



6th International Symposium on Academic Writing and Critical Thinking 2026

*Creativity, Identity, and Agency in the Era of
Generative AI*

Symposium Program

February 14, 2026
Nagoya University, Japan

Hosted by
Nagoya University Writing Center
Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS)
Nagoya University

The electronic version of this booklet can be found at:
https://www.ilas.nagoya-u.ac.jp/Meiwriting_AWU/symposium.html

The open-source \LaTeX template, `AMCOS_booklet`, used to generate this booklet is
available at https://github.com/maximelucas/AMCOS_booklet

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About

Sixth International Symposium on Academic Writing and Critical Thinking

Thinking Outside the Bot: Creativity and Diversity

Academic writing is often considered distinct from creative writing and other creative expressions. As tools such as A.I. take on a greater role in academic writing and research, however, it is useful to consider the link between academic and creative work. One area where machine learning may not be so easily able to replicate human thought is creative thought. What is the place of intuition or creativity in science and other academic endeavors? Can creativity supplement technical writing, and can A.I. play a role? How can teachers and students use creativity for logical thinking and writing? What can creative genres such as music, visual arts, film, and theater contribute to teaching and learning academic writing and presentation? Should we have clearer or looser divisions between academic writing and creative writing?

The Sixth International Symposium on Academic Writing and Critical Thinking seeks to promote stimulating discussion of questions such as these by bringing together scholars from various fields. Of particular interest are papers and panels that address the relationship between creativity and the teaching of academic writing in terms of theoretical analysis and concrete pedagogical strategies.

Nagoya University Writing Center

The Sixth International Symposium on Academic Writing and Critical Thinking is organized by the Nagoya University Writing Center (Mei-Writing), in the Department of Academic Writing Education at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Nagoya University. Mei-Writing aims to help its students publish their research by improving their logical thinking skills rather than merely language skills. Mei-Writing is founded on the belief that the most fundamental objective of an academic research paper is to convince its readers to accept the paper's thesis statement by demonstrating the logical supports that lead to the thesis statement. Our education goal is to help students publish their research paper. For this purpose, we ask our students to develop, in writing the paper, a clear research idea and a logical argument that provides a convincing support for the idea. Our overall pedagogy focuses on teaching our students how to

bridge the gap between writing and thinking. Under this approach, students learn how to think logically so that their thoughts can be expressed properly through words. We offer courses in English and Chinese.

Organizing Committee (in alphabetical order)

Ryan Barnes	Nathan Hamlitsch	Paul Lai
Jian Lu	Chad Nilep	Kyle Nuske
David Toohey		



6th International Symposium on Academic Writing and Critical Thinking 2026

Thinking Outside the Bot: Creativity and Diversity Date: February 14, 2026 Venue: Nagoya University



Time	Featured Presentations (Location: Sand Theater, Common Nexus)	
10:15–10:30	Registration	
10:30–10:45	Welcome Remarks	Prof. Shin Nayatani (Director, ILAS / Professor, Graduate School of Mathematics, Nagoya University)
10:45–11:30	INVITED TALK	Prof. Satoko Shao-Kobayashi (Chiba University) From Audience to Creator: A Critical Approach to Racialized Representation in Media
11:30–12:15	INVITED TALK	Prof. Ryan Spring (Tohoku University) Using AI in the EFL Writing Classroom: A Balanced Approach?
12:15–13:45	Lunch Break	
13:45–14:30	FEATURED PRESENTATION	Dr. Solomon Leong (SOLOMON BLOEMEN) AI Bloom Where Humans Wilt? Exploring Floristry's Essence in an Algorithmic Age
14:30–14:45	Transition — Please move from the Common Nexus to Building A for Parallel Sessions	

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1 (14:45–16:15) — Location: Building A			
Time	Room A31: Research Epistemology and Knowledge Construction	Room A32: Critical Pedagogy and Process-Oriented Writing	Room A33: Authorial Identity, Voice, and Cultural Negotiation
14:45–15:15	Story as Methodology: A Mixed-Genre for Creativity in Academic Writing Pauline Baird International College of Technology, Kanazawa	Sub-Text: Mission Creep and Writing Pedagogy Iain Maloney Sugiyama Jogakuen University	The Search for Authorial Identity in Academic Writing: Cultivating a Distinctive Voice in the Era of AI Robert MacIntyre Sophia University
15:15–15:45	Language is Necessary but not Sufficient: Knowledge and Creativity in Scholarship and Science Chad Nilep Nagoya University	Promoting Process over Product: Assigning Unconventional Bite-Sized Assignments as an Antidote to AI Dependence Joel Deacon Florida Institute of Technology	Canceled
15:45–16:15	Moving Beyond the Gaps: Expanding Our Mental Models for Research Problems Nathan Hamlitsch Nagoya University	Cultivating Creativity in the Age of AI: Practical Insights for Teachers and Learners Jason D. Gold Sagami Women's University	Evolving Writing Identity in a Japanese EFL Course: Voice, Agency, and Cultural Negotiation in Professional Genres Nooshin Goharimehr Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

16:15–16:30	Coffee Break		
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PARALLEL SESSIONS 2 (16:30–18:00) — Location: Building A			
Time	Room A31: Creative Potential and Methodological Inquiry	Room A32: Global Perspectives on Writing Centers and Composition	Room A33: Narrative, Adaptation, and Program Innovation
16:30–17:00	Re-examining the Case Study Method through Meta-Analysis: Bridging Research Gaps in Critical Thinking and Academic Writing Pedagogy May Oo Khin Nagoya University of Commerce and Business	Summary of Current Services Offered at 7 Writing Centers in the United States Jonathon Harrison Nihon University	Creative Paraphrasing Through Film Adaptation: A Modern Retelling of Jane Austen's Emma Khadijah Omar Kyushu University
17:00–17:30	From A to Zine: Can Literacy Skills Help Students Unlock Their Creative Potential? Adam Miller / Jessica Zoni Upton Nanzan University	TEFL Composition as an Art of the Contact Zone: Leveraging Students' Linguistics Awareness and Creativity Bobby H. Nawbary Aomori Prefectural Oma Senior High School	Mei-Writing Spring Camp as a Novel Study-Abroad Program Paul Lai / Ryan Barnes Nagoya University
17:30	Symposium Close 18:30: Symposium Dinner at Shooters		

This symposium is supported by the Nagoya University International Conference Grant.



List of Abstracts

Story as Methodology: A Mixed-Genre for Creativity in Academic Writing

Pauline Felicia Baird PhD, International College of Technology, Kanazawa

The “I didn’t know how to say it” confession of students who submit AI-generated text as their own has prompted deeper reflection on how students can gain agency for their own composition and expression. No doubt, AI has become ubiquitous on almost every digital platform, assisting with various tasks, including academic writing (for example, Grammarly’s AI writing assistant). Rubiak et al. (2024) have noted that “AI has revolutionized autonomous English learning by offering personalized and adaptive learning experiences...accessibility and providing valuable feedback” (p. 33). Recognizing that students are increasingly using AI to compose their assignments, often with little to no support from teachers, underscores the need for reorienting the “how” in writing pedagogy. However, should academic writing pedagogy blur the lines between academic writing and creative writing to create space for diverse composition practices that empower students to discover and utilize their voices? I argue that identifying the creativity gap in academic writing that includes AI can help lower the stakes (Bowen & Watson, 2024) and preserve creativity in academic writing. All writing involves creativity; therefore, I propose a set of practical strategies that reorient students’ thinking and composing practices in academic writing. In my presentation, I will share how I employ storytelling as a methodology towards a hybrid approach to writing pedagogy, resulting in mixed-genre compositions at a university in the Northwestern Pacific, in a first-year composition class, and in a Reading and Writing class at an engineering college in Northwestern Japan. This approach involves primary research, story-gathering, reporting, drafting, reflection, and AI comparative analysis.

Dr. Pauline Felicia Baird is a scholar and educator with over three decades of international teaching experience in Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Palau, Guam, and Japan. Her current work examines ethical and pedagogical applications of artificial intelligence in STEM education, particularly in engineering and technical writing contexts. Drawing on oral history and culturally grounded pedagogy, she investigates how AI can support reflective learning, communication, and student agency in multilingual STEM classrooms. She has authored four books and published in academic journals.

Promoting Process over Product: Assigning Unconventional Bite-Sized Assignments as an Antidote to AI Dependence

Robert Joel Deacon, Florida Institute of Technology

The idea that writing develops better thinking skills is well supported (see Bean & Melzer, 2021). The cognitive benefit of writing, in part, is a result of its difficulty. People (most of them anyway), however, tend to prefer the path of least resistance. As generative AI tools become increasingly integrated into basic software and learning management systems (LMS), the natural temptation for students to outsource cognitive effort has never been greater, and the effects of this have never been more detrimental. Research suggests that LLM use reduces students' brain activity, leading to cognitive deficiencies compared to non-LLM users (Kosmyna et al., 2025). This presentation argues that one effective response to this challenge is the deliberate use of creative, unorthodox writing assignments that promote process over product. When instructors design writing tasks that require unconventional products for which AI lacks training data, students will need to engage in genuine exploration and reflection rather than replication to receive a satisfactory grade. In general, multistage, mixed modality assignments are preferable to reduce the temptation to use an LLM to try to bypass the writing process. This presentation will discuss classroom-tested examples, student feedback, and strategies for integrating creative unpredictability into composition pedagogy to cultivate cognitive engagement in our current age of AI brain rot.

References Bean, J. C., & Melzer, D. (2021). *Engaging ideas: The professor's guide to integrating writing, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom*. John Wiley & Sons. Kosmyna, N. et al. (2025). *Your Brain on ChatGPT: Accumulation of Cognitive Debt when using an AI Assistant for Essay Writing Task*. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2506.08872>

Robert Joel Deacon is an Assistant Professor in the School of Arts and Communication at Florida Institute of Technology, also known as Florida Tech. His research interests include issues in writing education, theoretical generative linguistics, and the study of myth, folklore, and metaphorical truth. He is interested in work that explores writing as a truth-seeking and sense-making tool and how best to lead students as writers to enhance their productivity as researchers and thinkers.

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Evolving Writing Identity in a Japanese EFL Course: Voice, Agency, and Cultural Negotiation in Professional Genres

Nooshin Goharimehr, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

This presentation reports findings from a mixed-methods study examining how Japanese EFL university students construct and negotiate their writing identities within an undergraduate Advanced Academic Writing course designed and taught by the instructor-researcher. Building on earlier research exploring EFL learners' motivation, investment, and identity negotiation, this study focuses specifically on how writing identity develops through sustained engagement with professional and academic genres. The course integrated practitioner-developed materials and iterative writing tasks that emphasized voice, reflection, and student-led meaning-making. Although the assignments centered on professional genres—emails, CVs, cover letters, motivation letters, and short research plans—they provided space for students to reshape personal narratives and articulate possible future selves.

Drawing on Ivanič's writing identity framework and Norton's concept of investment, the analysis integrates writing artifacts, surveys, and AI Use reflections from 22 undergraduate participants. The findings show how students navigated cultural expectations of modesty, the rhetorical demands of English professional discourse, and emerging confidence in authorial agency. Students also engaged thoughtfully with available AI tools, often editing or declining suggestions to maintain authenticity, revealing nuanced decision-making in technologically supported writing environments. These patterns illuminate how identity work unfolds when learners balance linguistic constraints, personal histories, and evolving rhetorical awareness. The study offers classroom-based evidence that genre-focused scaffolding and reflective practice can support the development of stronger writer identities in EFL contexts. It highlights how students negotiate identity across professional genres while cultivating voice and confidence within culturally shaped and technologically mediated writing conditions.

Dr. Nooshin Goharimehr is a lecturer in British and American Studies at Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Japan. She holds a Ph.D. in Human Sciences from Osaka University. Her academic background spans applied linguistics, linguistic psychology, sociology of education, and cultural studies, with professional experience in English language education, academic writing, and international higher education. She has taught a range of EFL, EAP, and professional communication courses and has contributed to curriculum development in cross-cultural and multilingual contexts.

Cultivating Creativity in the Age of AI: Practical Insights for Teachers and Learners

Jason D. Gold, *Sagami Women's University*

Creativity is often seen as an innate talent rather than a skill that can be strengthened through intentional practice. Drawing on research from educational and positive psychology, as well as creativity studies, this presentation examines several common barriers that limit creative work—such as fixed mindsets, limited diversity of ideas, mental overload, and overreliance on AI.

The session introduces practical, research-based strategies for both educators and students to help foster creativity in learning and teaching contexts. Participants will consider how factors such as mindset, variety of input, and effective use of structure and technology can support more original, flexible thinking.

Ultimately, the presentation highlights how simple, evidence-informed changes in habits and perspective can help both teachers and learners sustain creativity in an increasingly AI-augmented academic world.

Jason Gold has been teaching at universities in Japan for the past ten years, and currently works as an Associate Professor at Sagami Women's University in Tokyo. He holds an M.A. in TESOL and a Doctorate in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education. His research interests involve educational psychology, positive psychology and CALL applications to improve classroom teaching and better support students' learning and well-being.

Moving Beyond the Gaps: Expanding Our Mental Models for Research Problems

Nathan Hamlitsch, Nagoya University

While it may be uncontroversial to say that a research project starts by addressing a problem and formulating a research question, it is often a source of struggle for students to effectively frame and communicate them to their audience. The research problem, or the initial observation inspiring the research question, is traditionally understood as “a gap in the research which needs to be filled.” Essentially, the problem is commonly framed in terms of “a lack of research” in the area. While this is true in some cases, there are other ways in which the research problem can be conceptualized. In this study, sixty-six peer-reviewed academic papers were selected by undergraduate students at Nagoya University in the spring of 2021 for a class assignment. The research problems were then identified, analyzed, and categorized into seven types by the author. This presentation introduces these types and presents a more nuanced characterization of research problems and argues for a broad view beyond the traditional research-as-gap-filler model. Taking a more holistic view of research problems can be beneficial to both educators and their students at any stage of their research.

Nathan Hamlitsch received his PhD in 2020 in linguistics at Nagoya University, where he currently serves as an associate professor in the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences Education Planning & Development Center Division of Academic Writing Education. His research interests include cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, frame semantics, construction morphology, loanwords, scientific skepticism, and research writing education.

Summary of Current Services Offered at 7 Writing Centers in the United States

Jonathan Harrison, Nihon University

The presentation will be a summary of current practices (2025 services, programs, etc.) at 7 writing centers in Alabama, Florida, and Michigan in the United States. At each of the following universities, the writing center director or assistant director and occasionally other staff were interviewed regarding the services and programs at the writing center: Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, University of Central Florida, Florida International University, and University of Alabama. The University of Michigan writing center director was contacted via email. These include 1) both online and face-to-face services, 2) how the practices are integrated into the curriculum, and 3) how AI is being addressed by the center and university. The aim of this research was to gather information about current practices, not to compare services at different universities. Specifically, the results will discuss 7 areas: 1. Services for Students, 2. Services for Faculty, 3. Services for the Community, 4. Software, 5. Staffing, 6. Training, and 7. AI Policies. Therefore, lists and descriptions of available services will be described to help those interested in creating a writing center or adding services to their existing writing center.

Jonathan Harrison is an associate professor at the Nihon University's College of Science and Technology. He teaches writing skills as part of undergraduate communication courses as well as academic writing and presenting courses for graduate students. His research is in the areas of curriculum design, assessment, and writing.

Mei-Writing Spring Camp as a Novel Study-Abroad Program

Paul Lai and Ryan Barnes, Nagoya University

Although the Japanese government has made great efforts to encourage students to study abroad, Japanese universities continue to struggle to increase student participation in overseas programs. Conventional study-abroad models have been constrained by structural incompatibilities with host institutions, high financial costs, and psychological barriers that discourage many students from participating. This talk introduces the Mei-Writing Spring Camp, a new type of short-term study-abroad program designed to overcome those long-standing problems. Building on the established pedagogical foundations of the Summer Camp, the Spring Camp extends this model to an overseas setting and reframes study abroad as a home-institution – led learning experience rather than a host-institution – dependent exchange. Unlike conventional programs, the Spring Camp is run entirely within the home university's academic system. As a result, students do not need to worry about credit transfer, double tuition, or delays in graduation, which greatly reduces both administrative and financial burdens. More importantly, the Spring Camp is built on a positive team-based learning model. Students are placed in diverse teams and work together on creative scriptwriting tasks that intentionally include humor. This approach helps students feel relaxed, supported, and connected with their peers. It reduces anxiety about language ability, making friends, and adapting to life in a new country. By learning together in a supportive environment, the Spring Camp effectively addresses the structural, financial, and psychological barriers that often prevent students from studying abroad.

AI Bloom Where Humans Wilt? Exploring Floristry's Essence in an Algorithmic Age

Dr. Solomon Leong, KL

Hong Kong

This seminar poses a central provocation: What if AI could fully replace floral designers—generating arrangements that evoke the same cultural resonance, sensory delight, and emotional depth as those shaped by human hands? Rather than advocating for one side, we'll unpack this possibility across four interconnected entry points, each designed to fuel open dialogue.

First, floristry as cultural archive: How do blooms encode rituals like hanami's ephemerality or Victorian floriography's secrets, and could AI's pattern replication preserve or dilute these traditions?

Second, the sensory intuition of craft: Human arrangements thrive on texture, scent, and inevitable imperfection—might AI's precision yield something equally compelling, or newly profound?

Third, replacement as opportunity: Envision AI optimizing sustainable designs and scaling beauty globally, freeing artisans for innovative frontiers like bioengineered landscapes.

Fourth, the philosophy of art: If an AI bouquet stirs grief at a funeral or joy at a wedding, does its origin diminish its status as "art"?

Culminating in a live demonstration of human-AI fusion—where algorithms sketch and hands refine—we'll debate: Is such replacement a loss of irreplaceable tactility, or a liberation toward symbiotic creativity? Drawing on my studio experiences, from memory-driven mourning wreaths to festival installations, this talk grounds speculation in practice, asking: In a world of machine-made petals, what remains uniquely ours—and why does it matter?

Influenced by the English garden style and the European flower arranging ethos, the work of the Hong Kong based floral designer Dr. Solomon Leong have been described as "extraordinary" and "striking" by international media such as the BBC.

Competitions have formed an important part of Dr. Leong's professional life. In 2019, Dr. Leong represented Hong Kong to compete in the FTD World Cup, the world's most prestigious floral competition held every four to six year. At the same year, he has won the Leeds Castle flower festival designer award at the castle's 900th anniversary. In 2006, 2008, and 2014 he was awarded the Gold Medal and the Best Floral Arrangement Award at the world renowned Royal Horticultural Flower Show at Chelsea in London, UK. At the same show, he has also won the Gold Medals for 2011, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019 and Silver Gilt for 2005, 2007, 2010, 2012, 2013 and 2018.

In 2014, 2015 and 2016 he was invited to be one of the leading international designers at the World Flower Garden Show in Nagasaki Japan, where he won Gold medal for both years. At the same show he also won a series of awards including the "Best Use

of Colours Award” (2014), “Best Innovative Design Award” (2015) and “Best in Show Award” (2015).

As well as competitions, Dr. Leong is also an active floral demonstrator who has demonstrated regularly at the Hong Kong Flower Show and other locations both locally and abroad. In 2019, his footsteps are all over the world. He was invited to become artist-in-residence at Aargauer Kunsthaus, Switzerland where he participated in the “Flowers to Arts” exhibition. And at the same year, he was also invited as the featured international designer at FleurEx, the UK most prestigious industry show by the British Florist Association. And he was also the sole representative from Hong Kong at 2019 Fleuramour at Belgium.

He presented floral art demonstrations in the Putrajaya Malaysia International Flower Show “Flora” in 2011, and in the Singapore Garden Festival in 2012 and Leeds Castle Flower Festival in the U.K. in 2017, 2018 and 2019. He was the feature designer for the AIFD symposium in 2017 in Seattle and also the 18th China Horticultural Expo in 2018, as the sole representative from Hong Kong.

As a doctor of philosophy in cultural studies, Solomon’s extensive knowledge of cultures and history in relation to floral art has turned him into a successful commentator of floral designs. He has been interviewed by media such as the BBC, TVB, the Radio Television Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Economic Journal as well as the South China Morning Post, amongst many others. Cosmopolitan Bride Beijing named him “one of the 50 influential Chinese voices in the wedding world”.

His unique approach to floral styles and aesthetics has made him a regular contributor in fashion and lifestyle magazines such as Elle, Cosmopolitan and Marie Claire, both in Hong Kong and China. In 2010, His works were featured in the prestigious Floral International Biannual 2010/11, 2014/15 and 2015/16 which showcases the most creative floral designers around the world. In 2010, “Solomon’s Blooming Chic” was published in Chinese. “Secrets of Flowers”, the bi-lingual book which Dr Leong as author, floral designer and photographer of all his floral designs, was published in 2016 Spring.

Dr. Leong is the director of SOLOMON BLOEMEN bespoke floral design studio, a renowned bespoke design studio based in Hong Kong providing expert floral services for a distinguished clientele. Since 2012, he has been repeatedly appointed as the artistic consultant for various prestigious shopping mall and hotels in Hong Kong including ELEMENTS, MGM and Shangrila, specializing in bringing cutting-edge floral designs into the retail environment.

Dr. Leong is a member of the AIFD (American Institute of Floral Designers), in which he is also an international representative for the South West regional chapter and the liaison officer for the Society of the Chinese members of AIFD. He is a Professional Floral Communicator – International (PFCI), the World Flower Council (Hong Kong

Chapter), the Royal Horticultural Society and an honorary member of the Good Florist Guide UK. He is the technical advisor for Employees Retraining Board HKSAR. He is also the Honorary Advisor for the Hong Kong Flower Club (an affiliated club with NAFAS under the region of London and Overseas) and President of the Hong Kong Association of Flower Arranging Societies.

The Search for Authorial Identity in Academic Writing: Cultivating a Distinctive Voice in the Era of AI

Robert MacIntyre, Sophia University

This presentation discusses research that looks at the struggles that writers from an EFL background have in expressing their identity in academic writing. Academic writing is seen as exemplifying objectivity, however, in the age of AI should writers learn from more creative genres to focus on the reader and involve them in the discourse. Writing is an act of communication. When you write, you aim to transmit something: an emotion, a picture in words, information, a viewpoint, to another person or group of people. What you write should be significant and meaningful. In contrast, academic writing is often seen as faceless and dry, however, there are a variety of lexical devices that writers can use to express their stance in academic writing: hedges, boosters, self-mention, and attitude markers (Hyland, 2005), which can involve the reader in the writers' argument. However, writers, especially in an EFL environment, tend to focus on language to help guide the reader through the text to make their argument clear and easy to understand. It is suggested that AI can be used to facilitate this, and academic writing pedagogy could be shifted to helping students find their voice, by learning from creative writing and acknowledging the importance of the reader.

I obtained my Master's in Education (EFL) from the University of Manchester (UK) in 2003 and a PhD in Linguistics from the University of Essex (UK) in 2015. My research interests include the application of genre-based approaches in academic writing and the investigation of metadiscourse (how students represent their identity in their writing). I am also researching how reflective practice can be utilised in teacher training.

Sub-Text: Mission Creep and the State of Writing Pedagogy

Iain Maloney, PhD, Sugiyama Jogakuen University

While creative writing has been breaking into academic institutions around the world over the past several decades, it is still seen as the trivial, lesser sibling of academic writing. In university contexts, particularly in Japan, academic writing is assumed to be the default form with other forms—creative, business, journalistic writing—offered as extras, if at all. Much recent research into creative writing theory and pedagogy has aimed to correct this imbalance, attempting to show that they are two sides of the same coin. In fact, the opposition may be entirely false and says more about teachers' assumptions than an actual theoretical dialectic. Clearly expressing our ideas in compelling ways through a unique authorial voice that reflects our identity underpins writing of all forms and genre, and this premise therefore should inform all writing pedagogy. Instead, in the rush to codify and standardise the teaching of writing—to make it truly “academic”—an understanding of why we teach writing in the first place often gets overlooked, leading to an estrangement between the academic and the creative, and an ouroboros of premises and conclusions.

In this presentation, Iain Maloney will look at some of the assumptions that underly current approaches to the teaching of writing, explore the theoretical underpinning, and show how academic and creative writing reach the same destination via different pathways. From here he will reframe the aims and move towards a more open, flexible approach to the teaching of writing that would benefit both students and teachers.

Iain Maloney Ph.D. is an associate professor at Sugiyama Jogakuen University specialising in English and Japanese literature and creative writing. He is also the author of nine books across a variety of genres including history, travel, fiction and poetry.

Re-examining the Case Study Method through Meta-Analysis: Bridging Research Gaps in Critical Thinking and Academic Writing Pedagogy

May Oo Khin, Nagoya University of Commerce and Business

This study conducts a systematic meta-analysis of empirical research on the effectiveness of the case study method in enhancing students' critical thinking and academic writing in English language teaching and learning. Following PRISMA-based procedures, peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025 were identified through major databases, including ERIC, Scopus, and JSTOR. Inclusion criteria focused on studies that empirically examined the relationship between case-based learning, critical reasoning, and academic writing outcomes in higher education contexts. Using a mixed-methods approach, quantitative data such as effect sizes and frequency of pedagogical interventions were analyzed alongside qualitative findings drawn from thematic coding of instructional strategies and learner reflections. The synthesis reveals significant variability in research design, assessment tools, and conceptual definitions of "critical thinking" and "academic writing." The study identifies methodological and theoretical gaps and proposes a conceptual framework for future action research that integrates the reflective, inquiry-driven features of case studies with explicit academic writing instruction. This framework aims to balance creativity and analytical rigor, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how innovative, context-based pedagogy can foster both creative and critical dimensions of English academic literacy.

Dr. May Oo Khin is a dedicated English teacher with over a decade of experience in EFL education. Holding a master's degree in English from Mandalay University in Myanmar, and double Master's and Doctoral degrees in Applied Linguistics from Tohoku University in Japan, she is passionate about fostering 21st-century skills in English language teaching and learning context. Moreover, she would love to inspire students to pursue learning English by creating engaging and thought-provoking learning environments that encourage personal and academic growth.

From A to Zine: Can Literacy Skills Help Students Unlock Their Creative Potential?

Adam Miller, Jessica Zoni Upton, Nanzan University

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how learning and creating “zines”, or “small-circulation, self-published works of alternative literature” (Whitworth University Library, 2025), can be applied to an EFL Literacy class at a private university in Japan, as a way for students to apply the academic writing skills they acquired a creative venture. The course will be conducted over 14 100-minute classes, and will include learning the history and cultural impact of zines, methods of planning and creating them, testing different creative media, creating outlines, early drafts, and producing a finished product. The presentation will be a reflection of two teachers who have taught the same syllabus to two separate classes; slideshows and materials will be shared to show how the topic can be applied, and insights will be discussed regarding what worked well, and what could be improved moving forward.

Jessica Zoni Upton works full-time at university level in Japan, where she has been teaching for over 10 years. Her primary research interests lie in intercultural competence (IC) and gender studies. She is a committee member of the IC society, SIETAR Chubu, and is actively involved in researching how gender and sexuality can be addressed in the EFL classroom.

Adam L. Miller has been living and teaching in Japan since 2008. He currently works for Nanzan University as a Language Instructor with the Foreign Language Education Center (FLEC). His research is mainly concerned with Film Studies, in particular cinematic history, Japanese cinema, and early cinema, as well as Instructional Technology, for which he is majoring in for his doctor of education (EdD).

TEFL Composition as an Art of the Contact Zone: Leveraging students Linguistics awareness and Creativity

Bobby H. Nawbary MA TESOL, Aomori Prefectural Oma Senior High School

This presentation explores the philosophy underpinning a composition course designed for first year composition students (Canagarajah, A. S. 2014). The course emphasizes the concept of the "contact zone" as a dynamic space where languages, cultures, and knowledge intersect. (Pratt, M. L. 1991). The course examines SWE (Standard Written English) within the a spectrum of writing styles students may encounter and promotes an understanding of writing as a collaborative and negotiative process rather than a rigid adherence to a single norm. It encourages students to leverage their unique language(s), rhetorical skills and creativity in conjunction with the expectations of a university environment. The aim is to equip students with the writing processes, language awareness, and rhetorical sensitivity necessary to navigate and thrive within a multifaceted academic setting increasingly influenced by globalization and technology/AI. A key component of this course will be students creating their own autoethnographies, which involve referencing between their personal experiences, writing about them, and reading research articles. By doing this the students will develop a reflective and critical awareness of composition. Students will also compare nonstandard representations of writing that are considered academic to help them understand that creativity in academic contexts is valuable. To conclude, the presentation will inform teachers on how they can start incorporating a "contact zone" approach to teaching composition by leveraging students' linguistic awareness and creativity.

References

Canagarajah, A. S. (2014). ESL composition as a literate art of the contact zone. In D. Coxwell-Teague & R. Lunsford (Eds.), *First-year composition: From theory to practice* (pp. 27–48). Anderson, SC: Parlor Press
Pratt, M. L. (1991). Arts of the Contact Zone. *Profession*, 33–40. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25595469>

Bobby Nawbary recently graduated with a Masters in TESOL from San Francisco State University and found his way to Aomori with the JET Program. His research focuses on promoting learning autonomy which examines the value in explicitly teaching Language Learning Strategies and encouraging students to leverage their unique backgrounds, and creativity to meet the expectations of a university environment. He has also taught literacy skills to students diagnosed with dyslexia and dysgraphia for a number of years.

Language is Necessary but not Sufficient: Knowledge and Creativity in Scholarship and Science

Chad Nilep, Nagoya University

Academic inquiry is sometimes thought of as existing on a continuum from “hard” natural sciences (cf. Comte 1830) to “soft” social sciences, continuing toward liberal arts and humanities. In this division, creativity may be seen as more important to the “softer” end of the spectrum, while data, methodology, or theory matter more on the opposite end. As most experienced mathematicians or physicists know, however, creative insight is crucial to advances in those fields, or in any field. Over the past few years, some thinkers have suggested that artificial intelligence may be able to take over mid-level data-related tasks, locating and synthesizing existing knowledge to create new outputs (e.g. Huang 2024). In such an environment, will humans need to shift to more creative roles or even to creative fields outside of science or academia? This presentation posits, on the contrary, that aspects of human imagination that AI is unable to replicate, and has no clear path toward developing, remain essential to positivist “hard” sciences as much as to social studies or the humanities. Imagination and creation have always been at the heart of academic work. Contrary to descriptions of creative writing as supplemental to academic writing, creativity is central to the processes of discovery that form the center of the sciences as well as the humanities. Given AI’s lack of creativity in this sense, it is necessary to continue training junior scholars in knowledge-related tasks so that they may contribute the creative insights needed for the continued production of new knowledge.

Chad Nilep is an Associate Professor in the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Nagoya University. His research includes sociocultural linguistics, bilingualism and code switching, linguistic ethnography, academic writing education, and analysis of political discourse. His work encompasses second- or foreign language learning, identity formation, and language and political economy, broadly construed. Publications include ‘Ideologies of language at Hippo Family Club’ (Pragmatics) and contributions to The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology and the Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.

Creative Paraphrasing Through Film Adaptation: A Modern Retelling of Jane Austen's Emma

Khadijah Omar, Kyushu University

This descriptive study examines how transmedia storytelling promotes creative paraphrasing within a project-based learning (PBL) environment. In this EFL course, 104 students read an abridged version of Jane Austen's *Emma*, view the 2020 film adaptation, and analyse how the same scene from the original work is rendered across different media. They then collaboratively produce a short film that reimagines their chosen scene in a contemporary setting. During script development, students negotiate how to best reinterpret the source material by deciding which narrative elements to retain, alter or omit. Unlike traditional paraphrasing, which prohibits verbatim copying, adaptation studies allow the strategic retention of original language while transforming the context and medium. Students discover that even when entire lines are lifted directly from the source, the intersemiotic translation from page to screen constitutes a legitimate form of rewriting that challenges conventional notions of fidelity. This literature-to-film project demonstrates how adaptation can serve as a form of creative paraphrasing, enhancing students' understanding of intertextuality and strengthening both their academic and general English writing skills.

Khadijah Omar (PhD) is a lecturer at the Faculty of Languages and Cultures, Kyushu University. After a teaching career in TESL in Malaysia, she moved to Japan to pursue her postgraduate studies. Her research focuses on applied linguistics, specifically Malay pragmatics, and English education with an emphasis on CALL. She contributes to the language teaching community as a Fukuoka JALT officer and as a member of JALT Pragmatics SIG as well as IPrA.

From Audience to Creator: A Critical Approach to Racialized Representation in Media

Satoko Shao-Kobayashi, IS

Chiba University

In the era of social media, not only has generating and sharing media content become increasingly casual, but judging what is “fake/real,” “wrong/right,” or “creative/imitative” has also become a familiar part of our everyday lives. Under these conditions, cultivating a critical perspective in education has become more crucial than ever.

This presentation offers insight into a pedagogical approach that helps students develop critical, empathetic, and creative perspectives and actions by engaging in the analysis and production of racialized representations in media. I draw on an undergraduate liberal arts course I teach at a Japanese university, which includes both home and international students, as a case study. The two main components of the course are lectures on the history of racialized representations of “Japanese” in the United States and a student group project in which students create a short video on representations of “foreigners” in Japan. I intentionally design the course to shift the focal content from “Japanese” in the United States to “foreigners” in Japan, students’ positionality from audience to creator, and the role of the primary class actor from myself to the students.

The analysis suggests that a media product is just one manifestation of the creative process. The intra- and interpersonal processes of reading, listening to, and observing ourselves and Others whose realities may differ from our own constitute an essential dimension of creative practice.

Satoko Shao-Kobayashi earned her Ph.D. in Education from the University of California, Santa Barbara, USA, in 2008. She is currently an Associate Professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Chiba University, Japan. Her research focuses on race and ethnic relations among transnational adolescents, linguistic and spatial practices, collaborative learning, and qualitative research methodologies, particularly from a linguistic anthropology of education perspective.

Some recent publications include:

- Polarized Agents of Internationalization: An Autoethnography of Migrant Faculty at a Japanese University (co-authored with Ioannis Gaitanidis), *Higher Education*, (83)19-33, 2022
- From “Japanese” in the US to “Foreigner” in Japan: Unlearning and Relearning “Race.” In *Representations, Teaching Japan: A Handbook* (I. Gaitanidis & G. Poole, Eds.), Amsterdam Press, 2024
- 『子どもの日本語教育を問い直すー外国につながる子どもたちの学びを支えるために』 (佐藤郡衛・菅原雅枝との共著), 明石書店, 2024.

- 移動性の視座から捉える〈居場所〉の実体化—在米日本人高校生による言語的空間的実践『質的心理学研究』(25) 99-111, 2026.
- For recent publications, please see <https://researchmap.jp/shao-kobayashi>.

Using AI in the EFL writing classroom: A balanced approach?

Ryan Spring,  IS

Tohoku University

With the advent of generative AI and the increasing capabilities of the latest models, the word “AI” has begun to pop up everywhere, especially in education. It has also recently become a buzzword, with the meaning beginning to shift and dilute as “AI” has become increasingly synonymous with generative AI. However, more concerning are the implications that generative AI will have not only on society at large, but on education, specifically. In this symposium, I attempt to disentangle terminology a bit by explaining what AI and generative AI are (e.g., Stryker & Kavlakoglu, 2024), introduce some of the popular usage styles (Mizumoto & Eguchi, 2023; Mizumoto et al., 2024; Teng, 2024), then seek to remind everyone to be a bit cautious about the output of generative AI (e.g., Spring, 2024; Steiss et al., 2024). Though it seems many educators either tend to want to disallow it or fully embrace it, I suggest that a more balanced approach is necessary, utilizing AI, but not haphazardly. Though this balance can be quite difficult, I then introduce some novel attempts to harness AI for the EFL writing classroom taking a more balanced approach (e.g., Coyne et al., 2025). In the end, I leave you with a question to which no one has the answer – what do we do about using AI in the EFL classroom? My hope is that this talk will give you some background knowledge to think about this question yourself a bit more deeply so that you can come up with some of your own solutions.

Ryan Spring began working at Tohoku University Institute for Excellence in Higher education in 2014, after graduating with a PhD in Language Communication from Tohoku University. He has a wide range of teaching and research interests including phrasal verbs, applications of cognitive linguistics to language learning, objective measures of language production, fairness in automated scoring, and the use of online tools and multimedia in language education. He serves on the board of reviewers for The Electronic Journal of Teaching English as a Second or other Language (TESL-EJ) and as vice president of the Association for Teaching English through Multimedia (ATEM) but is also active in a number of research and education-related conferences. At Tohoku University, Dr. Spring works with his colleagues to create and update English teaching materials and has administrative roles. He is also one of the Editors of the Pathways to Academic English textbook and serves as a webmaster for the connected homepage. He works with his colleagues to improve and enhance the various related educational materials.

List of Participants

Table 1: List of Speakers

Name	Affiliation	Place
Pauline Felicia Baird	International College of Technology	Kanazawa
Ryan Barnes	Nagoya University	Nagoya
Robert Joel Deacon	Florida Institute of Technology	Melbourne, FL, USA
Nooshin Goharimehr	Nagoya University of Foreign Studies	Nisshin, Aichi
Jason D. Gold	Sagami Women's University	Sagamigahara, Kanagawa
Nathan Hamlitsch	Nagoya University	Nagoya
Jonathan Harrison	Nihon University	Tokyo
Paul Lai	Nagoya University	Nagoya
Solomon Leong	SOLOMON BLOEMEN	Hong Kong, SAR
Robert MacIntyre	Sophia University	Tokyo
Iain Maloney	Sugiyama Jogakuen University	Nagoya
May Oo Khin	Nagoya University of Commerce and Business	Nisshin, Aichi
Adam Miller	Nanzan University	Nagoya
Bobby H. Nawbary	Aomori Prefectural Oma Senior High School	Oma-machi, Aomori
Chad Nilep	Nagoya University	Nagoya
Khadijah Omar	Kyushu University	Fukuoka
Satoko Shao-Kobayashi	Chiba University	Chiba
Ryan Spring	Tohoku University	Sendai

Useful Information

Parallel Sessions will be held in **Building A** of the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences.



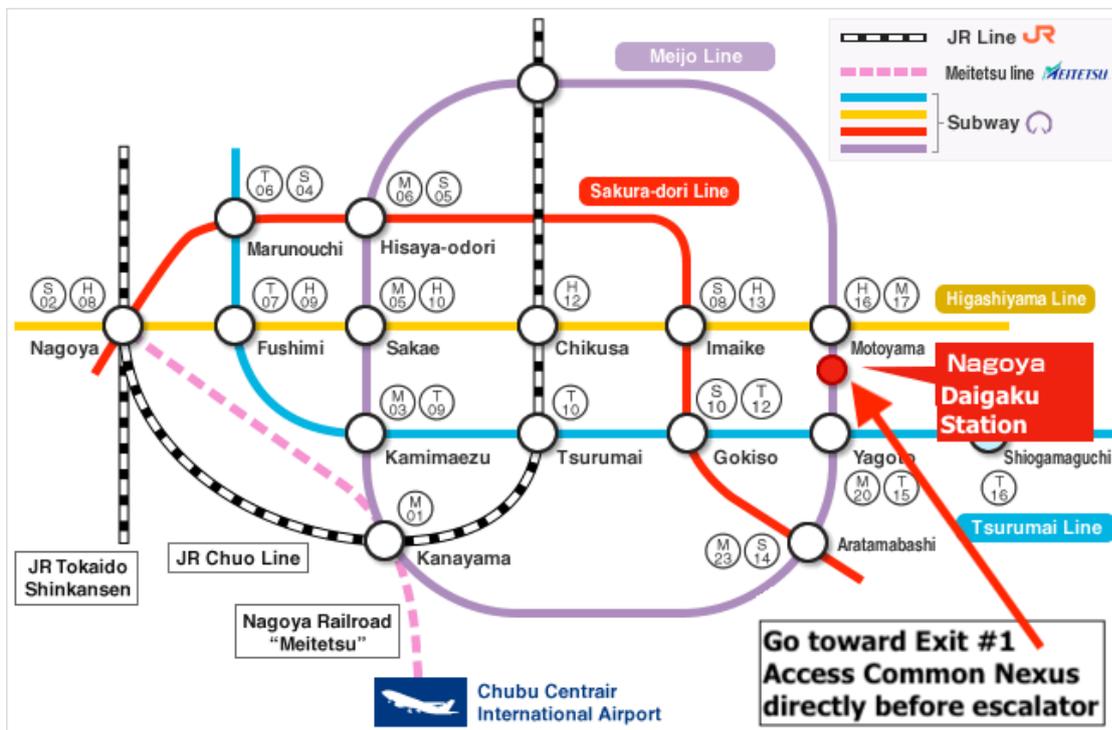
Coffee breaks and lunches will be offered in Room A34

Wi-Fi will be available during the conference.

The **conference dinner** will be held at Shooters Sports Bar & Grill www.shooters-nagoya.com



How to get to Nagoya University?



Campus Map

- a School of Engineering Building 1
- b School of Engineering Building 2
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- e School of Engineering Building 6
- f School of Engineering Building 7
- g School of Engineering Building 8
- h School of Engineering Building 9

