

Editorial



<https://doi.org/10.52696/SWPW4248>

Reprints and permission:
The Malaysian English Language Teaching Association

✉ Azlin Zaiti Zainal azlinzainal@um.edu.my
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0149-9742>

ELT Materials and Methods in the Digital Age

Azlin Zaiti Zainal

Faculty of Languages and Linguistics
Universiti Malaya

Materials and methods in English Language Teaching (ELT) predominantly depended on conventional textbooks and visual aids. In the 21st century, the discourse around ELT materials and methods has progressively transitioned to non-traditional approaches, where the integration of multimodal digital texts and Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology is becoming standard practice. A central theme of this edition of *MaJER* (Volume 22, Issue 1) is the impact of technology on the engagement with ELT materials. A pertinent question is whether interaction with new technologies has resulted in significant changes to methodologies. Although traditional materials may continue to be relevant in contexts with restricted technological access, the incorporation of novel digital tools in ELT necessitates a deeper understanding of their effective application and the ways in which their integration facilitates innovative methodologies. Another focus of this issue is the role of English in instruction, which is a central to the topic of ELT materials especially where English serves as a *lingua franca*, extensively utilised for communication by non-native speakers of English. In such environments what constitutes standard English? Which variety should be used in communication and reading materials adopted in the classroom?

The first article, *Identifying EFL Students' Uses for AI Chatbots in Academic Writing*, examines the perceptions of university students in France regarding the role of AI. It aims to understand how students make decisions about incorporating AI chatbots into their writing; the article found that students preferred suggestions related to grammar and lexical choice, while changes that would affect their writing style or the meaning of their original ideas were less favoured.

The second article, *Chinese Postgraduates' Perceptions and Use of Standard English in EMI Courses at a Malaysian University*, found that students perceived standard English as diverse and not limited to the native speaker version and formal standard English remains the preferred choice for communication with lecturers.

The third article is titled *Content Selection Strategies in Vlogging: Analysing ESL Students' Decision-Making at Universiti Malaysia Sabah*. This article highlights that students' selection of content for their vlogging projects was influenced by a host of factors ranging from entertainment value to personal preferences.

The fourth article on *English Language Literature Component: Students' Perspective and Attitude Towards Malaysian Literary Texts*. The study found that Form 4 students perceived local literary texts positively. Several factors influenced these students' attitudes toward literary texts including cultural novelty.

The fifth article *Exploring the Influence of MMORPG in English Language Performance: Relating Game Features and Incidental Vocabulary Learning* advances our understanding of digital game features and informal learning. It demonstrates how engagement with MMORPG can enhance not only proficiency and vocabulary learning but also learner motivation.

The significance of new technologies in transforming conventional practices is underscored in some of the articles featured in this issue. We acknowledge the capacity of AI to offer personalized feedback to individual students' writing; however, this capability is contingent upon students' successful implementation of effective learning strategies, particularly self-directed learning, in improving their writing. Arguably, the use of AI in the classroom is also dependent on teachers' attitudes towards it as a tool of learning and how teachers can support learners in their use in the teaching of writing and to promote critical thinking.

We also note that the use of digital platforms, including social media and digital games, can enhance students' learning experience by allowing them to choose their materials and utilise the multimodal capabilities of these tools. Through collaborative project-based learning, students can engage in authentic content, produce creative outputs, and generate materials that are suitable for a real-world audience. Examining immersive learning experiences through digital games in informal language learning also provides us with an understanding of how learners can acquire new vocabulary and improve their overall English language proficiency while engaged in digital play.

This issue also highlights the significance of English in different domains of application, particularly when non-native university students use it as a lingua franca in an EMI context. Furthermore, this issue, while focused on digital technologies, also emphasises the potential of traditional materials, such as physical reading texts. Literary texts can provide ESL with new contexts and enhance the overall learning experience, and it is important to gather students' views on different texts (for example texts written by local writers or texts written by native speakers) to understand how they can learn from them. MaJER welcomes submissions that enhance our comprehension of how various materials can improve current teaching methods, whether they are in the form of digital technology or traditional physical resources.

Dr. Azlin Zaiti Zainal

Editor-in-Chief

Malaysian Journal of ELT Research (MaJER)

MELTA Malaysia