of Thai and Vietnamese learners of English as a foreign language, focusing in particular on the relationship between three variables – gender, motivation and English learning experience – and learning strategy use. One of the main conclusions from the study is that, of the three variables, motivation has the most significant bearing on the students' choice of strategies.

In the last full article of this issue, Masato Takimoto and Hiroko Hashimoto make a case for the use of interpreting and translation in the teaching of a second/foreign language. Drawing from evaluative data collected from students of an Australian university who took an advanced Japanese course based on the theoretical framework of Intercultural Language Teaching, the authors argue that interpreting and translation tasks can encourage greater 'intercultural exploration,' a higher level of learner participation and interactions, and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Up-to-date and progressive learning materials and textbooks for Southeast Asian languages are comparatively rare compared to those available for English and other more commonly taught languages like French, German or Japanese. The University of Wisconsin's efforts to produce Thai readers for foreign language learners therefore represent significant new developments in the teaching of Southeast Asian languages. A team of reviewers led by Adisorn Prathoomthin critical-

ly appraises Volume 1 of the Wisconsin Thai Reader and examines its suitability for use in the classroom and as independent learning material.

Concluding this issue, Paul Chi Hong Lip reviews the book “Teacher Language Awareness” by Stephen Andrews, which is targeted at pre-service and in-service language teachers with a desire to understand the developmental process of acquiring and using language, particularly in the teaching of grammar.

We thank you for your interest in *e*-FLT and look forward to your continued support, feedback and submissions.

Wai Meng Chan  
Editor