IJTS Call for Papers
Communicating beyond the University: The Asian Workplace

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Aims and Scope
Dubinsky and Getchell (2021), in an enlightening paper, provide a comprehensive overview of the evolution of business communication, technical communication, and later professional communication. More importantly, they surface issues and tensions related to how these fields are positioned and hence viewed in university's curricular spaces, primarily in the context of North American higher education landscape. Their key contention is about the lack of clarity in the definition of disciplinary boundaries of business communication and technical communication, in particular. They further argue that where these fields reside in a university has an influence on how they are perceived, their place in the curricular space, and how the disciplinary knowledge is built. However, Dubinsky and Getchell are referring to the first language (L1) context.

In a separate yet equally illuminating paper, Du-Babcock (2018) presents a critical review of business communication in an Asian ESL/EFL context in the last two decades, from the perspectives of culture, language, and international business. She postulates that there seems to be a silo effect in the research of communication and management practices in Asia as scholars approach them from their respective fields. Not only does Du-Babcock's stance speak to Dubinsky and Getchell's view about disciplinary boundaries, it also adds to the complexity considering that the context is ESL/EFL.

In fact, we could add this special issue, we add another to the discussion, that is the influence of technology. We know that employees at many workplaces have been using generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT for their writing and communication demands. Further, social media has challenged the understanding of communication and the recent pandemic has opened up new ways of communication.

In view of the multi-dimensional aspect of communication in the workplace, be it business, technical or professional communication, we suggest that it is an interdisciplinary endeavour. Research and practice, theory and application, benefit from interviews, discussions, and lessons drawn from different fields that become interrelated in workplace communication. In her concluding remarks, Du-Babcock (2018) calls for an integrated model to capture such complexity and diversity; Dubinsky and Getchell (2021) too ask for conversations on interdisciplinarity and business communication.

Besides interdisciplinarity, we further argue that there should be dialogues on what constitutes *effective* communication in the workplace. While much has also been written about it, the challenge remains on *how effective communication can be cultivated in higher education to prepare students for the workplace*.

The International Journal of TESOL Studies invites educators in diverse areas of ELT, business communication, technical communication, professional communication, rhetoric and composition, discourse, organizational communication, management communication and other related fields to contribute to a Special Issue on *Communicating beyond the University: The Asian workplace*, to be published by **late 2024**.

Call for papers

We invite scholars and practitioners to explore, examine, and share how institutes of higher education prepare students for workplace communication in the current landscape; how professionals and industry practitioners communicate in workplaces in the Asian context; and other emerging issues in the field. **Interdisciplinarity** is key.

While we recognise that English language may not be the primary language of workplace communication in many Asian countries, we intend for this Special Issue to focus on communication using English in the Asian workplace.

There are three sections for contribution, as follows:

Articles
Articles are papers with original research which includes empirical-based data, systematic or scoping reviews. Articles should present new contributions in terms of ideas, approaches, or understanding. The issue(s) or problem(s) must be clearly defined and contextualized, research design well justified, and data carefully analysed, evaluated, and discussed. The length of Articles is between 6,000 and 8,000 words including references (but excluding materials in the annexes).

Reflections
Reflections are critical reflective pieces on the author's teaching or innovative practices which have an impact on student learning. Reflections should be undergirded by relevant theoretical frameworks. They could be framed as a critique, interrogation or evaluation on teaching and innovative practices. The context of each reflective piece must be clear and there should be examples provided for enhanced understanding of the audience. The length of Reflections is between 4,000 and 5,000 words including references (but excluding materials in the annexes).

Conceptual Essays
Conceptual essays include essays that offer fresh perspectives or insights into a specific area. It may challenge the audience to have a different or deeper understanding of the topic area, and further persuade the audience to set new directions for future teaching and innovative practices. The length of Conceptual Essays is between 3,000 and 3,500 words including references (but excluding materials in the annexes).

The submissions should **ALL** be contextualised in the Asian higher education setting and workplace; and should draw from diverse perspectives such as socio-economic, political and (inter)cultural nuances, ELT, business, technology. Issues and topics include (but not limited to) the following:

1. Communication disconnect between content specialist/expert and end user/client
2. 'Context' in workplace communication
3. Communicating in specific industries or communicating inter-industries
4. Non-conventional communication at the workplace (e.g., use of emojis, abbreviations, images, audio and video)
5. Cultural nuances influencing communication in the Asian workplace (e.g., hierarchy, seniority, gender)
6. Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in workplace communication
7. Alignment between industry's expectation of graduates' ability to interact in the workplace and professional/communication curricula
8. Communicating during challenging times (e.g., empathetic communication)

Submission Instructions

Deadline for submission of manuscripts for Articles, Reflections, and Conceptual Essays is **31 March 2024**. Please email submissions to elcleekc@nus.edu.sg.

Contributors may be invited to peer review papers for the special issue in the months following. All manuscripts should be formatted according to the journal's style guide.

References

Du-Babcock, M. (2018). Business Communication Research and Theory Development in Asia: Past, Present, and Future Prospects. *Business Communication Research and Practice*, *1*(1), 4-17. https://doi.org/10.22682/bcrp.2018.1.1.4

Dubinsky, J.M., & Getchell, K. (2021). The Disappearance of Business Communication From Professional Communication Programs in English Departments. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 2021, *35*(4), 433–468. https://doi.org/10.1177/10506519211021466