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International Conference on Humanities in Asia Pacific (ICHAP) 2025

**THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN LOCAL AND GLOBAL
IN THE HUMANITIES IN ASIA PACIFIC**

16 -17 OCT 2025

<https://ichap.usm.my>

Email : ichap.ppik@usm.my

MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION, UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA



Assalamualaikum wbt and Greetings to all.

It is my pleasure to welcome all participants to the Inaugural International Conference on Humanities in Asia Pacific or ICHAP 2025, hosted at the School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Whether you have travelled from near or far, or are joining us virtually from across the globe, your presence here reflects a shared commitment to the advancement of human knowledge, cultural understanding, and scholarly dialogue within and beyond our region.

This conference marks a significant milestone—not only for our university, but also for the broader academic community in the Asia Pacific. As we gather here for the very first time under the theme of “The Intersection Between Local and Global in the Humanities in Asia Pacific”, we celebrate not just the diversity of the humanities, but also the powerful role they play in helping us make sense of the complexities of our world—from history, literature, language, religion, philosophy, and the arts, to geography, translation, culture, and identity.

We live in a time that demands critical reflection and thoughtful engagement. The Asia Pacific region, with its rich cultural tapestry and dynamic social transformations, offers fertile ground for scholarly inquiry and interdisciplinary collaboration. This conference provides a timely platform for such dialogue—bringing together voices across borders, disciplines, and perspectives.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the organising committee, our academic partners, sponsors, and all those who have worked tirelessly to bring this vision to life. To our keynote and plenary speakers, we are excited to hear your insights. To our young scholars and students, may this conference inspire you to pursue bold ideas and meaningful research. And to all our participants, I encourage you to engage deeply, ask questions, share your work, and build lasting connections. May your time together be marked by intellectual generosity, spirited discussion, and a collective commitment to the values that underpin our shared humanity.

Thank you.

PROFESSOR DR. HABIBAH A WAHAB, FASc.
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation
Universiti Sains Malaysia

FOREWORD BY THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES



It is with great pride that we welcome you to the inaugural International Conference on Humanities in Asia Pacific (ICHAP 2025), organised by the Asia Pacific Research Unit (APRU) at the School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia. This landmark event marks a significant milestone in our collective commitment to advancing humanistic scholarship in a region defined by its cultural richness, historical complexity, and evolving global significance.

ICHAP 2025 emerges as a vital platform for dialogue, reflection, and collaboration across disciplines, institutions, and borders. In an age where local identities are continually shaped and sometimes challenged by global currents, the humanities play an indispensable role in making sense of these dynamic interactions. It is within this context that the conference theme, "The Intersection Between Local and Global in the Humanities in Asia Pacific," finds its urgency and relevance. This theme invites us to explore how localised cultural expressions, languages, and historical narratives both influence and are influenced by global trends, technologies, and ideologies. It encourages scholars to interrogate the ways in which the global can be made meaningful through the lens of the local, and vice versa, particularly in a region as diverse and rapidly transforming as Asia Pacific.

It is hoped that the conversations sparked here will not only deepen our understanding of the humanities in this part of the world but also forge lasting academic networks and inspire future research that is as contextually grounded as it is globally engaged.

Finally, I wish to extend my congratulations and thanks to the organising committee of ICHAP 2025 for realising this year's conference.

I also wish everyone an enriching conference and a wonderful stay in Penang.

Welcome to ICHAP 2025.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. JASNI SULONG

Dean

School of Humanities

Universiti Sains Malaysia

FOREWORD BY THE CONVENOR OF ICHAP 2025



On behalf of the Asia Pacific Research Unit (APRU) at the School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, it is with immense pride and great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to all participants to the inaugural International Conference on Humanities in the Asia Pacific (ICHAP 2025).

This conference is organised by APRU at the School of Humanities. In the past, APRU has hosted conferences, workshops and seminars on Southeast Asia research. This is the first time APRU is hosting a conference that focuses on the humanities in the Asia Pacific. May ICHAP 2025 mark the beginning of what we hope will be a long-standing platform for rich dialogue, meaningful collaboration, and critical reflection within the diverse and dynamic field of the humanities in Asia Pacific.

This year's theme, "The Intersection Between Local and Global in the Humanities in the Asia Pacific," invites us to explore a central tension and opportunity of our time. The "global" is not an external force that simply overwrites the "local." Rather, it is in the vibrant, often contested, spaces of intersection where new forms of knowledge and understanding are born. Our collective endeavour at ICHAP 2025 is to move beyond simplistic binaries. We seek to investigate how local narratives can inform and engage with global discourses, and conversely, how global frameworks can provide new insights into local identities and experiences. We also seek to understand how the shifts and transformations of our time impact the relationship between local and global. This conference is founded on the belief that the rich, diverse intellectual traditions of the Asia Pacific are not merely subjects of study but are vital, living contributors to global knowledge.

We are especially proud to host this inaugural event here in Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Pinang, also known as Penang; we are just a stone's throw away from Georgetown, the UNESCO World Heritage Site—a place that itself embodies the dynamic interplay of tradition and transformation. We hope the setting will inspire your work and your conversations.

Lastly, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the ICHAP organising committee whose dedication and hard work this past year have helped make this conference a success.

Thank you, and I wish you all a fruitful and inspiring conference.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. GRACE V. S. CHIN
Asia Pacific Research Unit
School of Humanities
Universiti Sains Malaysia



VISION

Studying humanity for self and societal development towards a sustainable tomorrow.

MISSION

The School of Humanities is committed to its mission of teaching, researching, and publishing in the core field of Humanities, as well as actively engaging with the community for global improvement.

OBJECTIVE

- Producing well-balanced graduates with a solid foundation in specialised field of knowledge and human skills, and sensitivity towards the environment
- Conducting fundamental, field, and applied research that brings discoveries benefiting humanity.
- Generating and spreading knowledge through quality teaching, research, and publications
- Contributing to community development through involvement and consultation.

School of Humanities (PPIK) PPIK is one of the earliest schools of literary studies established at USM in 1970. Together with the School of Comparative Social Sciences and the Centre for Educational Services, PPIK is oriented towards liberal literature and is designed to widen and balance the academic curriculum at USM. The programmes offered in these schools have proven that the academic planning at USM is not solely focused on science and technology, neglecting other aspects of human life. The philosophy behind the emergence of literary schools like PPIK is to equip students with a fundamental yet deep understanding of the key characteristics of societies, cultures, and thoughts, especially in Southeast Asia, and how external elements also influence or leave an impact on the original cultural roots of the country.

PPIK is committed to ensuring academic excellence and producing well-rounded graduates at all times. The courses at PPIK are formed to achieve these objectives. Its curriculum is structured to enable graduates from this school to not only meet the demands of the workforce within the country but also to be able to face the challenges of the future, especially in the era of information and communication technology (ICT) and globalisation. Reviews and adjustments are constantly made to ensure that all programs remain relevant, up-to-date, and in line with the needs and circumstances of the times and situation. PPIK itself is always moving forward, adapting to ever-changing circumstances.



ASIA PACIFIC RESEARCH UNIT (APRU)

Established in 2004, the Asia Pacific Research Unit (APRU) at the School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), aims to promote multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the humanities that is related to any part of Asia Pacific, including Asia (West, South, Southeast and East), Australasia and the Pacific Rim regions of the Americas (North, Central and South). Research areas in general complement those taught and studied at the School of Humanities at USM, including history, geography and the environment, linguistics, literature, religion, philosophy, and translation and interpreting studies. APRU has three main objectives: 1) to explore new research ideas, challenges, and opportunities in the humanities; 2) to engage in collaborative research partnerships and develop scholarly networks; and 3) to encourage the production of quality scholarship through multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

To achieve its aims and objectives, APRU launched the *International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies* (IJAPS) (www.usm.my/ijaps/) in December 2005. An award-winning journal that has since been indexed in Scopus, ESCI, and DOAJ, among others, IJAPS now functions independently under Penerbit USM (USM Press) and is published biannually in February and August. Additionally, APRU in the past has successfully organised and hosted workshops, seminars and conferences. This year, APRU is the organiser of the inaugural International Conference on Humanities in Asia Pacific 2025 (ICHAP 2025), which is held at the School of Humanities, USM, from 16-17 October 2025.

ICHAP 2025

The Intersection Between Local and Global in the Humanities in Asia Pacific

The intersection between local and global has emerged as a key site of inquiry in the field of humanities in Asia Pacific, especially in relation to changing cultures/societies and its impact on identities in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Referring to localised identities, places, ideologies, politics, narratives, cultures, societies, and governments, the local has been engaged in conversation and negotiation with global discourses and ideologies of migration, communication, science and technology, trade and finance, geopolitics, and many more. Historically, the intersection between local and global is demonstrated through human movements and developments that include colonisation, migration, adaptation, translation, and hybridisation, among others; however, the relationship between local and global is also in a constant flux, subjected to the contextual and contingent tensions, shifts, changes, or transformations occurring in the local (e.g. nation-state) and/or global (international) spaces. Studies in the humanities can thus help shed light on the evolving and complex relationship between local and global in the here and now.

This theme comes especially at an urgent time of deglobalisation and the emergence of a multipolar world, which would impact the ways in which the intersection between local and global are being (re)conceptualised, (re)interpreted, (re)framed or (re)shaped by new or emerging narratives and discourses in societies and cultures in Asia Pacific.

It is hoped that the inaugural International Conference on Humanities in Asia Pacific (ICHAP) 2025 can help contribute to these important discussions and debates through the theme of The Intersection Between Local and Global in the Humanities in Asia Pacific, with focus on Asia Pacific, which encompasses Asia (West, South, Southeast and East), Australasia, and the Pacific Rim regions of the Americas (North, Central and South).

Presentations that feature multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and innovative theoretical or conceptual approaches and original perspectives that can advance the conference theme in the aforementioned geographic areas are welcomed. It is also hoped that ICHAP will help form new scholarly alliances and networks as well as foster new or significant research ideas and knowledges that can fruitfully contribute to the study of the humanities in Asia Pacific.

CONFERENCE THEMES

- History and Civilization
- Geography and Environment
- Languages and Linguistics
- Literary Studies and Theory
- Religion and Philosophy
- Arts and Media
- Cultural Studies
- Translation and Interpreting Studies
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender and Sexuality
- Identity
- Politics
- Other

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PROGRAMME

DAY 1, 16 October 2025

TIME	EVENT
8am	Registration
9am	Opening ceremony
9.30am	Keynote session
10.30am	Refreshment
11am	Parallel session 1
12pm	Parallel session 2
1pm	Lunch break
2pm	Plenary session 1
3pm	Parallel session 3
4pm	Parallel session 4
5pm	Refreshment
7.30pm	Conference dinner at Eastin Hotel

DAY 2, 17 October 2025

TIME	EVENT
8am	Registration
9am	Plenary session 2
10am	Refreshment
10.30am	Parallel session 5
11.30am	Parallel session 6
12.30pm	Lunch break
2.00pm	Parallel session 7
3.00pm	Workshop
4.30pm	Closing ceremony

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



From Nasi Lemak to Female Education, and much more in between: The Humanities Interconnecting the Local to the Global and viceversa in the Asia Pacific of the 21st century

Professor Dr. Ooi Keat Gin
Academy of Brunei Studies
Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Abstract:

The humanities – encompassing the disciplines of language, linguistics, literature, history, jurisprudence, philosophy, comparative religion, ethics, the arts (music, theater, dance, cinema), architecture – have been essential over the centuries in telling us where we have been and assisting us to envision our journey of where we are heading in the foreseeable future. Paralleling the humanities, seemingly to be in competition is STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) which has been increasingly emphasized in national education policy hence translated into curriculum content. Moreover, in our midst (since 2022) there is an AI (artificial intelligence) boom accelerated by ChatGPT, a generative AI chatbot that adds to what had been ubiquitous since 2001, the almost all-knowing Wikipedia. Some quarters might harbour the impression that the humanities vis-à-vis STEM, AI, ChatGPT, Wikipedia is being sidelined. On the contrary, far from being marginalized its imperativeness lies in nurturing critical thinking that enabled us to analyze complex multifaceted issues and challenges, in understanding different and diverse viewpoints, and in developing creative and sustainable solutions to pressing problems in contemporary times.

Furthermore, the pendulum of focus in the world that has centered in North America (read U.S.) and Europe during the greater part of the 20th century has increasingly swung to the Asia Pacific. The shift to some extent had beginnings in the 1990s with the advent of Hallyu whence South Korean popular culture dramatically burst on the world stage enjoying global popularity that remained sustainable three decades thereafter. Black Pink was phenomenally explosive in the past three years with the likes of Jisoo, Jennie, Rosé, and Lisa who as a quartet literally took the world by storm.

My intention here is to put forth the argument that a local cuisine hailing from provincial provenance could not unlike Black Pink be elevated to the world stage, becoming popular and ubiquitous. If America's Macdonald's and KFC possessed chain outlets across the globe, the humble Malaysian nasi lemak could similarly attained likewise with initiative, ample creativity coupled with resourcefulness. Nasi lemak could just be a tip of the iceberg so to say, for other grassroots dishes such as Thai pad thai, Vietnamese phở, Chinese Peking duck, Taiwanese niu rou mian (beef noodle soup), Japanese sushi, Iranian chelow kabab, Arabic falafel, Central Asian shorpo (soup) and shashlik (grilled meats), Punjabi keema, Bengali hilsa curry, Tamil dosa and idli or Fiji's kokoda and lovo, Vanuatu's santo beef and citrus fish, Tonga's kapisis pulu and lu pulu, Cook Islands ika mata and curried octopus, or New Caledonia's crayfish stuffed crabs could equal or surpass Macdonald's Big Mac, French fries, apple pie. Imagine a nasi lemak outlet adjacent to (New York's) Times Square, in proximity to (Paris') Place de la Concorde, on (London's) Oxford Street, off (Rome's) the Corso, or along (Athens') Adrianou Street.

On the flip side, what has become universal and global such as female education should likewise be available, accessible and commonplace in all localities in all countries across the Asia Pacific. No girl aged seven or eight, the acceptable age to attend school should have access to education regardless where she is residing, whether in Samarkand or Karakalpakstan (Uzbekistan), Xinjiang (China), Keningau or Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia), or Tongatapu (Tonga), or elsewhere in the region.

The humanities through the complementarity of disciplines such as language, history, the arts, architecture could propel local cuisine like nasi lemak to the global market place. At the same time, the disciplines of language, law, philosophy, ethics, architecture, and the arts could promote the importance of female education throughout the Asia Pacific in rural and urban settings. Whether from local to global (nasi lemak) or global to local (female education), the creativity and resourcefulness inherent in the humanities need to be maximally harnessed.

Keywords: humanities; Asia Pacific; local and global; food culture; female education; gender equality; culture and heritage; identity; tourism; economy

Biography:

OOI Keat Gin is currently professor of the modern history of Brunei/Borneo at the Academy of Brunei Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Brunei and visiting professor of the Korean Institute of ASEAN Studies (KIAS), Busan University of Foreign Studies, Busan, South Korea. An elected Fellow of the Royal Historical Society (London), he serves as associate editor of Suvannabhumi: Multi-disciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies, and honorary advisor of International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies (IJAPS), both Scopus-listed peer-reviewed scholarly journals. Having an area of specialization in Southeast Asia, his particular expertise lies in wars and conflicts, sociocultural and socioeconomic history, biographical studies, urban colonial history, historical references (encyclopaedias, dictionaries), modern Malay literature, food culture (street foods).

Recent book-length works include *A Story of George Town, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia c.1780s to c.2000s* (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka 2019), *Borneo in the Cold War, 1950–1990* (Routledge 2020), and as editor, *Borneo and Sulawesi. Indigenous Peoples, Empires, and Area Studies* (Routledge 2020) and *Malaysia and the Cold War Era* (Routledge 2020). He co-edited *The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Brunei* (Routledge 2023). Together with Cao Kim Lan, *Bao Ninh's Contribution to Vietnamese and World Literature: The Sorrow of War and his Short Stories* (Routledge, 2025), and a co-edited volume with Kathrina Mohd Daud, *The Literature of Brunei History, Culture, and Challenges* (Routledge, 2025).

Two forthcoming volumes, viz. Co-authored with Victor T. King, *The Handbook of Southeast Asian Studies: Pioneers and Critical Thinkers* (Springer, in press), and, co-edited with Norainie Ahmad, *Women's Agency and the State in Contemporary Brunei* (Routledge, in press).

Works in progress inter alia *The Chinese in Brunei* (edited volume, Routledge); 'Islam in Contemporary Brunei: Issues and Challenges' (co-edited volume with Mohd Hairul Azrin Haji Besar); 'Islam as the Central Pillar of Brunei's Malay Islamic Monarchy' (co-edited volume with Nur Amali Aminnuddin).

PLENARY SPEAKER 1



The Rise of AI and Rethinking the Humanities

Emeritus Professor Dato' Dr. Morshidi Bin Sirat
Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)

Abstract:

The oft-quoted narratives to-date is the demise of the Humanities as a result of the disruption arising from the adoption of AI, particularly generative AI, in emerging economies of the Asia Pacific. This presentation, while acknowledging the potential negative impacts of this technological wave on the Humanities in many universities (such as shrinking enrolment and much reduced opportunities for employment among Humanities graduates in economies that are adopting technological advancement), it is critically important to explore and highlight evidence of the Humanities and values connected with this discipline shaping and contributing to the much needed skills associated with an AI-driven economy. Do we have enough empirical evidence to support the notion that the Humanities discipline can continue to be offered in universities that are AI-focused?

Biography:

Emeritus Professor Dato' Dr. Morshidi Bin Sirat began his academic career at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in 1982 and retired in 2015 after nearly 33 years of service. In recognition of his contributions, USM awarded him the title of Emeritus Professor in 2022. He remains active in research, consultancy, and advisory work both nationally and internationally.

His foray into higher education policy began in the early 2000s as Director of the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN), where he led significant studies, including one on graduate unemployment that shaped national policy. He later held key leadership roles such as Deputy Director-General of Higher Education (2011), Director-General of Higher Education and Registrar General for Private Higher Education (2013), and Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). In 2014, he became the founding director of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF), which promotes Malaysia's higher education expertise across the Commonwealth.

Morshidi has advised numerous organizations, including UNESCO, the World Bank, ADB, ASEAN University Network, and SEAMEO-RIHED. He continues to support the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS), contributing to national higher education reviews and strategies for internationalization. His recent work centers on SDG4 – Quality Education, flexible learning pathways, and student mobility.

A prolific scholar, Morshidi has published over 150 academic works and 50 technical reports. He serves on editorial boards of international higher education journals and frequently facilitates capacity-building workshops on university leadership, governance, and quality assurance. His work continues to influence higher education policy and practice in Malaysia and beyond.

PLENARY SPEAKER 2



The intersection between local and global in the Humanities in Asia and the Pacific

Emeritus Professor Louise Edwards
School of Humanities & Languages
The University of New South Wales (UNSW Sydney)

Abstract:

In public discourse, it is commonplace to see the 'local' conflated with 'tradition' and the 'global' with 'modernity'. The terms are frequently implicitly or explicitly presented as binary pairs. The capacity for change is credited to 'foreign-ness', while the 'local' remains comparatively static and subject to influences from outside, that it either adopts or repels. Local traditions are appraised for their degree of purity—how far they have resisted change by external influences—and graded on their 'authenticity'.

This lecture advocates for the importance of promoting broader appreciation of 'local traditions' as dynamic, evolving and actively 'influencing the foreign'. The local, I argue, is inherently global. Tradition is inherently dynamic. And the global has multiple historical traditions that can be tracked backwards in time even while it directs our attention to future connectedness and integration. Narratives that juxtapose the local and the global against the other, and credit one with passivity and stasis and the other with dynamism are powerful ideologies with concrete political implications for how we see the world and how we conduct research as scholars of the humanities in and on Asia and the Pacific.

Biography:

Louise Edwards is Emeritus Scientia Professor of Chinese History at UNSW, Sydney. She is also Honorary Professor at the University of Hong Kong's School of Modern Languages and Cultures and the University of Technology of Sydney's Australia-China Research Institute and a Senior Advisor to Asialink at Melbourne University. In 2022 she was appointed as Chair of the Board to the ANU's China

in the World Centre. Her most recent sole-authored books include *Citizens of Beauty: Drawing Democratic Dreams in Republican China* (Washington University Press, 2020), *Women Warriors and Wartime Spies of China* (Cambridge University Press 2016), and *Women Politics and Democracy: Women's Suffrage in China* (Stanford University Press 2008). Edwards is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and the Hong Kong Academy of the Humanities.

WORKSHOP



Publishing a Paper in a Scopus/Web of Science Journal

Associate Professor Dr. Grace V. S. Chin
Editor-in-Chief of *International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies* (IJAPS)
Universiti Sains Malaysia

Abstract:

Publishing a paper in a Scopus or Web of Science (WoS) indexed journal can be a daunting process for academics and scholars seeking to navigate the highly competitive landscape of academic publishing. This workshop guides participants through the key stages in the publication journey, from identifying a suitable journal to the peer review process and final outcome. Furthermore, the workshop provides critical insights into the editorial process, especially the peer review stage by advising on how to effectively address reviewer comments, among others. Journal guidelines, ethical standards, and issues found in the publishing process will also be covered. Ultimately, this workshop serves as a strategic guide for early-career and experienced scholars alike, aiming to increase the likelihood of successful publication in the future.

ABSTRACTS

Melanau Mato Mystical World Characteristics in Matu, Sarawak

Abdul Walid Ali, Asrul Hafiz Huliman Hami Ahmad, Nora Edrina Sahharil
Universiti Teknologi MARA

Melanau Mato in Sarawak has unique views on the otherworld, with mystical characters closely tied to their modern lifestyles. While research on Melanau's mystical worlds is limited, interest has grown in their ethnic demography and cultural shifts. Recent studies have focused on folklore and Melanau sago masks, especially with the rise of Sarawak's digital agenda and TV Sarawak, which open new avenues for exploring Melanau arts and cultures. Key figures in Melanau research are anthropologist Stephen Morris, researcher Heidi Munan, and Melanau-born researchers such as Jeniri Amir and Bedui Une. Morris has done the most extensive work since publishing his book *The Oya Melanau*. Since the late 2010s, researchers at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, notably Yakup Rafee and Awangko Hamdan, have utilized visual ethnography to deepen understanding. Researchers like Chong Sin from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia also explore Melanau culture and ethnic shifts. Most research on mystical creatures derives from cultural events, such as the Serahang Kakan during the Kaul festival and the Bebayoh ritual. Field studies have been conducted in this Melanau Mato mystical creature research. The field trip involved interviewing local Melanau Mato in Matu and Daro, focusing on the characteristics of their mystical creatures, many of which are related to river life and fishing. While some creatures are harmful, others are benign and appear only in specific contexts. This research will provide insight into Melanau's identity, culture, and world perception to enhance Malaysian cultural and art studies.

Integrating Haiku and Digital Platforms to Foster Creative Cooperation in Foreign Language Learning

Abduvakhit Abdukadirov
Fergana State Technical University

Shakhnoza Igamberdieva
Fergana State University

In the context of contemporary education, there is a growing need to develop not only linguistic skills but also transversal competencies such as creativity, cooperation, and intercultural awareness among students. This study examines the potential of the haiku genre as an innovative pedagogical tool to foster creative cooperation among university students majoring in foreign languages. Conducted as a formative pedagogical experiment, the research involved 304 third-year students from three universities in Uzbekistan. Integrated into the course "Intercultural Communication in Foreign Language Teaching," the project was based on the BIT-lesson model (Dialogue – Game – Creativity), with a focus on the creativity component. Digital platforms such as Padlet were actively integrated into the learning process to support collaborative writing, visualization, and presentation of student-created haiku. Technical and instructional support for these tools was provided by an educational technology specialist. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including pre- and post-intervention surveys, textual analysis of student-generated haiku, classroom observation, and semi-structured interviews. The findings demonstrate enhanced student motivation, linguistic expressiveness, and group engagement. Students displayed distributed leadership, intercultural

sensitivity, and collaborative decision-making during the haiku writing process. This integration of literary form and digital tools demonstrates a dynamic approach to enhancing student-centered, cooperative learning in foreign language contexts. The study highlights the value of integrating haiku into creative pedagogy supported by digital platforms to foster meaningful group work and cultural reflection. These results contribute to the field of language pedagogy and suggest further exploration of scalable, tech-enhanced frameworks for creative collaboration in diverse educational settings.

Anglophone Southeast Asia as Received: 1967 to 1989

Ann Ang

National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University

Southeast Asian anglophone writing is a field of study that has expanded from the early 2000s, with the increased publication and prize-winning status of such literary works in the Anglo-American global north. Given the diasporic status of many Southeast Asian anglophone authors, this area of inquiry continues to face challenges in terms of representation, relevance to the region, and the relative shortness or colonising status of English as a literary language. In response, this paper provides a study of how anglophone writing from Southeast Asia was received by writers and scholars within, and beyond the region, from 1967 to 1989. Using data drawn from a quantitative cataloguing of creative writing as well as critical responses related to Southeast Asia in eight scholarly journals, including *Tenggara*, the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, and *Westerly*, the presentation makes a case for how writers, scholars and readers of Southeast Asian anglophone literatures were consciously engaging peers in the region through informal networks and para-academic efforts, and often across languages. This presentation also examines the limited ways in which Southeast Asian writing was accommodated within broader frameworks, such as postcolonial writing, because of limited access to academic institutions and infrastructures. Despite these challenges, my paper argues that the production and critical reception of Southeast Asian anglophone writing began much earlier than is assumed, and was not entirely accommodated by national methodologies or existing comparative frameworks. I conclude my presentation with a few suggestions for reading and theorising anglophone Southeast Asia

Gendered Improvisations and Hidden Histories: A New Historicist Reading of Mo Yan's *Explosions*

Anwei Tu, Wan Hasmah Wan Teh

School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia

This paper examines Mo Yan's short story *Explosions* through the lens of Stephen Greenblatt's theory of cultural power and Louis Montrose's concept of gendered history. It focuses on how Mo Yan constructs the experiences of female characters to reveal the hidden histories of rural Chinese women often silenced in dominant historical narratives. Through Greenblatt's idea of cultural power, the paper analyzes how these women navigate ideological forces, such as state-imposed reproductive policies and patriarchal family, by improvising acts of resistance within cultural constraints. Montrose's framework of gendered history highlights how their bodily experiences, emotional expression, and social roles are shaped, and respond to, historical power relations. Through their struggles, Mo Yan exposes the conflict between private suffering and public ideology, rewriting history from a gendered and localized perspective. *Explosions* thus becomes a site of cultural negotiation where the

suppressed voices of women re-enter the historical discourse. In doing this, Mo Yan offers a powerful critique of both official historiography and entrenched gender norms in modern China.

Co-creating XR Documentary with the Salako through Rhizomatic Framework

Ts. Augustus Raymond Segar
Swinburne University of Technology

This paper examines how Extended Reality (XR) documentary can facilitate community-engaged storytelling that challenges dominant modes of representation in media production. Focusing on *Listening to the Salako: Voices of the Paddy and Human*, a co-created XR documentary with members of the Salako community in Sarawak, the study investigates the use of immersive technologies to centre the community's lived experience and voices. The research adopts a rhizomatic framework introduced by Deleuze and Guattari, combined with participatory methodologies drawn from interactive documentary (i-docs) scholarship. The creative arts and documentary production process involved collaborative narrative development with Salako community members, particularly concerning cultural practices related to paddy cultivation and the Gawe Ka Padi festival. The documentary structure was shaped through shared authorship, non-linear storytelling and locally grounded epistemologies. The findings highlight the potential of XR and i-docs to support polyvocal, entanglement and non-hierarchical forms of representation in new media. It also provides insights into interactive documentary creative practice and immersive technologies in media production with and within underrepresented communities. The paper concludes that XR documentary, when approached through a rhizomatic framework, can contribute to more inclusive and ethically grounded practices in media production. *Listening to the Salako* contributes to the ongoing dynamic conversation on agency, authorship and representation in community-engaged documentary practice in Southeast Asia.

From the cyclo to the royal flag or the miracle of post-colonial Cambodia (A case of *A New Sun Rises Over the Old Land, 1961* by Soun Sorin)

Do Thi Huong
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In *A New Sun Rises Over the Old Land*, the life of the character Sam from his youth to adulthood is closely associated with the cyclo. The cyclo is not only a means of livelihood for Sam and many other characters in the work, but the cyclo is also a symbol of the process of rising to mastery of the country by the poor Cambodian workers after the French colonial period. Cyclo also witnessed the miraculous rise of Cambodia under the leadership of King-Prime Minister Norodom Sihanouk, who led Cambodia to escape from French colonial rule, bringing prosperity and happiness to the people. The symbol of freedom, also the symbol of the King of Cambodia, is the blue stripe on the Cambodian national flag. Through the analysis of the two symbols - the cyclo and the royal flag - the article explores the process of positioning and the development path of Cambodia after being decolonized: from a poor colony to an independent country, and prosperous development based on the strategy of neutralism.

Introducing new institutional theory to assess corruption in Malaysia's civil service

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Although prior research has predominantly addressed corruption through economic and legal dimensions, recent global discourse underscores the growing relevance of cultural factors in shaping perceptions and practices of corrupt behaviour. Specifically, the interplay between formal institutions (regulatory mechanisms) and informal institutions (cultural norms) has emerged as a critical lens. This dual institutional interaction assists to understand corruption as a behaviour that may be formed beyond formal institutional settings. This article applies New Institutional Theory (NIT) to analyse how institutional structures and cultural expectations interact to shape responses to corruption. It advances two core arguments: first, institutions play a significant role in shaping cultural attitudes toward corruption; and second, entrenched cultural norms may either undermine or reinforce institutional responses to corrupt practices. Despite NIT's widespread application in global corruption studies, its application in the Malaysian context, particularly concerning how cultural norms sustain corruption in the civil service, remains limited. This study addresses that gap through qualitative analysis of interviews with public officials and subject-matter experts. Findings suggest that corruption in Malaysia is not merely a breach of legal codes but may be justified and normalised through deeply embedded cultural routines. By illuminating the reciprocal relationship between culture and institutions, this article demonstrates NIT's analytical utility in contextualising corruption and offers insights for culturally attuned public sector reform.

Shifting of the Meaning of Independence: The Dynamics of Internalizing Independence within the Indonesian General Elections Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum/KPU), 2017–2022 and 2022–2027)

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This study explores the shifting meaning of independence within the Indonesian General Elections Commission (Komisi Pemilihan Umum/KPU) by conducting a comparative analysis of two leadership periods, 2017–2022 and 2022–2027. Independence, as a core institutional principle, is fundamental to ensuring the integrity, credibility, and quality of electoral democracy in Indonesia. Although both periods operated under the same legal framework, Undang-Undang No. 7 Tahun 2017, they demonstrated significant differences in how the principle of independence was interpreted, internalized, and practiced, particularly in the administration of the 2024 elections. This divergence suggests that institutional principles, while formally defined, are also shaped by contextual dynamics, leadership orientations, and the political environment surrounding electoral processes. The urgency of this study stems from the central role of the KPU in safeguarding democratic development. As an electoral management body, the KPU is entrusted with wide-ranging tasks and authorities across critical stages of the electoral cycle, including planning and budgeting, updating voter data, organizing campaigns, managing electoral disputes, and facilitating government formation. Any shift in the meaning and application of independence therefore has direct implications for the credibility of elections and the legitimacy of democratic governance. Employing a qualitative approach with a comparative design, this research draws upon literature review as a conceptual foundation and in-depth interviews with academic experts who specialize in electoral governance. By examining how

independence is constructed, internalized, and operationalized within the KPU across two leadership periods, the study highlights both continuity and change in institutional practice.

Ecological Wisdom and Customary Law: The Siriah Kasidang Tradition in Forest Conservation in West Sumatra, Indonesia

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The siriah kasidang tradition is a local wisdom in customary forest management in Nagari Pasiyah Laweh, Agam Regency, West Sumatra. This tradition requires the community to follow a customary procession to ask permission from customary leaders before utilising forest products. Because of this practice, Nagari Pasiyah Laweh won the Nature Conservation Award 2023 from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry as the best nagari in nature conservation in Indonesia. It is the highest recognition in nature conservation in Indonesia. This research has two aims; first, to explore the process of siriah kasidang as practised by the indigenous community, and second, to analyse the impact of this tradition on maintaining the welfare of the community while preserving the customary forest. Using a phenomenological approach from the perspective of cultural anthropology, this study found that the process of siriah kasidang has three stages, starting from the community's request, the customary hearing and the announcement of the decision from the customary leader. This tradition succeeded in creating ecological awareness from the community to carry out selective logging and be responsible for planting new trees as many as the number of trees cut down. This tradition has maintained the sustainability of indigenous forests even though they have been utilised for the economic and social needs of the community as the vision of green economy launched by the Indonesian government.

Fostering Real-Life Communication Skills: The Role of Authentic Activities in English Language Teaching

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The paper explores the benefits, theoretical foundations, and practical implementation of authentic communication activities in English language classrooms. Authentic communication refers to the use of meaningful, real-life interactions and tasks that reflect natural language use outside the classroom.

Such activities are designed to replicate genuine communicative experiences, helping students engage more deeply with the language by using it in purposeful ways. Teaching authentic communication is essential for increasing students' motivation and interest, as it shifts the focus from mechanical language practice to dynamic and relevant exchanges. This approach aligns with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes the importance of developing communicative competence and preparing learners for real-world language use. The methodology for researching authentic communication activities involves analyzing how authenticity is both constructed through pedagogical design and perceived by learners in classroom contexts. This includes exploring how authenticity is attributed to materials, tasks, and the overall communicative environment, as well as its connection to learner engagement and performance. Special attention is given to the design of classroom speaking activities that foster oral communication skills and simulate workplace communication demands. Moreover, the presence of authenticity in teaching has been shown to promote stronger teacher-student relationships, thereby positively influencing students' emotional (affective) and intellectual (cognitive) learning processes. Overall, this paper argues that incorporating authentic communication activities into English instruction significantly enhances language acquisition by making learning more relevant, engaging, and effective in preparing students for practical language use beyond the classroom.

Cultural Stigma of a Disordered Mind: (Re)Defining "Gila" in Hanna Alkaf's *The Weight of Our Sky*

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Women's madness is a social construct that undermines women's responses toward their mental health conditions. While (mad)women's narrations are generally being neglected and situated at the state of periphery, this present study aims to re-examine the "mad" experience of Melati Ahmad in Hanna Alkaf's *The Weight of Our Sky* (2019), which further challenges the myth of the silent and suppressed Malay (mad)woman's voice in the discourse of madness. The novel unpacks the notion of women's madness, examining Melati's suffering from the complex intersection of the global and the local perspectives. One interesting aspect of Hanna Alkaf's novel is the way in which it uses a woman's body and the nation to highlight the converging experiences of marginalisation and displacement found in the discourse of women's madness and the political unrest during the May 13 racial riot in Malaysia. These sensitive issues illustrate the notion of uncertainty, which symbolise Melati's inner turmoil and unresolved sociopolitical tensions in the country. From a global perspective, Alkaf's novel depicts Melati's struggles with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and schizophrenia. Melati's possession of djinn, on the other hand, reflects how localised religious discourse constructs the notion of women's madness. Despite being seen as a madwoman, Melati subverts the madwomen's tropes, where her "madness" challenges the tropes rather than embodies them. Melati exemplifies a different form of "Otherness," highlighting the level of awareness and consciousness in resisting the mantle of women's madness that empower her to regain her sense of Selfhood. Melati regains her female agency while situating herself in an environment of marginality and of exile.

Unfulfilled Equivalence: The Indonesian Labour Party's Electoral Defeat Towards the Capitalist Hegemony

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This article discusses the failure of the Indonesian Labour Party's (Partai Buruh) to win seats in the House of Representatives in the 2024 legislative elections. During the Reformation era, the Labour Party participated in four elections in 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2024. All four resulted in failure, with the vote share reaching than 1%. Despite this, the 2024 version of the Labour Party expanded its representational base to include not only labour, but also farmers, fishermen, and other informal workers. This article examines why the Labour Party failed, despite its efforts to establish a logic of equivalence among various segments in the elections. This article is the result of qualitative research that collected data through literature reviews and interviews. Drawing from Laclau's theory on discourse and hegemony, this article finds that the logic of equivalence constructed by the Labour Party failed to establish the Labour Party as a hegemonic force among voters. Furthermore, the Labour Party did not complement this with the formation of a logic of differentiation against the ruling coalition groups dominating Indonesian politics, resulting in an unclear political frontier in the 2024 election. The Labour Party also lacks a successful naming that functions as an empty signifier and a nodal point, which is a prerequisite for the formation of a hegemonic power. This study provides insight that capitalist hegemony still dominates contemporary Indonesian politics.

Liminal Remembering: Transitional Space, Diasporic Grief, and Mourning in Kat Chow's *Seeing Ghosts* (2021)

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This paper examines Kat Chow's memoir *Seeing Ghosts* (2021) through D.W. Winnicott's notions of Transitional Space and Objects, situating grief within the nexus of cultural identity, memory, and narrative practice. Grounded in Chow's Chinese American familial context, the memorial objects such as tombstones, inscriptions and ancestral rituals operate as transitional space and objects that mediate her internal mourning and external cultural milieu. Besides foregrounding the liminality of grief and navigating between absence and presence, the narrative explores how Chinese-American funerary customs, memorial inscriptions, and the act of remembering operate within hybrid transitional space. The study highlights the ways in which cultural practices shape personal encounters with loss. This negotiation between private grief and collective ritual underscores grief not merely as an individual's psychological turmoil but as a socially and culturally embedded experience thus an enactment of the diasporic experience of grief. The analysis reveals that transitional spaces provide both continuity and transformation: they preserve bonds with the deceased while also enabling adaptation to absence. In doing so, *Seeing Ghosts* (2021) demonstrates how literature can illuminate the localised rituals, and communal dimensions of mourning, offer insights into the interplay between memory, identity, and emotional survival in the contexts of cultural hybridity.

“By the Grace of the Hornbill”: Representing Nonhuman Agency in Golda Mowe’s *Iban Dream*

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Speculative fiction, a genre that imagines realities beyond conventional realism, allows the nonhuman to emerge as an active presence. This paper examines the representation of nonhuman agency in *Iban Dream* (2012), a fantasy narrative by Golda Mowe. Drawing on material ecocriticism, I argue that Mowe’s work challenges anthropocentric paradigms by portraying lands, rivers, trees, and animals as vibrant agents. This representation reflects an Iban worldview that emphasises the interconnectedness of human and nonhuman realms. The narrative highlights two key aspects: first, the roles of animate and inanimate entities in sustaining indigenous life and guiding the protagonist’s journey to become a headhunter warrior; and second, the territorial pact between humans and animals, which embodies indigenous values of respect for other-than-human domains. Ultimately, *Iban Dream* presents nonhuman entities as active subjects beyond human control, while also demonstrating how Southeast Asian speculative fiction reimagines the boundaries between human and nonhuman through indigenous perspectives.

A Literary Analysis of Tea Culture in Anglophone Singapore Literature

Goh Cheng Fai, Zach

Tea is the second most consumed beverage in the world, after water, and it is a significant part of many different cultures around the world, including that of Singapore, a former British colony in Southeast Asia. Every cup of tea carries certain messages with it, which can be interpreted in different ways. Tea is used in rituals and ceremony, where it takes on symbolic meanings. Also, tea functions as a social lubricant: how a person interacts with tea provides clues to their upbringing and social or cultural identification. This paper examines the literary representation of Singapore’s tea culture through Anglophone Singapore Literature, including Simon Tay’s *A History of Tea*, Vyvyanne Loh’s *Breaking the Tongue*, and Kevin Kwan’s *Crazy Rich Asians*. It explores the dynamics of cultural identification in relation to how the various characters relate to each other at the tea table, or when tea is being used in the literary text as a plot device. How tea functions in Singaporean society is examined in relation to Singapore’s history as a former British colony: the post-colonial tensions between different ideologies can be explored in the tea scenes that permeate the Anglophone Singapore novels studied in this paper. Through a close analysis of how tea is represented in these texts, the power relations, cultural dynamics, and hybridity of the participants in tea scenes can be discovered and can provide significant insight to the cultural identifications of a strata of Singapore society, as well as attitudes of Singaporean people towards tea culture.

Conceptual Metaphors of Unity used in Chinese Public Speeches: A Study of Chinese College Advanced EFL Learners’ speeches

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Despite the central role of “unity” in the Chinese social and educational context, little is known about how advanced Chinese EFL learners employ metaphors in speeches to construct and convey the concept “unity”. This study explores the linguistic metaphor of unity used in English public speeches

by advanced Chinese EFL learners. It then identifies the conceptual metaphors and the image schema's motivation of metaphors behind them. The research tries to answer two questions: (1) What are the conceptual metaphors of unity used in public speaking by advanced Chinese EFL learners? (2) How do image schemas motivate the metaphor of "unity" in the public speeches by advanced Chinese EFL learners? This research analyzes the unity used in the "FLTRP-ETIC Cup", National English Public Speaking Contest in China. This research uses the Kuakenote, an app to transcribe the videos to words, and makes a small corpus database from the words in the videos. MIPVU is used to find out the linguistic metaphors in the speeches. The conceptual metaphor proposed by Lakoff and Johnson theoretically informs this study. The results show that the source domains of the metaphors of unity used by the Chinese advanced EFL learners in the speeches were MUSIC, COLOUR, FLOWER, MEDICINE, FAMILY, GLUE, and ENDPOINT.

Comparative linguistic analysis of official written discourse in Uzbek and English

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This research highlights the language structure differences in written official discourse in two languages, which are different in their structures, Uzbek and English. It analyzed 200 administrative and business documents to examine the use of word phrases, sentence structure patterns, and core grammar elements in formal communication of both languages. The analysis emphasizes the differences in English and Uzbek word structure. While English relies heavily on prepositional phrases and nominal compounds in formal documents, agglutinative word forms and postpositional structures dominate in Uzbek official texts. The study further analyzed culture-specific preferences for hierarchy, clarity, politeness in formal writing and examined the use of simple, compound, and complex sentences. The use of passive voice, modals, and cohesion also are used to maintain formal and precise texts, which is essential for underscoring politeness and formality. The paper contributes to the field of translation and English for Specific Purposes education by highlighting isomorphic and allomorphic elements, along with referring to relevant bilingual document production for Uzbek and English. The practical implications of the study are directed toward educators and translators of the two languages documents focusing on bilingual document creation.

Navigating Gender Inclusivity in Indonesian Skincare Marketing

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While global beauty standards have increasingly embraced gender-inclusive marketing, prompting many companies to align with this progressive shift, such practices remain relatively rare in Southeast Asia, especially in middle-income countries. However, in recent years, the Indonesian beauty industry has begun to adopt gender-inclusive marketing strategies, signaling a gradual response to this global transformation and fostering a more equitable approach to self-care for all genders. Despite these emerging trends, academic research on gender-inclusive marketing within the Indonesian context remains limited, highlighting a significant gap in the existing literature. Therefore This study tried to investigate consumer responses to such marketing efforts through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), focusing on how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence purchase intentions, to account for individual differences in gender perception, the study integrates gender identity as a moderating variable, drawing from Social Identity Theory. Using a

quantitative approach with survey data from 500 customers from all around Indonesia, the study examines whether gender identity strengthens or weakens the relationship between attitudes toward gender-inclusive marketing and purchase intention. The results are expected to offer practical insights for marketers aiming to implement inclusive strategies without alienating traditional consumer bases. This research significantly contributes to the marketing and gender studies literature in Southeast Asia, especially in a middle-income country.

Order Transformation and the Hedging Behavior of Small and Middle Powers: Evidence from Four ASEAN States

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The strategic competition between China and the United States is bound to trigger a regional—and potentially global—transition in the international order, which will directly affect the status and national interests of small and middle powers. While the existing literature has extensively documented the hedging strategies, it has not sufficiently explained the variations among different types of hedging. Moreover, although some studies have linked the foreign policy behavior of small and middle powers to changes in the international order, they often suffer from conceptual ambiguity or an overreliance on systemic-level factors. Building on a critical engagement with the “preference-change model,” this article proposes a new theoretical framework—the Order Transition Hedging Model—to explain how small and middle powers choose specific forms of hedging based on cost-benefit calculations. According to this model, political elites weigh the potential economic gains against the political risks posed by the international order transition. When both economic gains and political risks are high, states are more likely to adopt a medium hedging strategy. Conversely, when both are low, a buck-passing strategy becomes more probable. If economic gains outweigh political risks, states tend to adopt a weak hedging strategy; if political risks outweigh economic gains, they are more inclined toward strong hedging. To empirically evaluate this framework, the article conducts a comparative analysis of four ASEAN countries—namely, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei.

Preserving Intangible Cultural Heritage Through Motion Capture Technology: Digitisation of Kayan Traditional Dance in Sarawak

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Sarawak is home to a rich tapestry of indigenous cultures, with Kayan traditional dance forming a vital part of its Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Despite its cultural significance, this heritage is increasingly at risk due to inadequate digital documentation and diminishing interest among younger generations, which may threaten the continuity of cultural identity. This study explores the role of digital technology in preserving Dayak traditional dance, focusing on the application of Motion Capture (MoCap) and real-time animation. Employing a qualitative ethnographic approach, the research centres on a case study involving traditional Kayan dancers from the Orang Ulu community in Sarawak. The study also investigates the embodied experience and perceptions of dancers performing within a MoCap environment, contrasting it with traditional stage settings. Three MoCap recording sessions were conducted with two professional troupe dancers and two experienced dancers from longhouse communities. Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) was used to examine core

movement sequences and assess the expressive qualities of the dance. Semi-structured interviews provided insight into dancers' interpretations, experiences and the cultural meanings embedded in their performances. Findings indicate that MoCap offers an effective, economical and accessible method for digitally preserving traditional dance, enabling real-time visualisation without the constraints of rendering delays in 3D applications. This technology not only supports dance learning and appreciation but also aids intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge. By integrating digital tools with ethnographic practice, this study contributes new theoretical and methodological perspectives to preserving Sarawak's ICH, reinforcing the relevance of traditional Orang Ulu dance in the digital era.

Identifying Conceptual Metaphors in Literary Texts Using Corpus-derived Keywords: A Corpus-linguistic Investigation of Virginia Woolf's Night and Day

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Traditional corpus-based studies typically obtain keywords manually to identify conceptual metaphors in literary texts, a process that is time-consuming. This article aims to examine the utilization of keywords obtained by corpus software for the identification of conceptual metaphors in literary texts and to address two questions: (1) What are the conceptual metaphors in Night and Day? (2) What is the framework to discern conceptual metaphors in literary works utilizing corpus-derived keywords? In response to the questions, two corpora are utilized, the self-built corpus focus on Virginia Woolf's Night and Day as the target corpus, and the Part (K-R) of the online LOB corpus as the reference corpus. The keywords are mostly extracted using AntConc (Version 4.2.4), a free and user-friendly software, and expanded into various keyword-related categories. The concordance of keywords or related words is analyzed across several linguistic levels to discover the mapping domains and, consequently, the conceptual metaphors of different sorts based on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The data and results indicate that there are keywords such as "night," "day," "eyes," "heads" in Night and Day, along with corresponding categories such as "time-related," "body-related". These are governed by conceptual metaphors such as "Life is a clock that runs without stop night and day." and "Bodies are containers of mind." respectively. Through the analysis of conceptual metaphors using keywords in Night and Day, the proposed framework for keyword-based metaphor identification is summarized, offering a practical model for corpus-based metaphor identification in literary texts.

Performing Fatherhood in the Digital Space: The Role of Filipino Fathers in Shaping Identity of Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) in Japinoy Family Vlogs

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This study aims to investigate the multifaceted role of Filipino fathers in Japinoy Family Vlogs on YouTube, with a focus on how they perform fatherhood and shape the mixed identity of their Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC). The research applies intersectionality theory by Crenshaw (1989) to examine how the father's role as a provider, nurturer, cultural representative and being a digital content creator intersect, influencing his on-screen persona and, by extension, his children's identity. Drawing on data from BIG PAPA Vlogs and Japinoy Vlog channels, this research will analyze the linguistic cues, visual presentations, and narrative framing to identify specific themes related to masculinity, family leadership, and the preservation of Filipino culture. The study aims to provide

crucial insights into the evolving nature of fatherhood in transnational families and contribute to a nuanced understanding of how digital media platforms can be used to foster the development of mixed identities.

Bureaucrat Morality Perspective of Utilitarianism: An Analysis Policy of Human Resources Development Agency of North Sumatra Province

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This article discusses the morality of bureaucrats' actions in the perspective of utilitarianism with a case study on the policy of the Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM) of North Sumatra Province. The utilitarianism approach that is oriented towards the greatest results and benefits for society becomes the basis for evaluating bureaucratic policies and actions. Through a qualitative-descriptive method with a document study approach and interviews, this article finds that the morality of bureaucrats' actions in the context of ASN training and development policies at BPSDM is often influenced by pragmatic, political, and administrative considerations. However, the application of utilitarian principles can be a moral framework that encourages bureaucrats' actions that are more ethical and orientated towards the public interest. This article also suggests the formulation of evidence-based policies and the utilisation of social impact evaluation systems as efforts to improve bureaucratic ethics. The findings of this article are expected to contribute to the public administration ethics literature and become a practical reference for improving the quality of bureaucratic services at the regional level.

Animals in Words: A Semantic and Cross-Cultural Analysis of Animal-Based Epithets in Uzbek and English Linguocultures

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This comparative study examines epithets formed with animal names and cultural insights of them in Uzbek and English contexts, highlighting how epithets denoting animal names are realized through different semes in the compared languages. In Uzbek, animal-based epithets predominantly realize state-related semes, regardless of whether they modify concrete or abstract nouns. Conversely, English epithets exhibit more semantic flexibility: when paired with concrete nouns, they reflect physical attributes, and when used with abstract nouns, they express states or emotional conditions. Utilizing qualitative methodology, the study analyzes that while certain animal-based epithets such as wolf look in English and bo'ri qarash in Uzbek appear in both languages, they often convey contrasting connotations. For example, in Uzbek, wolf-related epithets typically express fear, aggression, or negative emotional states, whereas in English, the same animal can symbolize strength and masculinity. This cross-cultural analysis offers deeper insights into national mentality, worldview, and linguistic creativity. The study underscores the importance of analyzing epithets as culturally bound linguistic units that contribute to effective intercultural communication and understanding.

Implementation of results-based performance management system: Basis for proposed improvement plan

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This study examined the Rating Practices of the RBPMS in public secondary schools of three divisions. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study assessed the rating practices of RBPMS in the four phases, through the perspectives of public secondary teachers, master teachers, and head teachers. Respondents' profiles were also analyzed based on their age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, length of service and position. Findings revealed that most respondents were experienced, married female educators aged 31–45, with pursuing graduate-level education. Findings indicated a high rating practices and satisfaction across the four RBPMS phases. Statistical analysis showed no significant differences in performance ratings across most demographic variables, although higher educational attainment and length of service were significantly associated in specific phases. Despite high implementation, several challenges were identified, including the lack of regular feedback, weak integration of performance with rewards, inadequate rater accountability, and low transparency. The study concluded that the RBPMS is implemented in terms of performance planning, monitoring, review, and rewards among teachers and instructional leaders. Even though it's implemented, there were identified challenges such as feedback provision, accountability, transparency, and a reward system. Despite the demographic profile factors such as age, gender, civil status, and position showed no significant impact on performance ratings across the four phases, though higher educational attainment and length of service were linked to more favorable experiences in certain RBPMS phases. An improvement plan is proposed to address the findings and challenges encountered by the teachers and instructional leaders.

Do Lectures Still Matter in EFL Teaching in Higher Education? Exploring Students' Perceptions in Fergana State University

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Despite being a foundational method of instruction in universities for centuries, lecture-based teaching is now under increasing scrutiny regarding its pedagogical effectiveness in the age of digital transformation. This study investigates university students' perceptions of lecture classes, focusing on their effectiveness and engagement levels. The research was conducted among 68 undergraduate English language learners of Fergana State University, using a quantitative survey approach. A structured Google Form questionnaire containing 12 close-ended items was administered to gather data on students' experiences and attitudes toward lectures. The findings suggest that a significant proportion of students view lecture-based classes as ineffective and disengaging. Key concerns raised include the lack of interaction, persistent classroom noise, and insufficient subject knowledge demonstrated by some instructors. These factors were reported to negatively impact students' concentration and motivation. The study also highlights a growing preference for more interactive, student-centered approaches such as group discussions, task-based learning, and technology-enhanced instruction. This research contributes to the ongoing debate on the future of traditional lectures in higher education, particularly within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. The results underscore the need for pedagogical reform, urging institutions to reconsider the structure

and delivery of lectures to better align with students' learning preferences and the demands of modern education.

The Transformation of Dayah Ulama in Political Engagement in Post-Peace Agreement Aceh

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Following the peace agreement between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Republic of Indonesia (RI), the establishment of local political parties became a crucial milestone in reconstructing Aceh's political landscape. The emergence of local parties opened a new direction in regional politics, serving both as a channel for public aspirations and as an instrument for strengthening autonomy. However, the trajectory of local politics has become increasingly complex with the engagement of dayah ulama in the political arena. This phenomenon indicates that ulama are no longer confined to the role of moral agents and religious figures within society, but have also become strategic actors capable of negotiating Islamic values with the dynamics of power to reinforce peace. This article aims to analyze the transformation of dayah ulama in politics after the peace settlement in Aceh and to examine the various forms of their engagement in strengthening the local political landscape. By analyzing the experiences of ulama who engage both actively and passively in political parties, this article offers a new perspective that the political engagement of dayah ulama reflects an effort to reconcile religious idealism with the pragmatic realities of power. This study is significant and urgent, as many still hold the view that ulama should not participate in politics, considering them as sacred figures.

Health Literacy and Its Impact on Health Outcomes in Asian Populations: A Systematic Review

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Health literacy (HL) is a critical determinant of health, influencing disease management, quality of life, and healthcare utilization, particularly in Asia's culturally and linguistically diverse populations. This systematic review aimed to synthesize evidence on HL prevalence and its impact on health outcomes among Asian populations from 2020 to 2024. Following PRISMA guidelines, a comprehensive search across PubMed, ScienceDirect, Scopus, Cochrane Library, and Google Scholar identified 10 eligible studies involving populations with chronic conditions, older adults, and disease-specific groups. HL prevalence varied widely, with inadequate HL ranging from 17.7% to 78.4%. Low HL was consistently associated with adverse outcomes, including poor quality of life, increased medication regimen complexity, frailty, and reduced disease management capacity. Key influencing factors included age, education, income, and chronic illness. Interventions targeting HL demonstrated positive effects on glycemic control, renal function, and frailty reduction. Findings highlight the urgent need for targeted, culturally sensitive HL interventions to reduce health disparities in Asia. Future research should prioritize standardized HL assessment tools, longitudinal designs, and gender-specific strategies to maximize health outcomes.

Integrating Local Culture into General Education: A Solution for Preserving Ethnic Identity in the Context of Globalization

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In the rapidly globalizing world, ethnic minority communities in the northern border regions of Vietnam are facing the risk of losing their traditional cultural identities. This study investigates the role of general education in preserving and promoting local cultural values by systematically integrating indigenous elements into educational content, pedagogy, and teaching materials. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Notably, a survey was conducted with 97 teachers currently working in mountainous schools in northern Vietnam. The findings reveal that 91.8% of respondents acknowledged the essential role of integrating local culture into education, yet 30.9% reported that the incorporation of local cultural elements into lesson planning remains limited, which hinders students' understanding of their cultural heritage. Furthermore, 43.3% of teachers indicated a lack of teaching resources and digital materials, highlighting a significant gap in the educational support system for ethnic minority regions. This issue warrants immediate policy attention. Through pedagogical experiments such as the use of bilingual folktales, community-involved storytelling activities, and the design of lesson materials rooted in festivals, customs, and indigenous knowledge, the research demonstrates the effectiveness of culturally responsive teaching approaches. The empirical results show that when learning content is connected to students' cultural experiences, it enhances their motivation, cultural pride, and intercultural critical thinking skills. Based on these insights, the study proposes several concrete solutions: (1) developing an open curriculum framework that allows for the localization of educational content; (2) training teachers in methods of integrating local culture; and (3) creating a flexible digital repository of ethnic minority cultural resources to support classroom use. Integrating local culture into education is not merely a heritage preservation measure, but a foundational strategy for nurturing globally-minded citizens who value and respect their cultural roots.

***The Garden of Evening Mists* in trauma literature dialogues Southeast Asia: The status of comfort women in the shadow of Japanese Empire**

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The paper focuses on analyzing the novel *The Garden of Evening Mists* (2001) by Tan Twan Eng (Malaysia) in the context of Southeast Asian literature about war trauma and the status of "comfort women" under the Japanese occupation in the Pacific War (1941-1945). Hundreds of thousands of Asian comfort women (Korea, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia...) were forced into sexual slavery, but their memories were forgotten or denied in mainstream historiography. Literature has become a place to restore those memories, especially from the perspective of trauma criticism and feminism. Based on the analysis of the character Yun Ling with aphasia, loss of communication and memory due to guilt for leaving behind her sister Yun Hong, a comfort woman - the paper points out the process of facing and resolving trauma. To expand the dialogue on Southeast Asian trauma literature, the paper also compares the works: *Comfort Woman* (Rosa Henson - Philippines, 1999), *Beauty Is A Wound* (Eka Kurniawan - Indonesia, 2002), and *Comfort Woman* (Nora Okja Keller - Korea,

1998). The paper points out: (1) Buried memories (Yun Ling, Akiko, Dewi, Rosa all tried to forget, hide - only when told, do memories become meaningful); (2) Limited language (Mute, silent characters, narrating through others (first-person narrative) - manifestations of trauma that has not been thoroughly processed; (3) De-traumatization through art (Japanese gardens, learning archery, storytelling, writing autobiographies, surreal elements, etc. become means of "liberating memories"); (4) Body and identity (The body becomes a place to preserve and resist the history of oppression); (5) The position of Southeast Asian literature in post-colonial dialogue and regional feminist struggles.

Marginal subjects in Vietnamese literature after renovation: A postcolonial approach to Nguyen Huy Thiep's *Nostalgia for the Countryside*

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This article explores the figure of marginal subjects in Vietnamese literature after the *Đổi Mới* (Renovation) period, with a particular focus on *Nostalgia for the Countryside* by Nguyen Huy Thiep as a representative case. From a postcolonial perspective, the study examines how the short story deconstructs central power structures and creates discursive space for voices that have been excluded or silenced in post-reform Vietnamese society following the economic and political changes of 1986. By re-reading Nguyen Huy Thiep's aesthetic and ideological strategies, the article argues that this short story not only reflects critically on the nation-building process during the period of economic liberalization but also reveals the tensions and intersections between tradition and modernity, rural and urban imaginaries, collective memory and individual aspirations. The marginal subjects in the narrative serve both as witnesses to social transformation and as voices that question dominant national, ethical, and developmental metanarratives. In doing so, the article underscores the role of literature as a critical space in which historical absences are revealed and discourses of identity and power are problematized under postcolonial conditions.

It's All About Family: A Narrative Study of Smartphone Domestication Among Mothers in Palembang, Indonesia

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This study aimed to investigate how the use of smartphones relates to the empowerment of women from low-income families in Palembang, Indonesia. To achieve this objective, this study adopted the domestication of technology as the primary theoretical framework, allowing for a broader exploration of how technology becomes integrated into everyday life. The analysis focused on four interrelated phases of domestication: appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion. Furthermore, a narrative method was used and in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 women participants as the primary method of data collection. The results identified four key dimensions that shape the domestication process of smartphones technology among mothers in low-income households. The first is the capital dimension, which encompasses both the material and symbolic resources available to women; The second is the contextual dimension, which relates to the social conditions and the technical reasons for smartphone use; The third is the cultural dimension, reflecting deeply embedded cultural norms; and the structural dimension, that involves broader external factors and sense of agency. The findings indicate that women exercised mobility, capability, and agency through their use of smartphones. However, cultural expectations and social control continued to constrain their

empowerment, requiring the re-orientation of technological practices toward family-oriented purposes.

The Role of Local Ethical Frameworks in Shaping Islamic Finance within the Global Economy: A Systematic Literature Review

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This study systematically reviews the role of local ethical frameworks in influencing the development, operations, and global integration of Islamic finance. Drawing on 87 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2000 and 2025, the review adopts the PRISMA methodology to identify, evaluate, and synthesize existing scholarship across key thematic domains, including Shariah compliance, cultural values, governance structures, and socio-economic objectives. The findings reveal that local ethical principles not only preserve the authenticity of Islamic financial practices but also serve as a strategic driver for differentiation in competitive global markets. However, tensions emerge when reconciling local norms with international regulatory standards, cross-border financial flows, and technological innovations such as fintech integration. The review highlights three dominant themes: (1) the embeddedness of Islamic finance within community-oriented ethical norms; (2) the adaptive mechanisms used to align local Shariah interpretations with global financial frameworks; and (3) the emerging role of ethical governance in enhancing trust and market expansion. Practical implications underscore the need for policymakers, regulators, and industry leaders to strengthen the harmonization between local ethical imperatives and global operational requirements. The study concludes by identifying research gaps, particularly in the areas of sustainable finance, digital transformation, and cross-jurisdictional ethical harmonization, providing a roadmap for future scholarly inquiry.

Re-scripting the Local Campus: How Variable Logo Fonts Reconfigure Chinese Private Universities' Visual Identity in the Global Marketplace of Higher Education

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Amid fierce competition in China's private higher education, visual identity systems serve as crucial tools for institutional identity negotiation. While variable logo fonts (VLFs) enable dynamic design adaptation, their potential to reshape educational identity remains unexplored in Asia-Pacific digital contexts. This study investigates how VLFs influence students' perceptions of belonging, professionalism, and emotional connection at Chinese private universities. A structured questionnaire surveyed students across multiple institutions using the SOR framework, assessing VLF perceptions, brand impressions, and behavioral intentions. Results demonstrate that VLFs significantly enhance perceived modernity while maintaining authority, effectively resolving the inherent tension between tradition and innovation. Key findings reveal emotional connection and professionalism as primary drivers of brand trust, while professional impressions and trust directly predict enrollment intentions. Students consistently perceived dynamic typography as both innovative and credible, indicating its capacity to strengthen institutional identity. The study concludes that variable fonts function as identity catalysts, enabling educational institutions to navigate evolving brand landscapes while fostering student connection in Asia's competitive academic environment.

Negotiating the Past, Shaping the Present: The Discursive Construction of Multilayered Identity at China's Yungang Grottoes

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Heritage identities are not fixed inheritances but dynamic constructs shaped through continuous discursive processes, where the past is negotiated and the present is constructed. This study investigates how identity is negotiated and shaped within the heritage discourse surrounding the Yungang Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage site that embodies China's complex historical interplay between different ethnicities and cultures. Drawing on discourse analysis of a multimodal dataset comprising 20 expert interviews, 45 academic publications, 6 policy documents, and 5 UNESCO files. Using NVivo software, we conducted a three-level inductive coding process that allowed identity dimensions to emerge from the data without imposing predefined categories. The analysis reveals how heritage discourse negotiates historical narratives and constructs stratified layers of identity: national identity, ethnic identity, place identity, and cultural identity. These identities are not separate or static but interact dynamically through processes of symbolic layering, narrative persistence, and discursive negotiation. Based on these findings, we propose a conceptual model of stratified heritage identity transformation, which captures how heritage discourse simultaneously preserves, reshapes, and reconfigures multiple identity narratives over time. This study contributes to heritage research by offering a methodological approach for tracing identity shifts and by highlighting how heritage discourse mediates the negotiation of complex identity legacies within China's multi-ethnic society.

Connected yet Alone: An Examination of the Alienating Effect of Technology in Sharmilla Ganesan's *Personal*

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The proliferation of new technologies promises a better future where we can have more by doing less. For example, the internet enables people to connect to the whole world (global) while staying in place (local). However, there is no such thing as a free lunch – both purveyors and adopters overlook the consequences these innovations have on society and the environment. Informed by Sherry Turkle's work on technology and the self, this study examines prominent themes in Sharmilla Ganesan's cautionary tale *Personal* vis-à-vis technology's disruptive nature. Set in futuristic Malaysia, the story unfolds as readers follow the protagonist Nissa through her day after news of a major crime stirred public unrest. In this imagined future, technology has become so ubiquitous that one's digital presence is not only expected but necessitated. Lack of online updates leads to speculation and worry while interruptions to digital activities are considered uncouth, as digital communication has taken precedence over face-to-face interaction. Even in physical presence of others, communication is mediated by technology to avoid awkwardness. This creates a paradox where people are constantly online and connected yet still feel alone and unempathetic towards each other. In a twist at the story's end, it was revealed that the major crime was committed because the perpetrator yearns for authentic connection – an act of radical resistance against over-digitalization. Perhaps the moral of the story is

this: as we set our sights on going digital (global), we ought not forget the physical (local) as one cannot completely replace the other.

Exploring digital storytelling to promote national identity and global citizenship for 5 -year-old children in Saudi Arabia: A case study

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This study explores digital storytelling (DST) in promoting national identity and global citizenship among 5-year-old children in Saudi Arabia. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected from two sites in Buraydah, Qassim region: the 1st Kindergarten and the Kindergarten Teachers Training Center. Multiple methods—classroom observations, semi-structured group interviews, self-reflective journals, and document analysis—were used, with thematic analysis (TA) conducted inductively to allow themes to emerge naturally. The findings reveal that DST plays a significant role in promoting national identity by enhancing children’s cognitive and social-emotional understanding of cultural symbols, traditions, and historical narratives. It also promotes global citizenship by encouraging respect for diversity, empathy, and cross-cultural awareness. Children demonstrated engagement, recall, and a growing appreciation for both their national and global identities. Teachers affirmed the pedagogical value of DST, noting its benefits for cultural learning and technology integration, but also pointed out challenges such as limited resources, technological constraints, and the need for high-quality content. The study highlights the need for improved infrastructure, teacher training, and culturally relevant digital materials to maximize DST’s impact in early childhood education.

Crafting with codes: Digital Preservation and Technology Adoption in Southeast Asian Heritage

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In an increasingly digitalized world, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage particularly in crafts faces both opportunities and challenges. This study explores how Malaysian handicraft heritage agencies and artisans incorporate digital tools into knowledge transfer practices to safeguard and modernize traditional craftsmanship in the Asia Pacific Region. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with 20 stakeholders including senior artisans, proteges and heritage agency officers. Participants were purposively selected to represent diverse age groups, roles and regional backgrounds. Thematic analysis was conducted through NVivo, emphasizing recurring patterns related to digital adoption, barriers and hybrid mentorship practices. Five major themes: (1) digital tools serve as a supplementary platform for craft documentation and sharing, (2) social media amplifies cultural visibility and market access, (3) limitations in capturing tacit knowledge remain a core challenge in digital preservation, (4) the digital divide constraints access to preservation technologies in rural areas and (5) hybrids models that combine digital resources gaining traction. Younger artisans were found to embrace platforms such as TikTok and Instagram for

outreach. While senior mentors expressed concern over authenticity loss and digital dilution. This study contributes to the understanding of how local heritage intersects with global digitization trends. It offers recommendation for policymakers and cultural agencies, including expanding digital literacy programs, supporting infrastructures in underserved regions and promoting blended learning models that respect both traditional values and modern innovations.

Stakeholder-Specific Pattern Analysis on Generational-Based Knowledge

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This study explores stakeholder-specific patterns in knowledge transfer practices within the Malaysian handicraft heritage sector focusing on generational and role-based distinctions among artisans, agencies and proteges. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were thematically analyzed through NVivo, revealing how each stakeholder group expresses and experiences knowledge transfer uniquely. Artisans emphasize tacit knowledge, cultural continuity and oral-based transmission rooted in family traditions. Agencies by contrast, focus on formal structures, documentations processes, policy frameworks while facing institutional challenges in sustaining knowledge systems. Protégé adopt a hybrid role-learning from mentors while integrating modern tools, social media and entrepreneurial innovation. Key themes such as cultural identity, mentorship, integration of technologies and documentation gaps emerged across groups but varied emphasis and meaning. The findings underscore the importance of designing a stakeholder aligned knowledge transfer framework that bridges generational perspectives and accommodates diverse roles in the preservation and evolution of intangible cultural heritage. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding on how differentiated stake holder experiences influence the sustainability of craft knowledge transmission in Malaysia.

Queer Performativity and Unfulfilled Desire: Negotiating Bodily Agency in Neel Mukherjee's *A Life Apart*

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Neel Mukherjee's *A Life Apart* (2008) offers a nuanced exploration of the Indian male protagonist Ritwik's diasporic queer identity, illustrating how his migration to the UK catalyses the awakening and expressions of his closeted queer sexuality. Within the heteronormative frameworks that dominate contemporary Hindu society, queer sexuality is initially rendered taboo, but Ritwik's relocation to London allows him to explore his queer identity through bodily performative acts, particularly within queer spaces. These spaces, such as London's underground public toilets and the Meat Mile, not only provide avenues for self-exploration but also expose the racialised and commodified dimensions of queer desire in a globalised context. However, his queer desire remains persistently unfulfilled, culminating in the tragic violence of his murder. This presentation uses Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's theory of queer performativity and Michael P. Brown's theory of the closet to examine how Ritwik negotiates his bodily agency and queer identity within these transnational spaces. It focuses on the ways in which Ritwik's queer identity and performativity manifest in his diasporic existence, while also analysing his navigation of unfulfilled queer desire and his exercise of bodily agency in queer spaces.

Ritwik's journey highlights how queer South Asian diasporic identities are shaped by the intersections of local and global forces, as well as dynamics of migration, displacement, and desire. By focusing on these intersections, this presentation critically discuss how systemic oppression and discursive power constrain queer self-expression, particularly for those who remain wretched on this globalised earth.

A comparative linguistic study of Korean and Tamil using machine learning techniques, archaeological reports, and historical literature

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This study aimed to compare the linguistic similarities and differences between Hangul and Tamil in terms of phonology, word formation, writing stroke order, and to computationally analyze Korean-Tamil word pairs with a focus on consonants. Further, to find out ancient maritime trade, anthropological links, archeological artifacts, inscriptions found overseas, and spread of Buddhism supporting Tamil-Korean ties. Tamil and Hangul vowels, consonants, and ancient scripts were retrieved from Wikipedia sources. 100 Korean-Tamil words used in everyday conversation in South Korea were chosen and the degree of similarity was quantified using machine learning models such as Damerau-Levenshtein, Jaro, Longest Common Sequence, Cosine, Jaccard, and Ratcliff/Obershelp models. Archaeological and literary evidence collected from peer-reviewed sources like PubMed, JSTOR, Scopus, Google scholar and thesis repositories. Archeological artifacts were collected at Keeladi Museum and the Seoul National Museum. This study observed many phonological, morphological, and syntactic correspondences in vowels, consonants, word formation, and writing stroke similarities. Machine learning models obtained scores of 0.5636, 0.2255, 0.6001, 0.4683, 0.3441 and 0.5716 with an average similarity of 56% for 100 word pairs. Computational results showed certain Korean-Tamil word alignments that may have been influenced by past lexical borrowings or even by chance. In conclusion, the plausible reasons for the linguistic linkage include ancient maritime trade, spread of Buddhism by Tamil Buddhist monks in Southeast Asia and academic exchanges as evidenced by the movement of scholars. Nevertheless, the consonant overlap, particularly in terms of the cultural significance level, is fascinating and warrants further study regarding possible historical contact or linguistic bonds.

Local Lessons, Global Impact: Financial Literacy through Children's Picture Books for Children in a Changing World

Shalini Nadaswaran

In her work *Cruel Optimism* (2011), Berlant suggests that life in late, contemporary capitalism, both in local and global spaces is marked by ongoing structural violence, economic instability, precarious labor, and the erosion of social safety nets. These conditions, unlike that of singular, dramatic events of trauma like war and assault, are produced rather by ongoing, low-intensity suffering that seeps into daily existence, a regular feature which is referred to as "everyday trauma". In her essay 'Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency)', Berlant further explicates this condition of everyday trauma by discussing how everyday life under neoliberalism wears people down, through poor health, debt, bad jobs, poor job security and even food insecurity. The entirety of everyday life is consumed

by these systemic pressures which are both cumulative and structural, affecting individuals; men, women and even children every day. Using Berlant's 'everyday trauma' as a theoretical framework, this paper will discuss the importance of teaching financial literacy to (underprivileged) children using children's picture books from an early age. More importantly, this paper will argue how children's literature through children's picture books are able to equip Malaysian children from the age of 7 to 9 years old with basic financial knowledge such as saving, earning and spending. Children's picture books such as *The Berstein Bears: The Trouble with Money* and *Dr. Seuss's One Cent, Two Cents*, provide a significant avenue for young children from all walks of life, whether local or global (local orphanages or international schools in Malaysia) to learn about money. This paper will then discuss how picture books bridge economic theory and lived experiences, both at local and global spaces.

The Global Rise of Chinese Web Fantasy Novels: A Glocalization Perspective

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Chinese web fantasy novels have gained unprecedented global popularity, with translated versions attracting massive international readerships. This paper investigates their global rise through the theoretical lens of cultural glocalization, aiming to identify strategies used by cultural agents in adapting local narratives for global audiences. Drawing on Giulianotti and Robertson's (2007a) typology—relativization, accommodation, hybridization, and transformation—it analyzes the glocalization strategies of three key works: *Coiling Dragon*, *Lord of the Mysteries*, and *Soul Land*. Findings reveal that authors engage in cultural hybridization by fusing Western narrative conventions with Chinese philosophical and symbolic systems; translators adopt a pragmatic balance of domestication and foreignization, reflecting linguistic accommodation to ensure accessibility while preserving cultural specificity; publishers pursue media transformation through cross-media adaptations and IP-based marketing. This study reveals that glocalization as an agentive, dynamic process rather than a passive response to globalization. The study deepens understanding of literary globalization, highlighting how localized products circulate globally with a distinctive voice.

A Corpus-Based Examination of Translator Style Consistency in Culture-Specific Items: The Chinese Translations of George Kao and Wu Ningkun

Shi Yuwen

This study examines the stylistic consistency of individual translators across multiple works using a multi-complex corpus model. While translator style has been widely investigated, few empirical studies have tested whether the distinctive stylistic traits identified in one translation persist across a translator's broader oeuvre. Integrating a parallel corpus with two comparable corpora, the analysis first compares how George Kao and Wu Ningkun handle culture-specific items (CSIs) in their translations of *The Great Gatsby* (TGG), and then examine whether the distinctive patterns identified in the TGG parallel corpus recur in their respective comparable corpora, which comprise other Chinese translations of American fiction. Quantitative findings reveals a high degree of stylistic consistency in both translators' work, with preferred CSI translation procedures and habitual linguistic choices appearing consistently across texts. This suggests that translator style can function as a stable, author-like signature detectable across multiple works by the same individual. These findings broaden current understandings of stylistic modelling in corpus-based translation studies and offer methodological insights for translator identification across languages and genres.

Mon Pottery Village of Koh Kret Island, Thailand

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Handicrafts are artifacts that carry cultural symbols and represent the intangible heritage of ethnic minorities. They play a vital role in consolidating the identity of ethnic groups. These artifacts help reinforce shared values and norms, maintaining a sense of connection to the past. For minority ethnic groups, the distinct cultural symbols embedded in their artifacts—differing from those of the predominant host community—serve to foster group identity and promote cohesion within co-ethnic enclaves. This empirical research investigates Koh Kret in Nonthaburi Province, an ethnic enclave of Mon descent in Thailand. An ethnographic study and case analysis were conducted in the Mon pottery village, which is part of Thailand's One Village One Product (OVOP) initiative. The third-generation Mon owner of a pottery workshop produces handmade pottery to preserve Mon heritage, despite having assimilated into Thai society (commonly referred to as Mon Thai). Drawing on Herbert Gans' (1979) seminal concept of symbolic ethnicity and recent studies applying this framework, this research highlights how second-, third-, or even later-generation immigrants utilize ethnic symbols to express identity while remaining integrated within the host society. The authors argue that Mon Thais, although highly assimilated into the dominant Thai society, continue to maintain ethnic symbols- such as pottery- as expressions of cultural identity. The ethnic tourism focus on the Mon pottery village of Koh Kret not only generates material benefits but also reinforces ethnic symbolism. This contributes to social cohesion among Mon Thais residing on the island and sustains cultural pride. The findings contribute to our understanding of cultural retention and highlight symbolic ethnicity as a key factor in patterns of cultural continuity.

Unveiling Two Decades of Knowledge Hiding Research: A Global Bibliometric and Asia Pacific Perspective

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This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of knowledge hiding research published between 2006 and 2025. Knowledge hiding has emerged as a critical topic in organizational behaviour, particularly in knowledge-intensive environments. Despite growing academic interest, there has been limited systematic effort to map its intellectual landscape and regional trends, especially from Asia-Pacific contexts. This study fills the gap by identifying the field's major contributors, intellectual structure, and evolving themes. A total of 595 documents were retrieved from the Scopus database using a title-based search strategy. Bibliometric tools, VOSviewer, were employed to examine document characteristics, co-authorship patterns, keyword co-occurrence, citation analysis, and thematic evolution. The data were analyzed to determine publication growth, influential authors, key journals, and emerging research areas. Importantly, 437 of these documents (approximately 73.6%) are affiliated with institutions from Asia Pacific countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, China, India, and Australia. Key journals such as the Journal of Knowledge Management and prominent authors contributed significantly to the theoretical and empirical development of the field. Core themes include ethical climate, leadership behaviour, psychological safety, and knowledge-

based work design. The study is limited by its reliance on a single database (Scopus) and a title-based search strategy, which may have excluded relevant but non-titled content. Future studies could expand the data scope and incorporate full-text or abstract searches for broader coverage. This study presents a bibliometric analysis of knowledge hiding with a regional focus, offering valuable insights to inform future theoretical development and practical interventions, particularly within non-Western organizational contexts

Sustainable Consumption Behavior Driving to Positive E-Word of mouth (E-WOM) of Gen Z

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Generation Z is emerging in shaping the global sustainable consumption behavior specifically in market of digital and technological era. This study examines how sustainable consumption behavior dimensions, such as quality of life, care for environmental well-being and care for the future generation, influence Gen Z's E-Word of mouth (E-WOM). The impact of sustainable consumption has been studied by previous literature in other contexts. However, the empirical research from Gen Z's is rather limited specifically on sustainable consumption behavior. Therefore, this conceptual paper is proposed to fill in the sustainable consumption literature gap by focusing on the relationship between sustainable consumption behavior and E-WOM from Gen Z's perspectives. Academically, this study contributes to the literature of sustainable consumption from Gen Z's point of view. Consequently, provide understanding on customer of Gen Z's regarding sustainable consumption.

Indigenous Leaders' Concerns about Customary Land Registration Program in West Sumatra, Indonesia

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The government's desire to protect the existence of customary land through the customary land registration program faces challenges from traditional leaders. The socialization of the implementation of land administration and customary land registration was actually responded to with rejection from West Sumatra community organizations. This paper aims to analyze the causes of traditional leaders rejecting the legality of customary land. By using a descriptive qualitative approach, interviewing thirteen informants and collecting the necessary documents, this study found three main reasons for the rejection of customary land registration programs by traditional leaders. First, there is concern about the emergence of social conflicts at the indigenous community level because the registration process requires certainty of the boundaries of customary land from all customary land owners. Second, concerns about customary violations, namely buying and selling customary land after the issuance of customary land certificates as an outlay for customary land registration. Third, there is concern about the dualism of the authority of customary leaders, namely between authorities who maintain communal values versus authorities who support land legalization through customary land registration. This concern prompted indigenous leaders to make a joint statement of attitude against

the customary land registration program socialized by the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and the National Land Agency of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024..

Intermediary Women and Imperial Selves: Negotiating Local and Global Identities in Hugh Clifford's texts

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In an era marked by rapid deglobalisation and the emergence of an increasingly fractious world, the world has become far more cautious. Yet, such a polycentric situation was also faced over a century ago by the British colonial administrator and author Hugh Clifford, who had to continuously negotiate between localised Malayan identities and global imperial ideologies. His writings, such as his short story collection *In Court and Kampong* (1897), serve as a historical microcosm illustrating how gender and racial imaginaries intersect in the writings, particularly in his depictions of Malay women across his Malayan short stories and personal correspondence. Clifford's representations of women are of as stabilising forces, symbolising moral redemption and order amid the perceived "languor" of the tropics. This is evident in stories like "A Daughter of the Mohammadans" within *In Court and Kampong* (1897) where the British imperial project is depicted as rescuing marginalised native women from obscurity. I argue therefore that Clifford's eroticisation and infantilisation of the non-European woman reflects broader epistemological frameworks that underpin the imperial encounter. Employing theories from postcolonial studies, gender theory, and cultural hybridisation, my analysis will reveal how localized narratives of Malayan identity in Clifford's short story collection, *In Court and Kampong* (1897) are continually reconfigured through global discourses of migration, communication, and geopolitics.

Between Betrayal and Suffering: Derridean Deconstruction of the Mother Character in Syair *Batu Belah Batu Bertangkup*

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This study examines the portrayal of the mother character, Tanjung, in *Syair Batu Belah Batu Bertangkup* through Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction, challenging the dominant moral narrative that emphasizes filial piety. Traditionally used to warn children against disobedience, the tale often absolves the mother of moral scrutiny, portraying her as a victim rather than an agent of harm. By applying Derrida's concepts of *différance* and binary opposition, this research interrogates the cultural construction of morality in Malay oral literature, particularly the depiction of motherhood, responsibility, and emotional fragility. Textual analysis of the *syair* reveals Tanjung as an emotionally unstable and neglectful mother whose despair and abandonment of her children subvert idealized maternal roles. Rather than a cautionary tale solely for children, this study argues that the narrative reflects patriarchal expectations and hidden tensions within family dynamics, making visible alternative moral readings. Comparative references to other regional versions of the story highlight shared narrative patterns while revealing local variations in tone and symbolism. This work contributes to Malay literary studies by demonstrating how deconstruction unearths silenced voices and destabilizes moral absolutes embedded in traditional texts. It invites a reevaluation of oral literature as a space of cultural negotiation, where marginalized perspectives—particularly of female

characters—can be critically reinterpreted. Ultimately, the syair becomes not only a moral parable but also a mirror of societal pressures and emotional complexities that transcend its folkloric context.

Privileged Refugees?: The Case of Russian and Ukrainian Long-Term Residents in Bali Amidst the 2022 Russo-Ukrainian War

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The Russo-Ukrainian war in 2022 has led to mass displacement, with millions of Ukrainians seeking asylum and thousands of Russians leaving their country due to political repression and economic sanctions. While most scholarly attention focuses on refugee movements from the Global South towards the Global North, a parallel yet underexplored migration pattern has emerged: the increasing numbers of Russians and Ukrainians as long-term residents in destinations like Bali, Indonesia. For many of the locals in Bali, the Russian and Ukrainian communities in Bali exercise their white privilege like most European tourists; however, many Russians and Ukrainians claim that their being there is a result of displacement from the war, making them refugees in their own terms. This phenomenon challenges traditional notions of refugeeism, which refers to the act of fleeing home as displaced people lose their privileges as citizens. Implementing discourse analysis and ethnography as the primary methods, the proposed research asks: (1) How does the presence of long-term Russian and Ukrainian residents in Bali, amid the Russo-Ukrainian war, challenge conventional understandings of refugeeism? (2) What does their migration reveal about privilege, precarity, and the geopolitics of movement in the 21st century? The results of this research will contextualize the migration patterns of Russians and Ukrainians in Bali and analyze the broader theoretical implications for refugee studies and global mobility justice. Ultimately, studying the migratory pattern from the Global North to the Global South may offer insights into the evolving nature of migration in the 21st century.

Metadiscourse and persuasion in online product reviews: A comparative study of expert reviews and consumer reviews

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The extensive range of products and services available today has made shopping increasingly complex and stressful. With countless options across various brands and price points, consumers often rely on online product reviews to make satisfactory purchase decisions and ease the buying process. These reviews are categorised into two types: expert-written reviews and consumer-written reviews. Expert reviews, such as those from Wirecutter (a New York Times affiliate), are widely perceived as authoritative and credible. In contrast, consumer reviews on platforms like Amazon.com, have wide global reach and offer detailed, experience-based insights from real users. This corpus-based study investigates the use of interpersonal metadiscourse in expert-written reviews from Wirecutter and consumer-written reviews from Amazon.com. It focuses on the distribution of metadiscourse markers used in these reviews and explores how reviewers construct persuasive appeals through credibility (ethos), emotion (pathos), and rational (logos). Drawing on Hyland's (2005a) Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse, the analysis examines interactive markers (transitions, code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, frame markers) and interactional markers (self-mentions, attitude markers, hedges, boosters, engagement markers). The findings reveal notable differences in metadiscourse between the two corpora. Expert reviews employ more interactive markers, particularly transitions,

evidentials, endophoric markers, and code glosses, to create logical flow, emphasising logos. In contrast, consumer reviews rely more heavily on interactional markers such as self-mentions, attitude markers, and boosters, highlighting personal stance, emotion and direct engagement with readers, aligning more with ethos and pathos. These findings highlight distinct rhetorical strategies and offer practical insights into how metadiscourse enhances persuasive digital communication.

Mastery of Direct and Indirect Depiction in the Works of Edgar Allan Poe and Nazar Eshonqul: A Psychological and Stylistic Analysis

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This article analyzes the artistic expression of national psychology and mentality through the speech of literary characters in the works of Edgar Allan Poe and Nazar Eshonqul. It argues that character speech functions as a dual-purpose tool that expresses both personal emotion and collective consciousness. The study examines how cultural, religious, and psychological elements are embedded in language through the use of idioms, inner monologues, and metaphorical expressions. In Poe's stories, particularly *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Black Cat*, obsessive repetition and intense inner monologues convey psychological breakdown, guilt, and paranoia—reflecting the Western tradition of individualism and existential isolation. In contrast, Eshonqul's characters speak in a calm, philosophical, and metaphor-rich tone, drawing from Eastern cultural and spiritual traditions to portray patience, faith, and moral resilience. The article offers a comparative analysis of the two authors' narrative approaches, emphasizing differences in linguistic features, psychological tone, and cultural symbolism. It shows how character speech reflects broader national values, social ethics, and historical memory. Ultimately, the study contributes to the theory of literary psychologism by demonstrating how psychological depth in literature is inseparable from cultural identity. Through this lens, character speech becomes a key to unlocking the philosophical and structural layers of a literary work, providing deeper insight into its meaning and cultural relevance.

From global theory to local discourse: The journey of Michel Foucault in Vietnamese and Asia-Pacific literatures

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This study examines the reception and reconstruction of Michel Foucault's thought in Vietnamese literary criticism, in comparative relation to literary spaces across the Asia - Pacific region, including China, Japan, South Korea, and Indonesia. Rather than presuming that Western theories - such as Foucault's - can "travel" in their original form, this paper focuses on how key Foucauldian concepts - discourse, power/knowledge, subjectivation, and regimes of truth - are extracted, translated, adapted, and grafted into local epistemological structures. The central question posed is: Can global theories be fully transplanted, or must they always be rewritten within indigenous contexts? In Vietnam, Foucauldian ideas have been mobilized to reread various literary layers, ranging from war literature and feminist writing to works that explore personal identity and social surveillance. However, this process has been uneven, shaped by academic paradigms, conditions of translation, and access to

original theoretical sources. In contrast, in several other Asian countries, Foucault is often integrated into postmodern criticism and cultural studies as a tool for reconfiguring literary practices. Thus, the reception of Foucault in Vietnam is not merely an academic gesture, but a critical endeavor to construct an autonomous discourse of literary criticism - one that moves beyond rigid ideological frameworks and conventional moralist interpretations.

Cinematic Art-Based Action Research: A Practice-Led Framework for Studying Film Production

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Contemporary film studies have predominantly centered on analyzing the film as text focusing on narrative structure, visual composition, editing, sound, and symbolic representation. While such approaches have yielded valuable insights into cinematic meaning, they often neglect the production process as an integral site of knowledge construction and cultural articulation. This paper addresses this critical gap by proposing a new methodological framework: Cinematic Art-Based Action Research (CABAR). Rooted in the principles of action research and developed through sustained experimentation with practice-led film production, CABAR positions the act of making film itself as a valid and rigorous form of academic inquiry. Drawing from Indonesian cultural aesthetics, community collaboration, and the lived practices of filmmaking, CABAR facilitates a dialogic and reflexive engagement with cinema not only as a finished product but as an evolving process shaped by creative decisions, social negotiations, and cultural values. This method allows researchers to interrogate the choices made during production ranging from visual design and narrative construction to collaboration and authorship as a way to critically uncover how meaning, ideology, and identity are formed behind the camera. In doing so, CABAR challenges the conventional boundaries between film analysis and film practice, offering a culturally situated, epistemologically robust alternative for scholars, educators, and practitioners in the field of film and media studies.

Emotional Communities of Displacement: Negative Emotions and Diasporic Femininity in Suchen Christine Lim's *The River's Song*

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Applying Barbara H. Rosenwein's theory of emotional communities, this study deciphers how diasporic female characters in *The River's Song* negotiate Singapore's transformation from riverine settlement to global metropolis. The strained mother-daughter relationship between Ping and her mother serves as a primary site for embodying Rosenwein's core premise—that emotional norms govern collective expression. Through close textual analysis, we trace a generative chain of negative emotions: cultural rupture manifests as unspoken grief—suppressed by familial emotional norms—which, when compounded by unmet expectations, crystallizes into mutual guilt that perpetuates intergenerational conflict; this cycle ultimately fosters ambivalent nostalgia for disrupted kinship bonds, a pivotal force reforming diasporic femininity. The Singapore River operates as a gendered memory container, spatially anchoring mother-daughter narratives of displacement while resisting state-led erasure of vernacular histories. By contextualizing these emotional dynamics within national modernization, the paper examines a hidden cost of progress that Singapore's economic ascent necessitates: familial fragmentation, transferring affective burdens disproportionately onto women. Ultimately, Lim positions emotional communities as micro-political arenas where diasporic femininity

navigates cultural trauma, simultaneously vulnerable to and resistant to homogenizing development discourses.

Double Reduction as Dynamic Governance: The local implementation logic and the global education nexus, triangulating social media and administrative evidence

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China's "Double Reduction" (shuang jian) policy is examined as a dynamic reform situated at the intersection of local governance and global debates on workload reduction, equity, and shadow-education regulation. Using a qualitative design and secondary materials, we triangulate two peer-reviewed Weibo corpora, including 10,155 posts and 22,463 comments (July 1–October 16, 2021) and 12,195 comments (July 24, 2021–April 24, 2022), with Ministry of Education (MOE) administrative indicators. Thematic, content, and qualitative sentiment analyses show an early negativity bias (59.6% negative vs. 40.4% positive; N=10,138) and a secondary-outbreak surge in negative affect as the tutoring sector destabilized. Topic modeling identifies durable clusters around industry impact, institutional supervision, public feedback, and school-level implementation, alongside thirteen subtopics (e.g., equity, parental companionship, teacher compensation). On the implementation side, MOE announced that all compulsory-education schools would provide after-school services from fall 2021; by late September 2021, 77.4 million students had participated, with 71.2% attending every weekday, providing evidence of rapid institutionalization with uneven local bandwidth. We treat social-media and administrative sources as non-commensurable yet triangulating, refrain from causal claims, and interpret convergences as patterned signals across discursive and administrative domains. The study contributes a local–global nexus framing and proposes actionable levers: audited quality-and-equity metrics for after-school services, institutionalized feedback loops keyed to opinion life-cycles, and transparent dashboards to support comparative learning. Future work should extend the time horizon and test mechanism hypotheses with design-appropriate methods.

Differential Impacts of China's Mandatory Waste Sorting Policies on Urban and Rural Household Behavior

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Since 2019, China has put mandatory waste sorting policies into real practice, aiming to reshape household sorting behavior. However, the evidence on the behavioral impact of these policies remains inconsistent, and some studies have contradictory conclusions between urban and rural areas. Understanding the differential implementation effects of mandatory waste sorting policies across urban and rural areas is essential for policy improvement. Regrettably, no literature review has examined these effects. To fill these gaps, this study examines the behavioral effects of mandatory waste sorting policies through an urban-rural comparative perspective. Using a narrative review method, the study focuses on papers published between 2019 and 2025 on household waste sorting behavior in China. A total of 37 relevant studies were identified from the Web of Science database (WoS). The analysis reveals that publication output started to rise significantly in 2020, reaching its peak in 2022. Despite a slight decline in the subsequent years, the output remained relatively steady. Furthermore, existing literature mainly focuses on urban areas, particularly developed cities. However, research on rural areas is scarce. This study also finds that the mandatory policy has had effects on

rural residents, while its influence on urban residents remains contested. Based on these findings, the study recommends that future research should focus on less developed urban and rural areas and pay more attention to the long-term effects of waste sorting policies. Finally, we suggest that governments adopt waste sorting policies that are appropriate for their region.

A comparative study of ancient Rome's and China's Han Dynasty's city of Chang'an's military defense systems

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In the centuries before and after BCE, a great and glorious civilization emerged at each end of the Eurasian continent: the Qin and Han civilization of China and the Roman civilization. Since the end of World War II, with the continuous development of contemporary archaeological excavations, a large number of material cultural relics have been unearthed over the past half century, greatly enriching people's understanding of the above civilizations. Although the academic community has made fruitful research on the above, the discussion on military aspects is relatively weak. Therefore, this paper aims to explain and compare the military defense of the capitals of both sides in historical periods, and to a certain extent supplement the current academic community's lack of research in the field of capital military. Based on the above considerations, this paper adopts the methods of bottom-up reconstruction of archaeological materials, top-down reconstruction of documentary materials and large-scale spatial historical geography research. Taking Chang'an, the central city of the Chinese empire in the Western Han Dynasty and the city of Rome in the imperial period as examples, this paper analyzes the development process of military defense and explores the success or failure of the city's military management.

The Impact of Professional Title and Teaching Experience on Reflective Attitudes among In-Service English Teachers in Chinese Higher Education

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This study examined the reflective attitudes of in-service English teachers in Chinese higher education through a quantitative method, focusing on how professional title and teaching experience influenced their engagement with reflective practice. A total of 182 participants completed a questionnaire measuring five dimensions of reflective attitude: the usefulness of the reflective process and activities, frequency and likableness of reflection, and feelings about reflection. Descriptive statistics indicated that teachers generally perceived reflection as valuable and integral to teaching effectiveness. Welch's ANOVA revealed that professional title had a significant impact on their perceptions of the usefulness of reflection in helping accomplish teaching tasks, usefulness in improving teaching performance, and likableness of reflection. MANCOVA results further showed that, after controlling for teaching experience, professional title significantly influenced all five dimensions. Additionally, more experienced teachers showed deeper and more meaningful reflective engagement, particularly in frequency, likableness, and feeling. Teachers with higher professional titles demonstrated more positive reflective attitudes. These findings suggest that reflective engagement is shaped by both professional titles and teaching experience, reinforcing that the contextual factors play a crucial role in guiding reflective behaviour.

Socioeconomic Vulnerability and Public Attitudes toward Climate Intervention in Malaysia: Assessing the Impacts of 1.5°C vs. 2.0°C Global Warming

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In the context of the “dual carbon” goal, peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality, there is an urgent need for systematic research into the role, mechanisms and future trends of Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS) as key players in global climate governance. This study aims to explore the evolving roles of ENGOS in climate governance and identify the factors influencing these changes. Using the PRISMA framework, we conducted a systematic review of 36 publications from 2015 to 2025, complemented by bibliometric analysis to identify the key roles and factors in ENGO participation in climate governance. The results showed that the role of ENGOS is driven by various factors, including institutional environment, resource support, technical capacity, social networks, and public legitimacy. Furthermore, their role is shifting from service provision to policy coordination, aiming to enhance governance effectiveness through digital tools and transnational alliances. Despite the rapid growth of related research in recent years, the field remains Euro-American centric. Challenges such as North–South disparities and issues related to the scale of governance scale also persist. Therefore, international cooperation, especially between the Global North and Global South, needs to be strengthened in the near future.

Family Temporal Orientations in *In Search of Lost Time* and *Dream of the Red Chamber*: A Cross-Cultural Study through Hofstede’s Framework

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This study examines family temporal orientations in *In Search of Lost Time* and *Dream of the Red Chamber* through Hofstede’s cultural dimension of long-term versus short-term orientation. Focusing on family education and marriage, the analysis shows that the Jia family reflects a long-term orientation emphasizing diligence, delayed gratification, and lineage preservation, while Marcel’s family represents a short-term orientation privileging individual happiness, emotional immediacy, and personal choice. Unlike prior applications of Hofstede’s framework—largely concentrated in management, education, and mental health—this research extends the theory to classical literature, addressing a gap in cross-cultural studies. The findings demonstrate that cultural dimensions can illuminate the temporal logics embedded in world classics, thus expanding the scope of Hofstede’s framework and offering a practical analytical tool for comparative literature. Future studies may further test its explanatory power across broader cultural contexts and literary traditions, thereby advancing the integration of cross-cultural theory with classical textual analysis.

The Role of Semiotics in Local Specialty Branding in Enhancing Cultural Identity and Market Appeal

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Semiotics plays a vital role in the field of brand design. However, the branding of local specialty products has not been effectively explored. The purpose of this paper is to study how to use semiotics theory to enhance cultural identity and market appeal in the process of improving local branding. This paper uses Saussure's semiotic theory and Aaker's brand equity model. The model is integrated into the shaping of local specialty brands. This study uses a structured questionnaire to analyze and test the relationship between hypotheses. Data analysis shows that brand symbol design that combines local culture can stimulate consumers to awaken their sense of local cultural identity, arouse consumers' attraction and promote purchases. This study explains the important role of the concept of semiotics in enhancing local cultural identity and attracting consumers. By combining the theories of local culture and semiotics, it is possible to effectively promote the branding of local specialty products. Having local cultural symbols can not only awaken consumers' perception but also enhance their willingness to buy. The research results provide theoretical and data support for local specialty brands and strengthen the connection between brands and consumers.

Navigating Ambivalence: Hong Kong Hybridity Between Mainlandization and the West in Jennifer Wong's *Letters Home* (2020)

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This paper examines how Jennifer Wong's selected poems from *Letters Home* (2020) reflect the ambivalence of Hong Kong diasporic identity through the lens of Ien Ang's theory of hybridity. Wong's poetry captures the dual anxiety of cultural erasure under China's mainlandization and racial reductionism in the West, where Hong Kong Chinese are often subsumed under a monolithic Chinese label. Drawing on Ang's conception of hybridity as a dynamic and resistant mode of identity formation, this paper argues that Wong reclaims her Hong Kong Chinese identity as a fluid, mobile resource. Her poems resist both nationalist essentialism and Western cultural simplification by inhabiting a space marked by linguistic ambiguity, cultural memory, and everyday textures. Rather than resolving identity conflicts, Wong foregrounds them—rendering hybridity not as cultural compromise, but as an ongoing negotiation of selfhood. Through this poetic enactment, she affirms hybridity's potential to articulate belonging without fixity, and difference without exclusion. Ultimately, Wong's work offers an important intervention into contemporary anglophone Hong Kong literature by revealing how poetry can respond to the pressures of global cultural politics while preserving the singular texture of local experience and resisting reductive narratives of identity.

The Cultural Significance of the Writing of Male Homosexual Emotions in Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio

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Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio (Liaozhai Zhiyi), a seminal work of Chinese supernatural literature by Pu Songling, is predominantly recognized for its heterosexual romantic narratives, it also contains some emotional descriptions between men. This study examines the cultural implications of these portrayals, drawing on episodes such as "Huang Jiulang" to argue that they transcend mere narrative embellishment, offering a lens into alternative emotional landscapes. Employing a theoretical framework inspired by Gilles Deleuze's concepts of "rhizomatic connections," this paper posits that the expressions of male-male affection in Liaozhai Zhiyi function as non-normative flows of desire, destabilizing the Confucian heteronormative order and its emphasis on familial duty and reproduction. These depictions, situated within the fantastical realm of the supernatural, form a rhizomatic network that intertwines human and non-human elements, rationality and the uncanny, thereby exposing latent tensions in gender and power dynamics of Ming-Qing society. Far from being peripheral, the writing of male homosexual emotions in Liaozhai Zhiyi emerges as a subversive critique of hegemonic norms, illuminating the complexities of identity, desire, and cultural resistance in traditional Chinese literature. This analysis underscores the text's broader philosophical and socio-cultural relevance, enriching our understanding of emotional multiplicity in pre-modern China.

The Complex Interplay of Local Communities and Global Initiatives in Peatland Management: An Ethnography of Frictional Environmentality

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This paper explores the complex interplay between local communities and global initiatives in peatland management through an ethnographic lens, focusing on the phenomenon of frictional environmentality. Based on multi-actor ethnographic research conducted in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, we investigate how local practices and identities interact with international environmental policies aimed at peatland conservation and restoration. Utilizing Foucauldian notions of governmentality and Tsing's framework of friction, we analyze the awkward interactions that arise between local communities and global initiators. Our findings reveal that while global initiatives seek to impose standardized ecological solutions, they often clash with the diverse realities, cultural values, and traditional knowledge of local communities. This friction not only highlights the challenges of implementing global policies and the formation of environmental subjects but also underscores the agency of local actors in negotiating their ecological futures. By illuminating these dynamics, this paper advocates for a more inclusive approach to peatland management that recognizes and integrates local perspectives into global frameworks, ultimately fostering more sustainable and equitable environmental governance.

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