

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Volume 11 marks a new age for AJELS.

With this volume, we happily launch a new look of the now decade-old Journal of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) – Department of English. The navy-blue color, which is linked to trust and stability, strengthens the identification of AJELS with its institutional birthplace, the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters. Besides this change in form, the substance of this volume also celebrates diversity in the kind of scholarly outputs featured and the themes that weave the published works into a unified message.

Whereas research articles have been the staple content of the previous releases, Volume 11 also publishes a review article, a brief report, a book review, and a critical essay. These unique contributions offer a more nuanced conversation on topics of interest. Representing voices mostly from the Philippines but also from Singapore and the US, the articles in the current issue contribute to the discourse of gender and inclusivity, language use and multilingualism, and literacy and education.

Questions exploring language and gender inclusivity are taken up in novel ways—a brief report, a book review, and a critical essay. These contributions examine important issues of intersectionality.

In their brief report titled, “**Addressing the Need for Asian Critical Language Awareness for Asian American Female Faculty,**” *Nirmla Griarte Flores* and *L. Erika Saito* explore the intersection of gender, race, and language awareness. Applying collaborative autoethnography, they critically reflect on their experiences as female faculty of color teaching literacy and language in the US. Through the lens of critical language awareness, they reveal some of the little-known challenges and successes of Asian women in their career trajectory as language teachers in migration contexts. Among the important themes foregrounded in their report is the interconnection of identities, ideologies, herstories, and hierarchy of powers, which invite further investigation.

The notion of intersectionality, specifically the ways that identity positionings overlap with power relations, is also highlighted in *Pauline Lim*'s review of the book “**Intersectional Perspectives on LGBTQ+ Issues in Modern Language Teaching and Learning**” edited by **Paiz and Coda**. *Lim* underscores the core themes that permeate the nine chapters of the 2021 publication, which includes how intersectionality leads to marginalization, such as experienced by LGBTQ+ language learners and teachers. Driving this point, the review highlights sections of the book that critically examine LGBTQ+ learners' experiences of oppression and resistance in the language classroom and language teachers' strategies for more inclusive instruction.

The need for a more concrete commitment to gender inclusivity in the classroom is more pointedly and practically articulated in the critical essay by *Veronico Tarrayo* titled “**Blending words and world.**” In this thought piece, he synthesizes the promises, practices, and predicaments linked to the integration of gender perspectives in English language teaching

(ELT) in the Philippines. Among other things, he mentions how the strongly Catholic identity of education institutions in the country present distinct challenges and opportunities to transcend traditional narratives around gender, toward growing a broader sense of empathy and valuing of diversity in the classroom. As Tarrayo thoughtfully put, “overcoming [the] challenges [of integrating gender fair language in the English language classroom] requires a thoughtful and localized approach that considers the cultural nuances of the Philippines.”

The context of the Philippines is also focused in three research articles that explore language use and multilingualism in the domains of news reporting, political speech, and schoolscales.

In “**Linguistic representation of the Philippine war-on-drug victims in online news report,**” *Josephine Alarcon* and *Rachelle Lintao* examine the linguistic devices used to represent drug war victims positively and negatively in news articles published online. Using Jeffries’ critical stylistics framework, their findings have practical implications for journalistic reporting.

Applying the same framework, *Kreisler Fontamillas* and *Joram Kim Corcuera* turn our attention to women’s political discourse, which remains underexplored. In the article “**The privilege speeches of Senator Grace Poe,**” they apply critical stylistics and Halliday’s transitivity framework in analyzing how a female Filipino senator texturizes language to express reality, reflect ideology, and achieve communicative purpose. The study serves as a linguistic case study of political discourse created by Filipino women legislators.

Then, focusing on signs in the environment of a top Philippine university, *Jean Reintegrado-Celino* and *Alejandro Bernardo* explore the dominant functions and ideologies reflected in the school’s linguistic landscape. In “**From signage to language ideologies,**” they use mixed methods to analyze the function and ideological underpinnings of signs in the schoolscape of a comprehensive university. They argue that beyond serving informational function, the language of the signs, which is predominantly English, reflect important language ideologies of school stakeholders.

Finally, two articles in this volume invite us to (re)enter the ELT classroom to closely examine challenges, practices, and opportunities in the teaching and acquisition of literacies.

In “**How mind-body-world ecologies work,**” *Cheung Yin Ling* methodically examines teacher-student interactions in the Grade 4 writing classes in a Singapore-based school. Through multimodal interaction and conversation analyses, the study demonstrates how multimodal resources in writing classes, such as teachers’ gestures, body movements, eye gazes, and drawings, contribute to an engaging participation framework and help foster a positive experience in writing composition classes.

Shifting our focus to the increasingly relevant but less understood viewing skill, *Nadia Santos* and *Razel Paglinawan*’s review article “**Curriculum and classroom challenges in teaching viewing comprehension skills to high school students**” takes a qualitative meta-analysis approach in examining studies about the teaching and learning of viewing comprehension. This literature review helps identify methods and materials toward a more productive, level-

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appropriate, and differentiated delivery of viewing comprehension instruction for high school students.

While enlarging different issues and contexts of English language use, the eight articles in Volume 11 echo the challenge of seeing with fresh eyes language and the world it shapes and in turn shapes it. Embracing this challenge, AJELS continues to explore ways to expand its horizon with the hope to release not one but two issues every year, beginning with Volume 12. The plan is to release a regular issue in June 2024 and a special issue in December 2024. The special issue (to be guest edited by Dr KC Lee and Dr Misty Cook of National University of Singapore) will focus on Generative AI Tools and ELT. We invite you to check out the next call for papers in the AJELS website. But first, please enjoy engaging with the fresh form and substance of Volume 11.

The good you will take from this volume is no little thanks to the beautiful human beings who generously helped put it together: Ms Josephine Alarcon, Ms Elisa Ang, Dr Dario Banegas, Dr Roger Barnard, Ms Ana De Guzman, Dr Robin De Los Reyes, Dr Dianne Dekker, Ms Michelle Desierto, Dr Francis Dumanig, Dr Maan Gaerlan, Mr Wilfred Gapas, Dr Raquel Jimenez, Dr KC Lee, Mx Ferdie Lopez, Dr Rosalyn Mirasol, Dr Andrew Moody, Dr R. Dian Dia-an Muniroh, Dr Madiha Neelam, Dr Anita Pu, Dr Willy Renandya, Dr Jun Santiago, Dr Supong Tangkiengsirisin, Dr Veronico Tarrayo, Ms Katrina Topacio, Ms Kristina Valerio, Dr. Aiden Yeh, Dr Catherine Young, Dr Shaomin Zhang. The members of the editorial board, the editorial staff, and the international advisory board also have my deep gratitude for their help and trust.

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