The Symposium
on Second Language Writing 2025

Editor's Note

The 21st Symposium on Second Language Writing (SSLW) was held from October 23 to 25 at the Howard Civil Service International House in Taipei. The theme of this year's symposium was Second Language Writing Teacher Education in the AI Era. Since the theme of this special issue of *Foreign Language Studies* is AI and Writing, I invited several L2 writing colleagues, who attended SSLW2025, to contribute their reflections of the conference to this report to compliment the special issue. Besides this year's conference, they have attended SSLW many times over the years, making them especially qualified to provide insightful commentary. Following a brief introduction of SSLW and this year's conference, I will introduce the four contributors, and their topics in this reflection. Please refer to the Research Note for their contributions.

The SSLW was founded in 1998 by Tony Silva and Paul Kei Matsuda and has been held in the United States and around the world nearly every year ever since. According to the symposium website, "SSLW is an annual international conference dedicated to the development of the field of second language writing—a transdisciplinary field of specialization that draws from and contributes to various related fields, including applied linguistics, writing studies, education, foreign language studies, literacy studies, rhetoric, and TESOL." This description indicates the richness and depth of discussions and interaction that invariably occur at SSLW.

In addition, a culture of inclusion and openness has encouraged scholars of all levels of experience from all regions of the world to participate. The emphasis on supporting graduate students is exemplified by a new award sponsored by the *Journal of Second Language Writing* (*JSLW*) and Elsevier. The JSLW Award for the Best Graduate Student Papers at SSLW, which was presented for the first time at this year's conference, "celebrates emerging scholars whose work demonstrates originality, clarity, and strong potential to contribute to the field of

second language writing" comes with a cash prize of USD250 for two papers. At SSLW2025, First Place went to Tomoko Oyama from Waseda University, Japan; Second Place went to Valentina Guzman Polanco from the University of Melbourne, Australia; and Che-Han Chen from Georgia State University, USA, received Honorable Mention. Besides purely academic activity, a special part of SSLW culture is the emphasis on social activities such as the pre-symposium social, an opening reception, and even organized tours following the three-day conference. These events are a significant aspect of the SSLW experience. This is all to say that "the symposium" has developed into one of the most worthwhile academic events for L2 writing scholars around the world.

　　　　SSLW2025 was no exception: This year, organizer, Professor Paul Kei Matsuda gathered an outstanding group of featured speakers from Asia and the United States. On Thursday morning, Greg Kessler, Professor of Instructional Technology at Ohio University provided a historical and theoretical foundation for the conference in his talk, "Technology and Writing: Past, present & future." On Friday morning, Icy Lee, Professor of Education (TESOL & Language Education) at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, spoke on "AI integration in L2 writing education: An expertise framework" for the second plenary address. Then Amy B. M. Tsui, Yu-Shan, Fellow and Chair Professor at National Taiwan Normal University, and Paul Kei Matsuda, Professor of English and Director of Second Language Writing joined her for a panel on 'Expertise in the teaching of writing revisited in the age of AI." Finally, Atsushi Mizumoto, Professor at the Faculty of Foreign Language Studies and the Graduate School of Foreign Language Education and Research, Kansai University, Japan, brought many discussions of the three days together in his Friday afternoon plenary titled "AI-assisted writing feedback: Does explicit or implicit correction lead to better retention?" Between and beyond these thought-providing speeches, L2 writing researchers and teachers presented 140 papers, 14 roundtable discussions, and 6 workshops, of which many were from Taiwan.

　　　　In this report, four distinguished scholars from Taiwan have offered their own unique reflections on their experiences at SSLW2025. The week after the conference I shared with these colleagues that I was "suffering from PCDS (Post-Conference Depression Syndrome)!" I wanted to know how they were feeling and if they would like to share their thoughts in a Research Note because a primary purpose of this section is to encourage a sense of community among readers and contributors. To

my delight, they all agreed to participate, so I brainstormed some questions and topics that they might find interesting and asked them to make their contributions into a shared Google Doc.

　　The first contributor is Hui-Tzu Min, Distinguished Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan. At SSLW2025, she presented her reflective paper, "An Exploratory Instructional Design for Eliciting L2 written feedback from ChatGPT" as a roundtable discussion. Her contribution here is "Teaching writing and critically embracing Gen AI," in which she describes her first encounter with GenAI and how, through using it with her students, her "layers of critical AI literacy" have developed beginning with SSLW2024, then SSLW2025, and now looking forward to SSLW2026. Next, Ju-Chuan Huang, Associate Professor, Institute of Applied English, National Taiwan Ocean University shares her observations and conclusions from attending sessions over three days in "The role of Gen AI in writing education." Third, June Yichun Liu, Professor, Department of English, National Chengchi University, presented two papers at SSLW. First, "AI-Enhanced L2 Writing Pedagogy" and then with Pin-Hsi Patrick Chen, "Redefining knowledge construction: The role of generative AI as a collaborative cognitive agent in EFL writing." In her contribution here, Liu shares her developing thoughts in "Voice in writing for publication" concluding that in this new AI era, discussions at SSLW2025 raised more questions regarding this issue that need to be addressed. Fourth, Lydia Tseng, Associate Professor, Fu Jen Catholic University also presented two papers at SSLW. First, with Lynde Tan, Lyan Chou, and Chung-Pei Tsai, she presented "Empowering Taiwanese EFL student writers with AI: Enhancing grammar awareness and collaborative autonomy through ChatGPT." Second, she presented "Enhancing Language Learning through Place-Based Digital Multimodal Composition in Taiwan." In her contribution here, Tseng considers, "Why SSLW is Important to Me" eloquently sharing her insightful reflections from the perspective of a teacher-researcher of L2 writing and digital multimodal composing and academic writing. Finally, I am Cheryl Sheridan, Assistant Professor at the Foreign Language Center of National Chengchi University and the Research Notes editor at *Foreign Language Studies*. At SSLW2025, I presented a paper titled "Understanding editor and author decision making in the peer review process: A case study using text histories and talk around text interviews" and reported online research into Taiwan-based journals' statements (or lack thereof) regarding AI use in their publications.

If you would like to learn more about the Symposium on Second Language Writing, please go to: https://pmatsuda.net/sslw/. There you will see information about SSLW2026, which will be held from October 23 to 25 at Kyoto University in Kyoto, Japan. The them for the conference is "The Humanity of Writing Teachers in the Age of AI." If you are interested in attending, it is strongly advised that you book refundable lodging immediately as Autumn is a very popular time to visit Kyoto and hotels and guest houses get booked up far in advance.

I truly appreciate Professors Min, Huang, Liu, and Tseng for participating in this semi-formal collaboration. I am also grateful to the co-editors of this special issue of *Foreign Language Studies* on AI and Writing, Yachao Sun from Duke Kunshan University, China and Ge Lan from City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Research Notes Editor,
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