

Keynote

Unlocking Brain Potential: What and How to Learn in the AI Era

Chi-Hung Juan, National Central University

Join me as we explore the history of AI and its profound impact on our daily lives and the academic world through the lens of brain science. With this foundation, we will focus on how students and educators can proactively harness the power of these rapidly evolving AI tools to effectively pursue their goals. I look forward to an interactive brainstorming session with the audience as we envision an even brighter future in the AI era together.

Invited Speakers

From Learning to Impact: Connecting Teaching, Research, and Real-World Relevance

Jessica Sze Yin Ho, Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia

In higher education, teaching, research, and impact are often treated as separate domains, with research outputs (i.e. publications) frequently regarded as a strong indicator of success. This separation can limit the potential of academic work to influence real-world practice and to enrich student learning. This paper proposes a reframing of these roles by focusing on how learning connects teaching, research, and real-world relevance.

Research is understood not only as the production of knowledge but also as a process through which knowledge is translated and applied in real-world contexts. This aligns with Boyer's concept of the scholarship of application, which emphasizes connecting academic knowledge to practical and societal needs. In practice, this includes both traditional outputs (e.g., publications, case studies) and applied engagement (e.g., industry collaboration, professional dialogue, and public-facing work). Through these interactions, knowledge is tested and extended beyond academic settings.

These experiences have direct implications for teaching. Constructive alignment emphasizes aligning learning outcomes, teaching, and assessment. If real-world relevance is an intended outcome, then learning experiences, teaching activities, and assessment need to be appropriately designed to support that goal. This includes creating opportunities for students to engage with authentic problems and apply knowledge in meaningful contexts.

Building on these perspectives, this paper introduces a cyclical model linking Learning, Research, Impact, and Teaching. Learning—shaped by prior experience and ongoing inquiry—drives research; research that engages with real-world contexts generates impact; and these experiences

return through teaching to enrich future learning. Together, these elements form a continuous, reinforcing cycle.

Critical Theory and Political Science: ‘Radical’ Views from the Arctic

Marc Lanteigne, UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, Norway

One of the current ‘great debates’ in political science today has centered on the emergence of subjective (or sometimes referred to as ‘post-positivist’ or ‘radical’), approaches to the discipline. This has taken place because of the growing multidisciplinary nature of the subject, as well as the introduction of new voices, histories, languages, and perceptions into the major questions surrounding political studies. The result has been a dramatic questioning of longstanding tenets of both domestic and international politics, including concepts of ‘the state’, ‘government’ and ‘sovereignty’. Who defines these concepts, have they changed due to current political questions, and how to make sure that the study of political science within social sciences remains relevant? These questions will be addressed from the viewpoint of the far north, as the Arctic is facing many political questions which fall beyond the traditional concepts of hard politics. These include the environment, human rights / intersectionality, Indigenous knowledge, gender and sexuality, human security, and the issues of neo- and post-colonialism, and all of these are having to share space with the ‘return’ of geopolitics and military security in many political science discourses. Why has critical theory now received the attention that it has despite its label as radical and disruptive? What can political studies and liberal arts and social sciences learn from these approaches, and can one point to the Arctic as a specific model for the (normative?) advancement of these debates?

NOT At All Costs: Climate Justice, Democracy, and the Promise of Liberal Education

Michael Mikulewicz, State University of New York ESF, United States

Among today’s global challenges such as growing authoritarianisms and pernicious inequalities, the crisis of climate change presents itself as an opportunity for humanity to unite and bring down the rising temperatures together. After all, climate change is touted as the ‘Great Equalizer’ that will spare no region, society, or species from its negative effects. Scientists sound alarm bells urging global leaders to tackle greenhouse gas emissions and to help prepare the most vulnerable for the now unavoidable impacts climate change. The world feels a justifiable sense of urgency to act. In such an environment, one could be tempted to set all our differences aside in the name of ‘our common future’.

I argue that there is grave danger hiding in this kind of rhetoric. A crisis like climate change is certainly a huge challenge, with countless lives and livelihoods at stake. However, a crisis like this is also an opportunity to deploy expensive technologies of dubious pedigree and effectiveness, or to turn to market solutions -- the vehicle of growth that caused climate change in the first place, or -- perhaps most worryingly -- to enact policies that disenfranchise many to the benefit of the few.

So, how do we address the climate crisis without increasing the already rampant social, economic, and political inequalities around the planet? This is one of the questions posed by the growing scholar-activist field of climate justice. In this talk, I will discuss what a climate justice lens brings to debates on climate change, as well as the ways to ensure that our responses to it do not become undemocratic, or worse still -- harmful and oppressive in the long term. In this context, I will discuss liberal education as a kind of education that helps keep us civically vigilant and suspicious of totalizing rhetorics that try to erase difference and democracy in the name of solving climate change.

Beyond Instrumental Utility: Reframing Empowerment through the Mode of Being in Liberal Arts and Bilingual Education

Makiko Yurita, National Institute for School Teachers and Staff Development, Japan

This presentation introduces a theoretical framework to address the conceptual ambiguity of empowerment by integrating Erich Fromm's ontological modes of "having" and "being" into a Four-Quadrant Model. Structured along two axes, which are having/being and individual-performative versus collective-democratic orientations, this model enables a systematic critique of contemporary discourses on education. These discourses predominantly operate within the mode of having, prioritising the acquisition of measurable competencies and reducing learning to its instrumental utility within a human-capital framework.

Applying this model, the study first reconceptualises liberal arts education not as the mere possession of knowledge, but as the embodiment of shared values through dialogue and as a community-building project for critical inquiry. In the context of rapidly advancing AI technologies, it further argues that the core value of bilingual education lies not in language acquisition per se, but in a practice that renders visible the contexts embedded in each language and enables movement across them.

Together, these approaches constitute a necessary medium for cultivating a critical mode of thinking that can render the constraints of language both visible and workable. In an era marked by processes of globalisation and standardisation, which increasingly decontextualise knowledge and communication, such a mode of thinking becomes indispensable. It fosters both the capacity and the disposition to render visible and place in relation the contexts embedded in different

languages, while cultivating a mode of being oriented toward relativising and critically examining one's own contexts.

These integrated capabilities are essential for restoring and collectively sustaining contexts that can be regarded as trustworthy, thereby providing a basis for meaningful communication and shared understanding. The presentation thus argues that achieving this requires a critical rebalancing of the discourses on education currently skewed toward the mode of having, through a renewed evaluation from the perspective of being.

Oral Presentations

Designing EMI Business and Technology–Oriented Courses in the Age of AI: Pedagogical Strategies from Multilingual Classrooms

Priyanka C. Bhatt, Yuan Ze University, Taiwan

English medium instruction (EMI) has become a central strategy for the internationalization of higher education in non English dominant contexts. At the same time, many EMI faculty members are increasingly tasked with teaching quantitatively and technologically intensive subjects related to data analysis, artificial intelligence, and contemporary business practice. Through this context I want to share pedagogical insights drawn from my experience as a faculty member at Yuan Ze university (one of the early adopters of EMI in Taiwan) teaching EMI courses to linguistically diverse cohorts. The presentation focuses on how EMI course design can be adapted to support effective learning in applied, technology oriented fields while also advancing broader liberal learning goals. It examines instructional strategies that address the dual challenge of disciplinary complexity and language mediation, including instructional academic language use, concept first explanations, collaborative problem based learning, and the responsible integration of generative AI tools to support learning rather than replace foundational understanding. We focus on how EMI classrooms can function as multilingual learning spaces in which students negotiate meaning across languages, and cultural conventions. I discuss common challenges faced by EMI instructors in rapidly evolving fields, such as cognitive overload, or uneven language proficiency in an attempt to practical strategies for course structure, and classroom interaction that have proven effective in this context.

By situating EMI pedagogy within technology and business oriented education, this presentation contributes practice based reflections to ongoing discussions of internationalized higher education in Asia. It highlights how thoughtfully designed EMI courses can move beyond language policy compliance to become sites of global competence development, and critical thinking with emerging technologies. The presentation will be of interest to faculty and administrators involved in EMI teaching, and curriculum innovation.

My True Voice: Artificial Intelligence as a Bridge for Identity and the Empowerment of Sovereign Consciousness (F) in Liberal Education

Fatiha Nesrine Bouzid, Independent Scholar, Algeria

In a world where English has seemingly become its sole gateway, millions of thinkers and researchers have had to abandon their true voices to be heard. But generative AI is changing this equation. It is no longer necessary to master another's language to join the global dialogue; we can now speak in our own tongue and be understood by our own will. This radical transformation liberates liberal education from the task of transmitting language as the sole medium of knowledge, and refocuses it on its higher mission: the cultivation of consciousness. This paper introduces the A-B.F-N model, which distinguishes between:

- The functional level (B): the level of information transfer, skills, and languages. This level can be performed and with increasing efficiency by artificial intelligence (B_a).
- The sovereign level (F): the level of critical consciousness, ethical judgment, the capacity to create meaning, and existential questioning. This level is the core of our humanity, and it must become the heart of liberal education.

In the very near future, we will no longer need to learn a language in order to understand or be understood. The machine will do that. This does not mean that education becomes futile; it means its role has changed radically. Its role is no longer to fill minds with information (B), but to cultivate consciousness (F). We need an education that teaches students how to think, not what to think. How to make ethical decisions in a complex world, and how to preserve their identity while engaging in a global dialogue. We need an education that produces free citizens in the classical sense of liberal education but citizens who are also free from the hegemony of a single language over their thought.

The paper draws on:

1. Neuroscientific evidence: A study by Wilcox et al. (2026) demonstrates that advanced consciousness (F) emerges from complex neural network integration a capacity that can be cultivated through appropriate education.
2. Evidence from the philosophy of language: The researcher's personal experience, as an Algerian writing in English with the aid of AI, shows that the machine (B_a) can serve identity (F) without dissolving it. It is a practical case demonstrating that translation is not replacement of the self.
3. A philosophical vision: The model provides a theoretical framework answering the question, What do we teach? in the age of the machine. The answer: we teach meaning, ethics, and critical consciousness everything that makes us human.

The paper concludes that the greatest challenge facing liberal education today is not technical, but philosophical. Do we have the courage to redefine our role as educators from transmitters of information to facilitators of consciousness? If artificial intelligence has returned our true voices to us, then we must return education to its true purpose: graduating human beings capable of thought, not merely of information retrieval.

Languages, Learning, and Leadership in India's Multilingual Model for Liberal Learning

Bharti Chhibber, University of Delhi, India

The paper explores India's contemporary trajectory of growth through the interconnected lenses of linguistic diversity, educational transformation, and emerging forms of leadership. As a nation with a vast number of languages, India demonstrates how multilingualism can function as a strength within educational and professional contexts, particularly in environments where English operates as a shared academic language. In this regard, India's Three-Language Formula, a multilingual education policy as articulated in the National Education Policy (NEP 2020), provides a significant framework for understanding how structured multilingualism can support liberal learning in globally oriented higher education.

Focusing on developments in higher education, this study examines how Indian institutions negotiate the relationship between global knowledge systems and indigenous intellectual traditions within English-medium frameworks. The Three-Language Formula not only promotes linguistic competence but also cultivates intellectual flexibility, ethical awareness, and intercultural fluency by encouraging students to engage with multiple knowledge systems and cultural perspectives. Such an approach aligns closely with the goals of international colleges, where multilingualism and global engagement are central to academic practice. The paper also reflects on the increasing visibility of women in leadership roles, situating these shifts within changing educational and linguistic landscapes. By analyzing the intersections of language, learning, and leadership, this research highlights how non-Western, multilingual contexts contribute to evolving models of liberal learning. It further argues that India's educational and linguistic frameworks equip learners with the capacity to navigate complex global challenges while remaining grounded in diverse cultural traditions. In doing so, this paper positions India as a useful case study of how multilingual, globally oriented education systems can meaningfully shape the future of liberal learning in an interconnected world.

Visible Bodies, Invisible Power: Gender, Protest, and the Politics of Legitimacy in Bangladesh's July 2024 Uprising

Moiyen Zalal Chowdhury, BRAC University, Bangladesh

This paper examines the relationship between gender, visibility, and political authority in the July 2024 uprising in Bangladesh. Drawing on ethnographic materials, including interview transcripts, graffiti documentation, and observational field notes, it argues that women's participation was central to the production of legitimacy during moments of protest, yet was structurally decoupled from political authority during processes of political consolidation.

The analysis introduces the concept of moral labor to capture forms of participation—such as coordination, vigilance, and affective stabilization—that sustain protest but remain under-recognized within formal political frameworks. It further develops the notion of tactical gendering to explain how gendered bodies are strategically positioned within protest spaces to shape legitimacy and exposure to risk. At the same time, the paper examines graffiti as a vernacular archive that privileges visible confrontation over sustaining labor, producing structural silences that contribute to gendered erasure.

By tracing the transition from rupture to settlement, the paper demonstrates how participation expands without necessarily transforming the structures through which authority is distributed. Situating the July uprising within broader debates on protest and political transformation, the paper contributes to discussions on visibility, power, and the limits of political inclusion in contemporary social movements.

Cross-Border E-Commerce in Southeast Asia: A Qualitative Study of Challenges and Opportunities for Taiwanese Merchants

Kai Wah Hen, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia

Since 2015, e-commerce markets in Southeast Asia have grown leaps and bounds into being the world's fastest-growing online market. Cross-border e-commerce starts to flourish as local businesses venture into other economic regions and markets. The establishment of various regional economic cooperations and initiatives, such as Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), has helped to accelerate the development of cross-border e-commerce among its country members. With the New Southbound Policy, Taiwanese businesses are encouraged to tap into Southeast Asia's burgeoning e-commerce market. Within such a dynamic developments, the onus is on the Taiwanese e-commerce players to tap into these cross-border e-commerce opportunities while remaining resilient towards the challenges that lie ahead. The primary objectives of this research are to identify the key challenges and opportunities faced by Taiwanese businesses in cross-border e-commerce operations in Southeast Asia, and to examine the impact of regional economic cooperation on cross-border e-commerce in Southeast

Asia. The study adopts a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews with respondents from Taiwanese e-commerce related businesses, trade associations, e-commerce platform providers, and relevant government agencies. Driven by domestic saturation and intense competition from mainland China, Taiwanese e-commerce companies are expanding into Southeast Asia to leverage its massive market potential, cultural similarities and advanced mobile first digital infrastructure, supported by favorable government policies and full-service technological solutions. At the same time, Taiwanese merchants face significant hurdles in Southeast Asia expansion due to a lack of localization and brand-building investment, intense competition from regional rivals, and a lack of practical government support, compounded by complex regulatory barriers like Halal certification and exclusion from major trade agreement.

Trend Changes in Southeast Asian-Themed Content on Public Television Service (2001–2024)

Aining Hsieh, National Chi Nan University, Taiwan

According to statistics from Taiwan's Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Labor, the populations of Southeast Asian marriage migrants and migrant workers in Taiwan have shown steady growth over time. Within this context, Public Television Service (PTS), as a public broadcaster with educational and cultural responsibilities, plays a significant role in addressing multicultural issues through its programming and in fostering mutual understanding between Taiwanese society and Southeast Asian communities.

This study examines PTS programs related to Southeast Asia. Data are drawn from official sources, including program schedules of the main PTS channel since 2000, the PTS+ streaming platform, and the official YouTube channel, ensuring the reliability and completeness of the dataset. The selection criteria include, but are not limited to, programs focusing on Southeast Asian countries, addressing Southeast Asian sociocultural contexts, or portraying the lived experiences of Southeast Asian migrant workers and new immigrants in Taiwan.

The findings indicate that PTS has consistently produced Southeast Asia-related content since 2000. Prior to 2010, programming primarily focused on marriage migrants. After 2010, the scope expanded to include a wider range of topics, such as political developments in Southeast Asia and the everyday lives of migrant workers in Taiwan. Since 2018, PTS has also introduced multilingual news programs in Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese. By 2024, additional initiatives emerged, including Vietnamese-language educational programs designed for children.

Overall, PTS programming demonstrates an increasing diversification in its representation of Southeast Asia. These developments not only enhance Taiwanese audiences' understanding of Southeast Asian societies but also provide Southeast Asian communities in Taiwan with greater

access to information in their native languages, highlighting the broadcaster's role in promoting multicultural communication.

Reading War Across Contexts: Feminist Film Analysis and Global Visual Literacy in Ukrainian Cinema

Svitlana Kosolapova, Tzu Chi University, Taiwan

The feminist movement in Eastern Europe has developed in close interaction with nationalist and postcolonial discourses. In Ukraine, this intersection is particularly visible, as ongoing war and processes of nation-building shape both cultural production and gender representation. In such contexts, war is not only a political or military phenomenon but also a gendered one, structured through expectations of care, endurance, and survival that are unevenly distributed.

Cinema provides a crucial medium through which these dynamics can be examined. Contemporary Ukrainian films move away from direct depictions of combat, instead focusing on civilian life, domestic space, and the psychological effects of prolonged conflict. Within these narratives, female figures often become central—not simply as characters, but as sites through which war is made visible and emotionally legible.

While feminist film theory offers tools for analyzing the construction of gender on screen, I argue that in wartime contexts it also enables a deeper reading of how ideology operates through representation. Female bodies and domestic spaces become carriers of meaning, through which national trauma, resilience, and continuity are communicated. This makes feminist analysis essential for uncovering how war is mediated beyond the battlefield.

Focusing on *Klondike* (2022, dir. Maryna Er Gorbach), this presentation examines how indirect visual strategies—such as off-screen violence, spatial disruption, and everyday routines—construct resilience as a gendered condition. The film simultaneously reproduces and critiques wartime ideology: it positions the female protagonist as a bearer of survival, while exposing the unequal burden placed on women to sustain life under conditions of insecurity and limited protection.

By bringing Ukrainian cinema into English-language academic discussion, this study highlights how feminist film analysis can function as a form of global visual literacy—offering tools to critically read how war, gender, and responsibility are constructed across cultural contexts.

Feedback and Generative AI: Better or Worse, and for Whom?

Karen Ferreira-Meyers, University of Eswatini, Eswatini

GenAI is profoundly transforming teaching and learning practices, including in language education. One of its most widespread uses is the automated generation of feedback on learners' written or oral productions. While such tools promise faster, more personalised and more accessible feedback, they also raise questions regarding pedagogical quality, reliability and their potential impact on learners' autonomy and critical thinking. Importantly, feedback practices are deeply embedded in cultural norms: expectations about how criticism is expressed, how authority is negotiated between teacher and student, and how learners interpret evaluative comments vary significantly across educational and cultural contexts. This paper explores whether GenAI improves pedagogical feedback, and for whom, when cultural expectations about giving and receiving feedback are taken into account. This study aims to examine the potential benefits and limitations of using GenAI in feedback practices in the teaching of English as a first or second language, with particular attention to the context of higher education in Southern Africa. In many educational cultures, including those influenced by hierarchical teacher–student relationships, feedback tends to be perceived as authoritative rather than dialogic. The introduction of AI-generated feedback may therefore alter how students interpret and use comments on their work, potentially changing their relationship to correction, evaluation and revision.

The research relies primarily on a documentary review of recent literature on formative feedback, automated feedback and the integration of GenAI in language teaching. Particular attention is given to studies examining feedback literacy, cultural dimensions of feedback practices and the pedagogical implications of AI-mediated learning environments. This literature review allows for the identification of key theoretical models, potential benefits and pedagogical concerns associated with these technologies. By highlighting the cultural dimensions of feedback reception and production, the study discusses the pedagogical conditions necessary for the responsible and context-sensitive integration of GenAI in HE.

Arab Heritage in an English Language Context

Imed Nsiri, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

In my capacity as an instructor at the American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, I primarily teach courses on Arab heritage in English. My students are predominantly first-year undergraduates who come from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Rather than constituting an obstacle, this diversity presents a valuable opportunity to examine key issues from multiple perspectives. Many of the students initially possess a one-sided understanding of heritage topics. In this presentation, I will focus on two of the courses I teach—The Andalusian Symbiosis and Introduction to Arabic Heritage II—and discuss the pedagogical strategies I employ in each.

For instance, instead of delivering a naive lecture that simply presents Muslim Spain as a harmonious *convivencia*, I encourage students to problematize the concept and engage critically with the historical narrative. In *Introduction to Arabic Heritage II*, we, for example, analyze the distinction between Sharia and Fiqh. Through this presentation, I will demonstrate how these strategies foster student engagement with complex topics and support the development of their analytical skills. In a rapidly evolving world, the aims of liberal learning have never been more critically important.

Learning to Flow: Liberal Arts Education and the Formation of Adaptive Strategists in a World in Motion

Julien Paret, Alliance University, India

Liberal education is not only a curriculum; it is a comprehensive system that obliterates the boundary between academic and experiential learning, operating as a constant flow, reminiscent of Laozi's renowned allegory of water, owing to its universality, adaptability, and incompressibility. It adjusts itself to the dimensions and contours of any vessel, embodying soft and hard skills while carrying a message of intelligent adaptation and understated strength, helping students to find out their true selves without loss of coherence, like wild herbs thriving amidst concrete. Based on my experience as a foreign administrator and professor in the postcolonial, multilingual, and illiberal context of contemporary India, where the dominance of STEM fields affects both the socio-economic environment and public perceptions of successful upbringing, I argue that liberal learning should focus on developing adaptive strategists. This can be achieved by converting conventional pedagogy into world-building, educators into mentor-engineers, and learners into socio-political actors, ensuring that academic disciplines are, above all, actively lived. In this sense, lecture halls should be reinvented into spaces of translation, experimentation, and action—practical labs for transversal, horizontal, intercultural interactions where individual perspectives engage rather than conform. This presentation asserts that liberal education is no longer solely a product of Western institutions but instead a multifaceted reflection of diverse and dynamic settings. This positions international colleges as compelling conduits for training innovators, leaders, critical thinkers, and problem solvers who are prepared to read, navigate, and impact complex, unstable, and volatile environments with clarity, flexibility, humanity, and humility. It therefore envisions liberal learning as a catalyst for adaptive strategists whose attributes, abilities, and qualities may concurrently integrate the ancient with the modern and the local with the global.

General Education for Nonhumans: From an extended viewpoint of humankind

Iljoon Park, Wongkwang University, Republic of Korea

Can non-human animals live meaningful lives or is meaning the exclusive purview of human beings? While the dominant theories in the analytic discourse on meaning in life have focused almost exclusively on the lives of human beings, some recent writers including, notably, Duncan Purves, Nicolas Delon, and Katie McShane, have defended the view that non-human animals, too, may lead lives of meaning. In this paper, I will focus on the phenomenon of animal grief in connection with those philosophical theories of grief offered by Matthew Ratcliffe and Michael Cholbi, both of whom connect the capacity for grief to the possibility of leading meaningful lives, albeit in different ways. After discussing the vexed question of whether non-human animal grief can count as genuine grief, I will argue that animal grief reveals the capacity for animals to live meaningful lives that is continuous with human lives, yet still importantly different from them as human grief and human meaning are marked by our self-interpreting capacities as we are, in the words of Charles Taylor, “self-interpreting animals.”

Curiosity, Creativity, Criticality: An AI-Resilient Framework for English-Medium Higher Arts Education

Subashini K. Rajanthran, University of the Arts Singapore, Singapore

The rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping higher education, challenging traditional notions of authorship, assessment, and academic voice. This disruption is particularly pronounced within English-medium instruction (EMI) in international colleges, where students learn across linguistic and cultural boundaries. In such contexts, AI can simultaneously support language development and obscure authentic expression, raising critical questions about how liberal learning is enacted and assessed in a changing world.

This paper presents an institutional case study from an Asian arts college, where AI integration has prompted a cross-disciplinary re-evaluation of pedagogical practices. Drawing on faculty symposiums and curriculum redesign, the study proposes a comprehensive framework for AI-resilient pedagogy grounded in three strategic pillars: provoking Curiosity, sustaining Creativity, and enhancing Criticality.

Curiosity is fostered through speculative prototyping, where students engage in embodied exploration before using AI to visualise ideas. Creativity is sustained through collaborative scaffolding in multilingual classrooms, prioritising foundational disciplinary skills to develop an authentic academic and creative voice in English. Criticality is enhanced through process-led assessment models, including viva voces, reflective journals, and prompt deconstruction, which foreground students’ cognitive and linguistic development over final outputs. Complementing

these shifts is an institutional AI literacy framework that equips educators to design learning responsibly while empowering students to critically engage with AI as a co-participant in knowledge production. Ultimately, these initiatives demonstrate how EMI institutions can evolve liberal learning for the future, balancing technological advancement with human-centred, globally relevant education.

Animal Grief and Meaning in Human and Other Animal Lives

Lucas Scriptor, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Can non-human animals live meaningful lives or is meaning the exclusive purview of human beings? While the dominant theories in the analytic discourse on meaning in life have focused almost exclusively on the lives of human beings, some recent writers including, notably, Duncan Purves, Nicolas Delon, and Katie McShane, have defended the view that non-human animals, too, may lead lives of meaning. In this paper, I will focus on the phenomenon of animal grief in connection with those philosophical theories of grief offered by Matthew Ratcliffe and Michael Cholbi, both of whom connect the capacity for grief to the possibility of leading meaningful lives, albeit in different ways. After discussing the vexed question of whether non-human animal grief can count as genuine grief, I will argue that animal grief reveals the capacity for animals to live meaningful lives that is continuous with human lives, yet still importantly different from them as human grief and human meaning are marked by our self-interpreting capacities as we are, in the words of Charles Taylor, “self-interpreting animals.”

Building ESL Students’ Presentation Skills While Leveraging GAI and PB

Krystie Wills, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

In my context, a pre-matriculation university program in the UAE, my CEFR B2 students gain skills and knowledge through a scaffolded project that leads them from the information-gathering stage to class presentations. In fact, research suggests that scaffolding gradually helps students gain and internalize skills (Yang, 2024).

Generative AI offers me efficient tools to prepare content for my students’ presentations. As Downes mentioned in 2017, “Cognitive processes like information processing are increasingly being supported [...] by technologies such as Artificial Intelligence.” Specifically, I can minimize a time-consuming, administrative part of teaching - gathering information - so that I have more time to nurture my students so they can develop a myriad of skills needed for university success.

In my presentation, I will explain how I quickly generate fact sheets using GAI on a variety of topics which are then distributed to students who leverage the information for oral presentations.

In the month-long project, they read for understanding and vocab enrichment, select and paraphrase details to support a presentation outline, learn to use Google tools (Docs, Sheets and Slides), and create visuals for use during the presentation. Through the project, students refine not only grammar and writing skills but also pronunciation and speaking skills. They develop confidence through rehearsal, by actually learning information on completely novel topics. When the students present to their peers, they speak like mini-experts. They shine. As Zohirovna mentioned in 2025, PBL leads students to refine linguistic, interpersonal and critical skills, and the meaningful, authentic nature of projects encourages engagement, which in turn leads to retention of the improved skills.

Students realize via this project that a substantial investment of time and energy is required to prepare successful presentations; even more, that the reward is not only a good grade but feelings of pride and satisfaction.

Building Bilingual Environment in Taiwan: Bridging Policy and Practice in Public Education

Yulis, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan

The (National Development Council, 2023) stated that Taiwan's Bilingual Nation 2030 policy will create a bilingual environment in which Mandarin and English are used in education, public services, professional communication to improve English proficiency and further enhance Taiwan's international competitiveness. to support Taiwan's internationalization process (Ministry of Education, 2018).

Despite the goals outline in these policies, many scholars have indicated several gaps between the vision of policy and classroom practice. Ngangbam (2022) discusses some problems related to teacher preparation, uneven distribution of resources, and inadequate institutional support. The rapid development in AI technologies, including AI-assisted language learning and creative platforms like AI SUNO, has opened new frontiers for supporting English learning environments. However, these technologies have hardly penetrated bilingual education policy or practice at the classroom level.

The highlight implementation gap between the policy and actual practice of bilingualism in public education in three dimensions: building English learning environments, enhancing bilingual teaching capacity, and recognizing AI-supported learning tools as strategic resources. Based on a quantitative survey, the research collected data from teachers and university students on their perceptions of policy implementation, teacher preparedness, and widely toward technology-assisted English learning. The finding are expected to contribute further policy adjustments and interventions.

Initial results show that participants generally support the Bilingual Nation 2030 project but several barriers exist: inadequate teacher training for bilingual instruction, uneven school-wide English learning environments, and underdeveloped use of emerging technologies like AI-based language learning tools.