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Editorial

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The editorial policy of *English Today* is to provide a focus or forum for all sorts of news and opinion from around the world. The points of view of individual writers are as a consequence their own, and do not reflect the opinion of the editorial board. In addition, wherever feasible, ET generally leaves unchanged the orthography (normally British or American) and the usage of individual contributors, although the editorial style of the journal itself is that of Cambridge University Press.

Celebrating linguistic fieldwork

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When taking a stroll through London's Borough of Camden recently, I stumbled across an advert campaign by Google, displayed right in front of their office premises in Pancras Square near the St. Pancras and King's Cross train stations. A number of installations celebrated various uses of AI, with one of them relating to "large language models" (LLMs) stating "Language models recognise and understand text by learning from massive datasets. More data can allow large models to develop more advanced capabilities."

Many of our readers will, in the past months, have engaged with LLMs, the most well known probably being OpenAI's ChatGPT, given its huge success in 2022 and 2023, and Google Gemini (formerly Bard). For some, their use will have been a welcome alternative to brooding over a white sheet of paper (in real or on screen). In fact, writing assistant Jenni (jenni.ai) promises to help "write, edit, and cite with confidence", including the use of autocomplete to "write alongside you to beat writer's block". Similarly, Aithor (aithor.com) creates "scholarly and creative works, personalized in minutes". Students openly admit to using AI to have lengthy, complicated chapters summarised in "easy language" or "for a ten-year-old" and to asking Chat GPT to compose lesson plans for their internships, and many have AI write celebratory speeches for birthday parties and the like.

Others may have sat in lengthy meetings discussing whether and how to allow and use AI tools in classrooms and assignments. However, even those who are strictly opposed to using any AI tools themselves and have called for strict bans of their use will probably have used LLMs in one way or another. The temptation to click Google's AI-created queries that follow on from us typing into its search bar, rather than continue phrasing one's own, individual query is strong: after all, these seem to be the important questions to ask, don't they?

The implications for empirical research into uses and users of the English language today are manifold, when we can no longer tell with confidence whether a stretch of speech or writing is authentic or the result of various algorithms combining what is out there on the web. Gone seem the days when we could, for example, use Twitter geo tags to investigate how users of English in various parts of the world employ a particular lexical item or grammatical construction. We simply no longer know who, or what, is behind a post. It may have been sent by someone who had a message composed by a chatbot and then translated by AI into a style that some have described as "boring, tasteless and characterless" (Pawel Sobocinski about ChatGPT in Sarv 2024).

There is, however, a very positive side to this issue. While investigating uses and users of English on the Internet continues to be exciting, given the fact that this is where a lot of interaction takes place today, there has always been the just as delightful fieldwork: wandering the streets in search for how English contributes to a space's linguistic landscape, sitting down with a coffee to observe how English mixes with other languages in speakers' conversations, and, to me most rewarding, engaging in interaction with expert informants. It will be interesting to monitor how English continues to evolve in real life uses in comparison to the transformations that it takes in virtual space.

At *English Today*, we continue provide our readers with papers that, written by real human authors (just look at the photos at the end of each article!), engage with all recent developments of English.

In this issue we are pleased to present four research articles. Hugo Wing–Yu Tam and Samuel C. S. Tsang explore the various ways that Chinese cuisine can be translated into English and, at the same, creatively translanguaged in Hong Kong and Singapore. Jacqueline Hirsh Greene and Hans–Jörg Schmid examine how text-based memes communicatively use bipartite structures to construct both intertextual reference and innovative expressions. Ian Schneider turns attention to the presentation of several

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K-pop bands and their songs to consider the ways that internationalisation strategies may have changed artistic process in K-pop. Finally, Yiyang Li and Tao Peng consider the positive effects gained by exploiting linguistic resources in translanguaging discourse in an English-medium American university in China.

We are also pleased to include seven short articles in this issue of *English Today*. Maryann Overstreet and George Yule carefully consider the history of the associative plural in English as well as cross-linguistic evidence of its use, suggesting that the form is both alive and well in English. Michael Chestnut and Trevor Schmitt explore privilege and discrimination when Irish English-language teachers seek employment in South Korea. Continuing to focus on English in Korea, Sun–Hee Kim and Hikyoung Lee investigate representations of North Korea in South Korean English textbooks. John Macalister and Melky Costa Akoyt document the use of English in a lesser-known Southeast Asian context of East Timor. Takako Kawabata describes linguistic puns that appear within the Japanese linguistic landscape and Julia Landmann and Yannick Ganz investigate some of the recent metaphors related to Brexit that have appeared in the *Financial Times*. Finally, Tamilla Mammadova describes policy measures to implement English-medium instruction in Azerbaijani institutions of higher education.

Completing this issue are two recent book reviews. Pamela S. H. Bogart reviews Rosemary Salomone's *The Rise of English: Global Politics and the Power of Language* and Babak Barghchi reviews April Baker–Bell's *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*.

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