

## Introduction

Welcome to the 2022 issue of *The Journal of Literature in Language Teaching*.

A major impact of the coronavirus pandemic has been the curtailing of opportunities to meet people—whether friends, family, classmates, or in travel to other countries. A corresponding rise in pleasure reading, observed across many countries, shows the value of literature in people’s lives: to compensate for isolation or loneliness, to feel a sense of connection with others, and to explore topics related to the pandemic. As language teachers, we have faced a situation where international travel, including study abroad and experiencing life in other cultures, has been limited. Thus, literature in the language classroom has arguably grown in importance for the opportunity it provides students for connection to a culturally diverse world.

A key part of intercultural training is raising awareness of one’s own culture. In the first of two *literature in practice* articles, **Vicky Ann Richings** describes how she adapted a western story grammar approach to help Japanese students understand the structure of Japanese folk tales, thereby supporting their comprehension of these folk tales in English. She provides useful insights into how to bridge the divide between Japanese-origin stories and stories in the western tradition. In the other, **Jeffrey L. McEntire**, in deploying well-chosen poetry and visual art prompts, illustrates how students can be encouraged to exploit pathos, through sensory and rhetorical devices, to improve the quality of persuasive essay writing.

Our *feature article*, by **Sofya Yunusova**, presents a model of reading literature in a second language based on a wide-ranging overview of literature from several areas of research. Taking earlier work by Urlaub as a starting point, the paper addresses the sparsity of work on the overall cognitive and emotional process of L2 reading. It persuasively integrates the different kinds of knowledge and strategies that support L2 reading, providing a platform upon which teachers can better scaffold their students’ engagement with literary texts.

Another impact of the pandemic has been the accelerated use of digital media in education as institutions migrated to online learning. **Aina Tanaka**’s timely *book review* of Clark, Hergenrader, and Rein’s *Creative Writing in the Digital Age* relates how the authors discuss the use and potential of different online genres to promote creative writing as well as improve student social media literacy in the development and understanding of one’s online “self”.

In our *interview* article, **Paul Hullah** reflects on how the views on poetry in EFL he expressed in a 2009 interview with John Lowe have evolved since then. He emphasises the importance of compassion and student well-being, as well as reaffirming the empowering role poetry can play in language learning and in developing cultural awareness.

In the first of two *conference reports*, **Tara McIlroy** and **Mary Hillis** recount an impressive variety of research from Japan connected to literature and creative writing in the EFL classroom featured at the 2021 JALT international conference. This includes exploration of the pandemic experience, social justice, multilingual writing practices, and student publishing; summaries of two presentations by featured speaker Greta Gorsuch on the diverse use of narratives to support various aspects of language learning, and on the use of multiple literacies to help lower-level students express personal responses to literary texts; and seven other presentations of interest to LiLT Journal readers concerning global citizenship, creative writing, L2 identity, storytelling performance, multimodal literacy, creativity in education policy, and independent textbook publishing. In the second report, **Tara** and **Mary** are joined by **Luke Draper** and **Jared Michael Kubokawa** in covering a LiLT SIG/Shizuoka JALT online event on creative writing: Hillis on creative writing responses to Camus’ *The Stranger*, Kubokawa on providing digital spaces for students to “publish” their work, Draper on the use of Japanese literature in translation as a prompt for story continuation, and McIlroy on applying CLIL approaches to creative writing.

Finally, a reminder that the peer-reviewed *Journal of Literature in Language Teaching* accepts submissions from around the world. Submissions are accepted at any time on a rolling basis, although those looking to publish in the next edition should try to submit by the end of April 30th. Submission details are given on the final page of this journal and can also be found on the LiLT SIG website <http://liltsig.org>. Submissions can be sent to [liltjournaleditor@gmail.com](mailto:liltjournaleditor@gmail.com). You can also contact the LiLTSIG at [liltsig@gmail.com](mailto:liltsig@gmail.com)