Studies of Applied Linguistics in Asia
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Editorial

The Inaugural Introduction of the International Journal: *Studies of Applied Linguistics in Asia*

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Studies of applied linguistics in different academic areas have become increasingly in demand, as the discipline of applied linguistics penetrates so many aspects of sciences, social sciences and humanities, and, geographically, applied linguistics develops in different regions of the worlds. This international journal of *Studies of Applied Linguistics in Asia* (*SALA*) is established to fill the gap that there are fewer specialist academic journals focusing on applied linguistics which reports research in Asia or publishes studies about Asian participants, language learners or teachers and other professionals of interest to researchers globally.

The objectives of *SALA* are to serve as a leading platform for disseminating cutting-edge research and innovative practices in applied linguistics with a focus on the diverse linguistic, cultural, and educational landscapes of Asia and Asian professionals in global contexts. Traditionally applied linguistic studies tend to focus on first and foreign/second language, acquisition, learning and teaching, practices and practitioners in business, education and medical and other professional fields. With AI developments, the penetration of AI involvement in traditional areas of applied linguistics becomes one of many emerging areas in applied linguistics. Thus, this newly established journal welcomes high-quality original research papers and review articles that address a wide range of topics in applied linguistics (AL), including but not limited to:

- English Language Teaching (ELT) in Asia
- Teaching other Foreign or Second Languages in Asia
- Second Language Acquisition (SLA)
- Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning (AI, VR, mobile learning, social media, corpus-based approaches, etc.)
- Intercultural Communication Competence
- Applied Linguistics and Linguistic Applications
- Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Appliable Linguistics
- Translation and Interpretation Studies
- Ecolinguistics
- Language Planning and Policy (LPP)
- Language Use in Professional Settings (Healthcare, Law, Media, Business, Live Streaming Sales)
- Language research in Special Educational Needs
- Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), including EAP, ESP, and EMI
- Metaphor and Narrative Analyses
- Clinical linguistics
- Forensic linguistics
- AI applications in language use and creation

The editors for this journal aim to disseminate research findings from applied linguists in Asia and the rest of the world reporting their research outcomes on the themes above. The types of papers *SALA* welcomes include specially invited papers (featured articles), empirically reported research papers, research topic review papers and book review papers. The launch of this journal provides another venue for researchers to discuss and debate critical theoretical issues and practical concerns in applied linguistics.

This inaugural issue itself is an example of showing the diverse and broad range of research under the discipline of applied linguistics. This issue includes nine papers, among which two are featured papers, six are research articles and one is a book review. In this collection, papers have covered areas of first, second or foreign language learning research from pre-school learners to university students. The two featured papers present the role and development of TESOL in applied linguistics, and intercultural communication in the aspect of building rapport management in international business/official contexts. In addition, there is a heathy variety of other topics

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including Hakka as a first language used in multilingual contexts and its identity sustainability; the development and validation devices for assessing the beliefs and attitudes of Chinese parents and pre-school learners towards English learning; a study of pedagogical metalanguage construction through visual grammar employed in English textbooks used by Chinese senior-high schools; the research on the intercultural communication competence development of Chinese high school learners over a four week study-abroad programme. This issue then moves on to two papers on the learning of Portuguese as a foreign/second language in Macau, where the first paper focuses on the use of the lexicultural analysis for teaching the language through literature; and the second is a pedagogical application of language teaching methods using an authentic Portuguese environment. The final article is a book review, covering the topic of clinical linguistics.

In more detail, the first paper by Professor Jun Liu, a co-editor-in-chief of *SALA*, and co-author Dr. Rining Wei offer a study of TESOL in the discipline of applied linguistics with the title of *The Case of TESOL in Applied Linguistics*. It examines the trends and tensions in TESOL, as well as how, over the years, TESOL has evolved both in becoming a professional workforce and organization and becoming a rich resource for research into the teaching and learning of additional languages beyond English. TESOL has grown into an interdisciplinary / multi-disciplinary research field and an established profession. This examination provides evidence showing the development directions of current and future TESOL fields.

The second specially invited paper is provided by Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey and Dr. Jiayi Wang. Their work on Communication Strategies for Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relations: A Sino-American Case Study of Rapport and 'Politeness' focuses on intercultural communication from the perspective of the pragmatics of rapport building and maintenance between senior Chinese government officials and American hosts while in the USA for three weeks. The research recommends the importance of intercultural communication competence for successful rapport building and achieving the visit objectives.

A multidimensional study to examine the dialect diversity of the Hakka language in the translanguaging context is revealed in the paper entitled *A Critical Analysis on the Revival of Hakka Diversity* by Chen and Cortazzi. This study employs both questionnaire and interview methods to explore issues of Hakka language use, speakers' attitudes and identity related to the survival of the language. This research proposes a pedagogical framework for a Hakka curriculum to revive the language use by raising metalinguistic awareness, enhancing multilingual competence and expanding linguistic repertoires based on their research findings.

Qingyun Li, Kimberley Kong, and Qian Li present their research entitled Development and Validation of a Parent Belief and Preschoolers' Attitudes Questionnaire on Supporting Chinese Preschoolers' English as a Foreign Language Learning. Their objective is to design and validate a questionnaire which can evaluate attitudes of parents and preschool learners towards English language learning, their home literacy environment, including parental support for children. They authors have used several analytical tools, including Exploratory factor analysis (EFA), exploratory structural equation modelling (ESEM), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), to validate their questionnaire. Their article argues that this validated questionnaire can provide useful tool to understand parents' beliefs and the home learning environment which is needed for the effective learning of English by young learners.

The study of English textbooks used in Chinese senior-high schools is a long-standing research topic of concern for English teachers, textbook publishers and students. In their paper, *More than Meets the Eye: An Image-Text Meaning Construction of Contemporary Senior High School English Textbooks in China*, the authors, Yajing Zhou and Yanyi Liao, have adopted the theoretical concepts of visual grammar to analyse the pedagogical metalanguage constructed in the multimodal design of the selected textbooks and they show how both the images and the relevant language are designed to support learners' comprehension of the texts.

A Four-Week American High School Study Abroad Program's Impact on Chinese Students' Intercultural Competence and English Oral Proficiency, by Huang and Tian, is their study on intercultural competence in the oral English improvement by Chinese high school students as international sojourners for four weeks. The quantitative and qualitative data from the study reveals that participants have made intercultural communication (IC) progress even through four weeks of study abroad experiences. Their findings provide valuable advice for enhancing sojourners' IC competence and experience through the key elements expressed by the two acrostics of BRIDGE and SUPPORT. Their findings show how important it is to provide these elements within the learning environment before, during and after the sojourn to help with learners' cognitive, linguistic, affective, social and educational growth.

The paper by Romeu Foz, *Naming the Return: A Lexicultural Analysis of the Term "Retornado" in Portuguese Postcolonial Literature* gives a different dimension of applying linguistics, focusing on lexiculture, critical discourse analysis, and postcolonial studies related to the term 'Retornado' in three contemporary Portuguese postcolonial novels. The paper has provided a new angle of employing the lexiculture approach to teach teaching literature to learners who study Portuguese as a foreign or a second language in a Chinese context in Macau.

Dr. Pedro Miguel Branco Caeiro has presented his research entitled *Learning on the Ground—Taking Language and Culture Teaching Outside the Classroom*. This study explores how real language settings can enable Chinese learners of Portuguese as second language learners in

Macau to improve their classroom learning experience. This learning also includes the learning of target language cultures, using Macau, a multi-lingual and muti-cultural city, to provide ideal intercultural and multi-cultural learning contexts and an authentic linguistic environment. This is an example of task-based onsite learning for Chinese learners of Portuguese. The teachers involved have designed authentic language activities to train students in real language settings, scaffolding their learning progress. The study measures the learning progress over three years through task activities assessed linguistically and culturally. The findings significantly indicate enriched learning outcomes. This research suggests that in teaching a foreign/second language, no matter which target language, applied linguistics theories and techniques can be useful to give a positive learning outcome to the learners.

Ziming Wu's book review presents another aspect of applied linguistics study. The edited book, *Clinical Applications of Linguistics to Speech-Language Pathology: A Guide for Clinicians* by Gurevich & Grindrod (2022) puts a group of papers on clinical applications of Linguistics to Speech-Language Pathology as a practical handbook for speech and language practitioners. It covers a range of theoretical and practical guidelines using linguistic knowledge to deal with clinical language disorders in clients ranging from children to adult populations. This review gives some critical evaluation for future expansion of clinical applications.

The above vignettes of papers here reveal some of the diverse features of applied linguistics fields which could be closely focused in one small aspect of a problem or an issue for study and analysis; or on an apparently grand topic showing a network of many aspects to compose an integrated and holistic consideration of research. All in all, the main outcome—as in all applied linguistics—is to apply the research into pedagogical and theoretical problems encountered in language-related professions.

It is hoped that readers of this issue will be able to participate in future issues and debate the research findings from the published articles here so that we disseminate and apply our research findings in the real world to improve the quality of our professions and of daily life.

We welcome contributions from academics, researchers, language educators, policymakers, graduate students, and practitioners in applied linguistics and related fields.

We hope to see your contributions soon!

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Use of AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

No AI tools were utilized for this paper.