Editorial

I am delighted to present this issue of the e-FLT which reflects the growing reach and impact of our journal within the academic community. The impressive number of submissions received and the diversity of our contributors with submissions coming from a broad spectrum of countries around the globe are a testament to the journal's wide readership, and the trust scholars place in us as a platform for disseminating their research.

In the first article, **Massomeh Estaji** and **Pegah Ghashghaie Nezhad** examined Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding speaking assessment, comparing novice and experienced teachers. In this phenomenological study, data were collected through semi-structured panel discussions with eight teachers from private institutes in Isfahan Province, selected using purposive sampling. Findings revealed that both teacher groups valued authentic tasks like story-telling, but for experienced teachers, pronunciation was the first concern, while novice teachers prioritized vocabulary knowledge. Both groups acknowledged the value of self-assessment but saw peer assessment as unsuitable for evaluating speaking. The study highlights differences in assessment approaches between novice and experienced teachers, suggesting a need for targeted professional development to improve assessment literacy in EFL contexts.

In the second article, **Eihab Abu-Rabiah** explored how cognates, false cognates (FCs), and non-cognate translation equivalents (NCTEs) affect Arabic-speaking learners' recognition of Hebrew words. Hebrew and Arabic share roots yet employ distinct orthographic systems. A total of 23 intermediate Arabic-speaking students were tested twice over a year on translating Hebrew words. Cognates were easiest to recognize due to sound and meaning similarity. While cognates resulted in the fewest translation errors, FCs caused the most errors at first because of misleading phonological similarity without shared meaning. Over time, performance on FCs improved to match NCTEs. No significant overall improvement was found, likely due to limited language exposure outside school. The findings stress the value of highlighting cross-linguistic similarities in teaching. This study fills gaps about bilingual learning in related yet orthographically distinct languages. It suggests teaching strategies to better support vocabulary acquisition. Future research should expand word samples and learner levels.

In the third article, **Wen-Chi Hu** in her mixed-methods study utilized a pre-and post-test experimental design to explore how integrating a crowdfunding video task into Business English courses affected EFL students' TOEIC scores. A total of 86 sophomore students participated, with the experimental group creating crowdfunding videos using task-based learning (TBL), while the control group followed traditional methods. The experimental group showed significant TOEIC improvements, demonstrating the task's effectiveness in boosting language skills. Students valued the task for enhancing communication, creativity, teamwork, and business vocabulary. The study highlighted how combining entrepreneurial activities with language learning prepares students for real-world business challenges. Despite limitations like sample size, findings support using authentic, collaborative tasks to improve English proficiency and 21st-century skills. Future research should investigate long-term impacts and refine task designs.

In the fourth article, **Loïc Renoud** presents a four-week instructional programme and research design for teaching French determiners, specifically the partitive, indefinite, definite articles, and demonstrative determiners, to university students in Japan. The study begins by analyzing how these determiners are taught in four popular textbooks, highlighting that they are often shown out of context and that their presentation relies heavily on translation and morphosyntactic rather than func-

tional equivalence. The article then introduces new teaching materials and methods inspired by Concept-based Language Instruction and Peircean semiotics, emphasizing the connection between the sign, its meaning, and its use. The experimental approach involves learners verbalizing their understanding and applying it to analyze determiner use within short video conversations to bridge grammatical explanations with real use.

In the fifth article, **Robert Wood** examined how teacher-student relationships affect Local English Teachers' (LETs) professional identities at a Chinese university. Using mixed methods, he collected questionnaires from students and teachers and conducted focus group discussion with LETs. Findings reveal a paradox: teachers value closeness with students but also seek distance due to emotional stress. Teacher identities are influenced by recognition from students, colleagues, and institutions, impacting their well-being. Teachers vary in balancing social engagement and professionalism, reflecting personal preferences and identity conflicts. The research highlights the complex dynamics shaping teacher identities and calls for further studies including student perspectives over time. It advocates institutional support and socio-emotional training to promote healthier relationships. Encouraging teacher self-reflection aids professional growth and reduces burnout. Recognition in relationships is crucial for fostering stable, sustainable teacher identities in EFL contexts.

In the sixth article, **Abdulrahman Hezam** and **Rian Mahyoub** explored challenges faced by Yemeni EFL teachers delivering online education amid conflict. A survey of 70 teachers revealed major barriers such as unreliable internet, limited device access, and weak institutional support. Despite these, teachers showed resilience through self-directed learning. The effectiveness of tools like Zoom and WhatsApp was mixed, influenced by infrastructure and digital literacy. Teachers held positive views on technology but emphasized the need for better training and resources. Economic, cultural, and security factors also affected technology adoption. Recommendations include international partnerships, increased funding, and sustainable professional development to enhance EFL instruction. The study offers valuable insights for policymakers to improve education during crises. Limitations include a small sample and self-reported data, indicating a need for broader research. Overall, it highlights the potential and constraints of technology in conflict-affected education.

In the seventh article, **Arining Indrasari Ahdi**, **Nur Arifah Drajati** and **Kristian Adi Putra** examined how 35 Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers developed creative thinking through digital storytelling in a 16-week course. Data from narrative frames, interviews, and digital story artifacts reveal the use of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration, which reflect participants' creative thinking. Participants generated diverse ideas, incorporated multimedia, and embraced feedback to improve their stories. The study highlights how digital storytelling, as a technology tool, fosters participants' creativity. Findings suggest that integrating digital storytelling in teacher education equips pre-service teachers with the creative skills needed for future classroom practice. Participants created original narratives without relying on AI tools. A qualitative narrative inquiry and thematic analysis were used. Limitations include a convenience sample and qualitative focus, urging mixed-method future research. Policymakers are encouraged to embed creative learning and "creativity zones" in schools. These strategies aim to boost students' critical thinking, creative thinking, and innovation.

In the eighth article, **Bitsol Kim**, **Hyeyun Jeong**, **Changkyung Song** and **Hojung Kim** investigated Korean learners' understanding of relative clause endings "-ten," "-essten," and "-(u)n" and their interaction with lexical aspects. A total of 69 learners and 31 native speakers completed three types of Grammaticality Judgment Tests (GJT) and a Self-Paced Reading Test (SPRT). Even advanced learners struggle to distinguish these endings, especially "-ten" vs. "-(u)n." Learners show better accuracy with "-ten" and "-essten," but implicit knowledge remains limited. Lexical aspect influences learner performance, with native speakers outperforming learners. Results reveal uneven acquisition and processing difficulties, highlighting the complex aspectual meanings. The study recommends explicit instruction focusing on distinctions and aspectual meanings. Teaching should target problematic verb combinations, as lexical aspect appears to influence the acquisition of relative clause endings. Future studies should include broader learner populations and more diverse predicates.

In the ninth and last article, **Qiongzhu Chen** looked at language learning strategies (LLS) use among non-English majors at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in China, focusing on gender and English proficiency. Data from 94 students' SILL questionnaires and interviews with 8 participants showed medium overall strategy use, with compensation strategies most common and affective strategies least. Female students used LLS more frequently, particularly cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. All strategy types correlated positively with proficiency, with cognitive strategies as the strongest predictor. Interviews confirmed these results and emphasized the role of learner awareness. The study highlights the benefits of systematic LLS instruction to boost autonomy and proficiency. The study recommends learner-centered teaching and strategy training tailored by gender and proficiency to improve English learning. The findings support enhancing cognitive and social strategy use in Chinese tertiary education. Limitations include sample imbalance and reliance on self-reports. Future research should use diverse methods and explore other influencing factors.

My special thanks go primarily to the authors for their valuable contributions, and to everyone involved in making the publication of this issue possible. Their collective efforts and support have been essential in bringing this work to fruition. We remain fully committed to publishing rigorous and high-quality research and we eagerly anticipate receiving further contributions from scholars worldwide.

Omar Salawdeh
Editor-in-Chief