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RESEARCH•REFLECTIONS•REVIEWS

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CONTENTS

WELCOME TO ETIC 10!

This is a landmark Issue for ETiC and so we want to give thanks to those who have gone before us and made the Journal into what it is today. ETiC started 6 years ago this month with Paul Meier at the helm, who then after stepping down as Editor went on to help peer review submissions for several Issues. Issue 4 saw Dr. Amanda Hilmarsson-Dunn and Mark Critchley take on the mantle both as Editors and from- time-to-time authors. Our 7th edition saw Samantha Ng and Jonathan take over the reins from Amanda and Mark, both of them having been involved in the Journal before. Jonathan was an author in Issue 5 and 6 and a peer reviewer in Issue 6. Samantha was a peer reviewer / section editor since the Journal's inception. Michelle Ives joined Jonathan for Issue 8 onwards, after having published in Issue 2 and been a peer reviewer/ Associate Editor in ETiC 7.

The Editorial Board was set up in Issue 6 with some of the members having also contributed in other capacities - as an author Prof. Andy Kirkpatrick (Griffith University) or being gracious enough to be interviewed – Prof. Don Snow (Duke Kunshan University). The majority of the Board members have stayed with us since Issue 6, and we are very fortunate to have their support. Dr. Stuart Perrin,(former Director of the Language Centre at XJTLU), Dr. Amanda Hilmarsson-Dunn and Mark Critchley, (former editors), Lesley Gryce-Sturino, (former HOD of the UMC), and Prof. Laobao Wang, (from Soochow University) have been constants on the Board. Issue 9 saw the addition of, Chris Macallister, (the new Director of the XJTLU Language Centre), Dr. Lia Blaj-Ward, (from Nottingham Trent University), and Eoin Jordan (former Deputy Director of the Language Centre).

Although there have been changes to the Editorial Team and a multitude of authors, some have shown particularly impressive support for the Journal. Appreciation goes out to the following people who have either written several articles and / or been someway involved in the Editorial Team for several Issues:

Jackie Hemingway	Sarah Butler	Layla Shelmerdine
Seth Hartigan	Debra Jones	James Lee
Kristin Reimer	Shu Deng	Gareth Morris
Jack Parkinson	Helen Gasking	Ralph Hughes
Paul Smit	Simon Smith	Michael Warrick
Eoin Jordan	Micah Park	Ann Brantingham
Natalie Meintjes	Jenna Shorten	Don Jack
Peter McConnell	Karen O'Toole	Jinying Ma
Tom Ennis	Junli Fan	Yingyi Zhang

Special thanks goes out to Jenny Howard, who left the post of Chief Copy Editor last issue. She was involved since Issue 4 as a copy editor and was Chief Copy Editor from Issue 6 on.

The later Issues have seen a fairly stable team of Peer Reviewers / Associate Editors comprised of: Emer Hayes, Jackie Hemingway, Chengcheng Li, Juming Shen, Richard Carciofo, and Jessie Canady.

For all of those who have not been mentioned specifically but contributed in some way to the Journal over the last 6 years, we also express our heart-felt thanks.

Someone once said "There's nothing as certain as change" and that couldn't be truer in the area of English teaching, and also of ETiC. This issue sees a new website http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/etic (thanks to Jonathan and Scott Mallinson) and a widened focus to include submissions from those who are teaching Chinese students, regardless of their physical location. This concept of change is further echoed in our submissions. **Yan Wei** interviews **Vanessa Fortyn** from Monash University who describes her English language centre's experience of change and provides advice to other institutions going through this process. The book reviewed by **Alex Barrett** "Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching: the Case of China" charts the enormous changes in English teaching in this vast educational context over the last 60 years. The changes in Thailand especially in the area of digital literacy in English language learning and teaching are outlined by **Samuel Newbould** and **Austin Pack**, in a report of the 38th Thai TESOL conference on that theme. These and much more can be found in this, our landmark 10th issue.

We hope you enjoy it!

Michelle & Jonathan

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CLT AND CHINA: A REFLECTION

Samuel Newbould

ABSTRACT

This article is a reflection and evaluation on the current push to promote Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the methodology of choice within China. Despite the Chinese government's selection of CLT as the methodology of choice, four key barriers to its implementation still exist. These are examination constraints, availability of teachers, perceptions of CLT classrooms, and motivation. It is concluded that if CLT is to be an appropriate methodology for China, then there needs to be an overhaul of the examination system and a re-training of available teachers.

CLT IN THE WORLD

Although communicative language teaching is not new, emerging in the 1970s (Richards, 2006) from the dissatisfaction from "ineffective" teaching methods that came before (Rowe, 2008), it has no universally agreed upon definition and what it means can depend on who you ask (Littlewood, 2011, p. 541). However, one unifying feature of CLT is the belief that language is communication (Richards, 2006) and was founded upon the work on Hymes' (1966) 'communicative competence' and later Canale and Swain's (1980) interpretation that included four key elements: grammatical competence, sociocultural competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. This reinforces the view of language for communication and meaning, rather than solely as a linguistic competence (Byram and Hu,

2017, p. 47). There are certain characteristics that have been ascribed to CLT classes. One example of this is David Nunan's '5 Features' of CLT (Nunan, 1991, p. 279):

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself.
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

Having passed through a number of distinct developmental periods, it is now at the stage where it is possible to talk of a 'postmethod' era, one in which the teachings from the "ivory towers" of western educational institutions have been questioned and the importance of local knowledge re-evaluated (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). However, pedagogical methodologies are still at the forefront of teaching and have also been described as an 'essential element of a teacher's make-up' (Harmer, 2003, p. 290) with CLT being said to 'dominate' English teaching around the world (Hall, 2016, p. 215). It has achieved such a hegemony of thought that Bax wrote about the 'CLT Attitude' (Bax, 2003, p. 27), which is the belief that CLT is the way to teach a language and no other methods are worthwhile.

As with the methods before (Grammar-translation, audio-lingual, etc), CLT was developed by western academics who, as has been argued, may have presumed

that their cultural contexts are constant universally (Ahmad and Sajjad, 2011). Such contexts, also known as 'Britain, Australia, and North America' (Holliday, 1994, p. 4), are characterised by small, private, multilingual classrooms with an abundance of resources and well-trained native teachers.

This method was then exported, either by foreign teachers or local teachers trained in the west then returned home, to be used in classrooms around the world, also known as 'Tertiary, Secondary, and Primary' (Holliday, 1994, p. 4). These are typically large, monolingual, under-resourced classes with non-native teachers who have to consider wider social influences. It has been argued that much of CLT was 'imposed' upon teachers in different contexts, they had not generated it, rather their teaching was 'imitative not initiated' (Rubdy, 2009), what Phillipson terms a 'transfer of technology' (Phillipson, 1992). It is no surprise then, that the appropriacy of CLT, having such predefined solutions to teaching, was questioned when used in contexts that have vastly different social, cultural, and economic circumstances (Rubdy, 2009).

THE CHINESE CONTEXT

Since 2001 the Ministry of Education (MoE) in China has officially promoted the adoption of CLT in primary and secondary school classrooms (Li, 2010), followed in 2004 and 2007 in universities (Han and Yin, 2016). This is a huge shift from previous policies which promoted traditional methods and mastery of grammar and vocabulary, now the aim is to develop communicative competence and allow students to experiment with language (Hu, 2005a, p. 15). Even so, CLT in China has been described as more 'rhetoric than reality' (Nunan, 2003, p. 606), meaning that although CLT is supposedly how English is to be taught, the experience in the classroom is somewhat different. The appropriacy of CLT for China continues to be debated by scholars, students, and not least of all, teachers, with no sign of a consensus emerging any time soon (Anderson, 1993; Hu, 2005a; Hu, 2005b; Liu, 2015; Rao, 2002; Yu, 2001). This section of the article will discuss how contextual factors such as examination constraints, availability and attitude of local teachers, perceptions of class sizes and CLT, and motivation, affect the implementation of CLT in China. These factors have been chosen as they appear to be the most commonly cited factors when discussing the adoption of CLT in China.

EXAMINATION CONSTRAINTS

teachers 'teach to the test', resulting in the neglect of non-tested aspects of English (Fang and Clarke, 2014, p. 111), and methodologies that reflect the grammar and vocabulary intense elements of the test (Burnaby and Sun, 1989).
The two most important English related tests in China are the Gaokao (university entrance exam) and CET (College English Test), both of which contain no mandatory speaking section, though there is an optional speaking test for the CET (Zheng and Cheng, 2008). The result is a narrow curriculum that prioritises mastery of grammar and vocabulary, taught via grammar -translation, and teachers that are afraid to try new teaching methods (Li, 2010, p. 445). Equally, students feel dejected by the limitations placed on their learning by exams. This is exemplified by one student's comment when asked about learning, 'I know it is very important to be able to communicate in English. But if I want to graduate from university, I have to pass all kinds of examinations, which are all grammar-based. That is why I like to work on English grammar' (Rao, 2002, p. 95). That is not to say

CLT is ill-suited to the teaching of grammar (Thompson, 1994; Fotos, 1994) but an established non-CLT methodology, such as grammar-translation, which mirrors test items and is better suited to the abilities of teachers (Yu, 2001, p. 197) is still seen as the better choice by both students and teachers.

AVAILABILITY AND BELIEFS OF LOCAL TEACHERS

It is through teachers that curricula are realised and lessons delivered, they are very much part of the context of a teaching environment, being the implementers of teaching directives. It is important to remember that CLT was devised with well educated, native speakers who have a degree of autonomy; unfortunately practicality means that this is rarely the case in China (Liao, 2004, p. 271), leading to questions as to whether CLT can ever really work in China.

When the policy of CLT was being proposed, a view acknowledged by Chinese English teachers themselves was that they lack the competences needed to implement CLT (Burnaby and Sun, 1989, p. 219),and there are indications that this is still the case today (Yan, 2012; Rao, 2013). An equally prevalent view is that they do not see CLT as applicable to their own context (Li, 2010, p. 445). The former point is also noted by external observers, commenting that teachers' poor English skills and inadequate training mean it is either very difficult or impossible for many teachers to use CLT in their classrooms (Fang and Clarke, 2014, p. 114; Liao, 2004, p. 272; Nunan, 2003, p. 606; Yu, 2001, p. 197). Similarly, though the MoE developed a new curriculum and accompanying teaching materials as stated earlier, teachers are failing to understand the principles underlying these new resources and are continuing to use them in traditional ways (Hu, 2005a, p. 16; Yu, 2015).

Chinese culture is heavily influenced by Confucianism, which emphasises education, though in such a way as to run counter to CLT in regards to the roles of teachers and students. A Chinese proverb encapsulates the role of the teacher as a supplier of knowledge by saying, 'To give students a bowl of water, the teacher must have a full bucket of water to dispense' (Hu, 2002, p. 98). Teachers' subject knowledge is prioritized over pedagogic knowledge. This philosophy is evident in attitudes towards teaching, by both teachers and students, where CLT and less traditional classroom learning practices, such the use of games or communicative activities, are met with scepticism as a teacher's job is to explicitly impart knowledge (Anderson, 1993, p. 473; Zhu, 2012, p. 801).

PERCEPTIONS OF CLT CLASSROOMS

China has a population of over 1.3 billion people and, aside from more prosperous eastern coastal cities, an often under-resourced education system (Hu, 2003, p.303), meaning class sizes are often larger than those envisaged by CLT's creators. Though it is true there is discrepancy in class sizes, as is to be expected with a country so large, primary, secondary, middle, and high school classes can number over 100, the OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, reported that the average class size for China in 2014 was 48 (OECD, 2018).

What is important is not the number of students in a class, but how teachers and those in the education sector interpret this. Often being used as a justification for the reluctance to implement CLT, or CLT-like activities, large class sizes are seen as difficult to manage or unsuitable for CLT (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998, p. 742; Yu, 2015), therefore are perceived

to necessitate the more teacher-controlled grammar-translation or audio-lingual methods (Hu, 2005a, p. 651). Physical factors such as available classrooms and furniture also affect teaching practices. Students typically sit on long benches which are bolted to the floor, severely limiting student interaction patterns typical of CLT (Jin and Cortazzi, 1998, p. 743). Furthermore, large-class coping strategies such as peer evaluation undermine traditional Chinese educational values, as students question what they can learn from each other and see feedback as one role of the teacher (Hu, 2002, p. 100).

MOTIVATION

Motivation in English learning is somewhat of a dichotomy in China. On the one hand the motivation to learn English in China has been increasing ever since its entrance into the WTO (Lam, 2005, p. 83) and China has the greatest non-native English speaking population in the world (He and Zhang, 2010, p. 769). On the other hand students become increasingly disinterested with English as they progress through school (Lee, 2009, p. 139). Perhaps more accurate would be that Chinese students are disillusioned with the lessons they receive, a 2011 study on motivation in English learning in universities found that 53.7% of students indicated they either 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' that the current teaching practices meet their needs and expectations (Pan and Block, 2011, p. 296).

With such a high percentage of students unhappy with the experience of learning English, one may wonder why a situation like this occurs. One reason could be instrumental motivation. Instrumental motivation is plentiful in China, mentioned earlier was the fact that exams are the major reason English is studied as English is seen as a subject rather than a form of communication (Lam, 2005). A phenomenon noted by Liu (2015)

is that once students pass the CET exam, the last English exam they are likely to take, their English proficiency decreases (Liu, 2015, p. 130). With motivation linked to exams, it may be that students endure their English lessons which utilise grammar-translation as they see it as a means to an end. Of note is that this would also support the recent 'L2 motivational self-system' proposed by Dörnyei (2009), whereby Chinese learners would like to view themselves as academically successful rather than competent English users in their ideal self (Li, 2014).

The lack of integrative motivation, that is, the desire to study a language in order to be part of that language speaking community (Ushioda and Dörnyei, 2009, p. 2) has been noted as a reason for the apparent lack of communicative competence in Chinese classrooms (Yu, 2009, p. 87). When investigated, one study found that learners at university had little desire or ambition to integrate into English speaking communities and equally did not identify with English-speaking cultures; rather they thought of English in terms of instrumental motivational factors, specifically passing tests and job opportunities (Zhao, 2012, p. 105). Therefore the relevance of a teaching methodology which highlights communicative features would not be as valued.

DISCUSSION

Although there is a government-sanctioned requirement to change to CLT in all levels of education, the uptake of CLT has been limited at best, with contextual constraints, real or perceived, cited as a reason. Two factors above all have limited CLT's introduction; examination constraints and availability and beliefs of local teachers. Other factors include perceptions of class size and motivation, though to a lesser extent.

It seems the real issue is that

Chinese language tests, which emphasise linguistic knowledge, appear to be contrary to the MoE's aim for communicative competence in language learning. Until this changes, and tests, which are so important in this context, reflect the MoE's aims, it is doubtful whether CLT will fully be adopted. Negative washback means teachers and students comply with a method that teaches them to pass tests, while limiting their overall language ability. At the same time many teachers lack the training and competence to implement CLT. In order to implement the government's policy of CLT the (re) training of teachers is crucial (Lee, 2009, p. 149). This is a daunting prospect given that there are over one million English teachers in China (Luo, 2014, p. 206). Currently and historically teacher-training has focussed on improving subject knowledge, rather than pedagogic knowledge (Fang and Clarke, 2014, p 1), however, experimental teacher training projects are in the early stages of being trialled with the intention of creating new teachers versed in CLT (Fang and Clarke, 2014). The results of which are not entirely a triumph for CLT, rather, trainee-teachers 'have surrendered' to the pressures of exams and school expectations of 'what a teacher should do', meaning little CLT is used in classrooms (Fang and Clarke, 2014) . It has been said that if teachers had a sound understanding of teaching theory they would be more supportive of CLT and encouraged to overcome the constraints of Chinese classrooms (Yu, 2001, p. 197).

This was partially true for a British Council organised teaching project which found that both qualitative and quantitative data indicated that Chinese teachers were 'open to CLT' and 'showed a willingness to change and improve their teaching practice', however they resisted completely converting to CLT, instead preferring to concentrate on the linguistic forms of language (Gu, 2005, p. 291). The overall message being that CLT can work, but it cannot be imposed 'as is', Chinese practitioners need to

be shown, and experience, how it can work in their contexts, with the burden of this being on the exporters (Gu, 2005, p. 302).

In terms of large class sizes, studies have shown that this is not an insurmountable barrier to interaction patterns (Todd, 2006, p. 6) and teaching methodology (Snow, 2007, p. 220), rather teaching-learning activities are more important than actual class size (Kumar, 1992). A negotiated pedagogy between teachers and students has been shown to be successful for dealing with this problem, especially when teachers explain their methods, the reasoning behind it, and provide encouragement (Anderson, 1993, p. 476).

If CLT is ever to become a success in China, both teachers and students need to negotiate a methodology that acknowledges the constraints of exams and the need for students to pass them. At the same time, teacher-training, especially in pedagogy, needs to be extended and CLT shown to be situationally relevant in a way that address the constraints of teaching and learning in China so that it is not seen as 'just another western import'. China is going through a significant change in regard to language teaching, with the shoots of CLT beginning to take root. Time will tell if the new generation of teachers will be able to bring about the change envisaged by the MoE, or if, as early signs indicate, the prevailing conditions will remain. Whatever happens, there is no doubt this is a fascinating time to be involved in language teaching in China.

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KEY CONCEPTS: PRAGMATICS

Michelle Ives

Note: This a brief introduction to the concept. For more detail, please see the Recommended Further Reading list.

Pragmatics has long been part of the study of both the English language and English language teaching. As a constituent of descriptive linguistics, it explains how morphology, syntax, semantics, phonetics and phonology are deployed in human language to make sense. Although correct usage of pragmatics requires mastery of skills frequently taught in English language courses, such as lexicon, syntax, and organization, which are frequently taught in English language courses, pragmatics itself is often omitted from curricula. However, as our students are increasingly using English for travelling or working within an environments populated by proficient English speakers, awareness of the pragmatic aspects of language is becoming more important to avoid miscommunication.

As an example, Halenko and Jones (2011), researching the pragmatic awareness of Chinese EAP learners in the UK, noted that their students struggled with simple tasks like requesting information from a lecturer. Pragmatic failure can therefore cause greater misunderstanding than grammatical failure and may even lead to communication breakdown (Thomas, 1983).

DISCUSSION

The field of pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics and semiotics (signs and meaning-making) and explains how language users avoid ambiguity and show intent. Basing their seminal research on Hymes' (1972) definition of communicative competence, Canale and Swain (1980) applied linguistic theory to language teaching to ensure that linguist assessment encompassed grammar of rules (linguistic competence) as well as grammar of usage (linguistic performance). Research in pragmatics often draws upon other theories such as Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969).

Expanding upon the communicative competence definition by Hymes (1972), Bachman (1990) defines pragmatic knowledge as knowing how words and utterances can be assigned specific meanings in context and function according to the user's intentions. Unlike semantics, which focuses on the literal meaning of words, pragmatics focuses on inferred meaning perceived by the speaker and listener, who use manner, place, and time of an utterance to create meaning.

The field of pragmatics involves implicatures; that is, things that are communicated although not explicitly expressed. For this reason, language that has a pragmatic function may often be idiomatic or metaphorical.

KEY TERMS

Utterance vs. sentence: A sentence is a string of words isolated from context. It therefore has no intrinsic meaning. If the meaning of a sentence can be inferred through the listener's knowledge of both the linguistic and non-linguistic contexts, it is an utterance. Leech (1983) suggests using the word sentence for grammatical structures, and the term utterance for instances of these, identified by their use in a particular circumstance. For example, "It's small" is a sentence; however, until placed within a context, it is full of ambiguity. What is "it"? Why was this said? What is the implied meaning? Who said it? To whom? For what reason?

Speech acts: These are utterances that have a performative function; that is, they perform the action they describe. Types of speech acts are promising, requesting, ordering, greeting, warning, inviting, and congratulating (Searle, 1969).

These are classified into:

• locutionary act: what was literally said (e.g., "Phew, it's hot in here")
• illocutionary act: the implied meaning (e.g., "Please open the window")
• perlocutionary act: the effect of the utterance (e.g., the listener asks if the window should be opened / opens the window)

Pragmatic competence: This is related to communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and is defined by Thomas (1983) as "the ability to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context" (p. 96). In the example above, if the speaker says, "It's hot in here" and the listener replies, "Would you like me to open a window?", then pragmatic competence has been achieved. The listener, through the speaker's utterance, has understood the illocutionary act and has inferred that a request has been made. Studies of this phenomenon have occurred both within the academic context (Halenko & Jones, 2011) and

in areas such as medicine (Hull, 2016).

Pragmatic failure: According to Thomas (1983), this is a combination of pragmalinguistic failure related to grammatical error, or when a learner transfers L1 speech act strategies to L2, and sociopragmatic failure, which involves the learner's lack of use of appropriate strategies related to the social conditions of the target language. An example of pragmalinguistic failure given by Thomas (1983, p. 101) is students responding, 'No I wouldn't', in response to the question, "X, would you like to read?". The learners failed to recognize the speech act was a request. The above example is from Russian classrooms, but the same situation can be experienced in China. In relation to Chinese L1 speakers, a common related research area has been the speech act of compliment giving and receiving (Cheng, 2011; Yu, 2011). For example, one explanation found for the pragmalinguistic differences between compliment receiving in L1 (Mandarin) and L2 (American English) was thought to be the transfer of cultural practices such as a show of modesty by the downgrading of compliments (Cheng, 2011).

Pragmatic development: This is the theory of how pragmatic competence occurs and includes research on how to foster this in the classroom (Chang, 2010).

RELEVANCE FOR TEACHING

Pragmatics has much significance for the language classroom within all language skill areas. The pragmatic focus and teaching method adopted will depend on students' reasons for learning English and curriculum restrictions. Those who are about to live and work overseas will have different pragmatic mastery needs than those learning English as part of their core curriculum for a particular degree.

Two main approaches have been used for teaching pragmatics: a general raising of awareness and explicit teaching. Yu (2011), noting that "socio-cultural conventions are so deeply ingrained in every individual..." (p. 1144), suggests that the teaching focus should be aiming to raise awareness to create learners who are more flexible and tolerant of pragmatic-related responses from other cultures. Opportunities for reflection on L1 and L2 differences can be achieved by providing more

opportunities for social interaction in an L2 environment (Timpe-Laughlin, 2016).

These opportunities can be created by teaching learners both speech acts in the target language and the motivation or intent of these acts, which involves noticing elements of time, person and performance (Blum-Kulka, 1982). It also requires correction of incorrect forms resulting from L1 pragmatic transfer. Limberg (2015) recommends a combination of these approaches along with progressive scaffolding of pragmatic development. Such considerations include gaining expertise, raising awareness, drawing conclusions, exploring speech acts, combining pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, creating variability, integrating different language skills, and practising speech acts within sequential structures.
In sum, regardless of whether the teacher aims to develop learners' pragmatic skills in a particular speech act, or focus only on raising awareness, pragmatically-aware language users will more likely be "enabled to avoid appearing impolite, hypocritical, or ironical [sic] and also make less biased judgement of others" (Sifianou, 1992, p. 208, as cited in Yu, 2011, p. 1144). ▷

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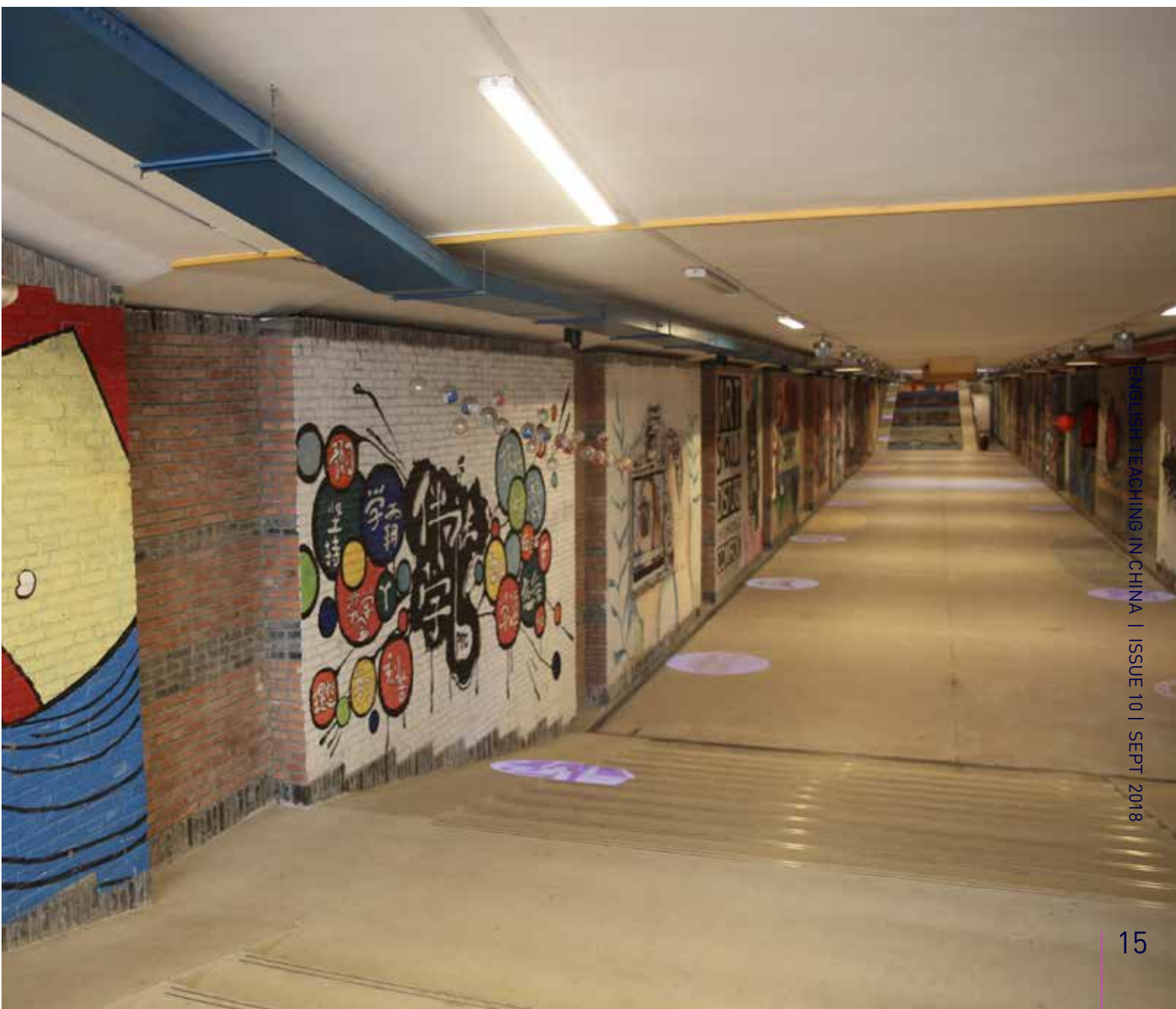
REPORT ON THE 38TH THAILAND TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, JANUARY 26-27, 2018, CHIANG MAI, THAILAND

Samuel Newbould & Austin Pack

The opening address of the conference encapsulated the ethos and goal of Thailand TESOL 2018, for presenters and attendees to contemplate the "real challenge for teachers to explore, select, and integrate appropriate digital medium and devices in the hope of achieving classroom transformation which truly enhances learners' ability and effectively stimulates the learning process and enthusiasm." This quote, from Thailand TESOL President Paneeta Nitayaphorn, is applicable to teachers worldwide in the 21st century.

The theme of the conference, "Digital Literacy in English Language Learning and Teaching," was well discussed over two days via 127 paper presentations, 50 workshops, and 31 poster presentations. Attendees came from all over the world and included academics, teachers, students, publishers, and teaching organizations. Of note was the large number of workshops conducted by English Language Fellows on behalf of the United States State Department's English Language programmes. In addition, there was a particular emphasis on encouraging local teachers and local language teaching students to attend.

The keynote speech by Charas Suwanwela, a professor emeritus of surgery and current chairman of the Independent Committee for Education Reform in Thailand, highlighted how teaching has moved beyond basic communicative competence to include a range of competencies, including financial, social, and digital. Suwanwela noted that digital literacy is especially important for economically undeveloped areas of the world as it provides new opportunities for engaging in learning. One important example of this is online distance education.

The first day's opening talks also saw plenary speaker Dr. Cynthia White address the topic of margins of practice, or the space and resources available to teachers. Interestingly, White was present at the first Thailand TESOL conference in the 1980s. She recalled that at that time the blackboard, dictionary, and classroom were considered technology. White is currently an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at Massey University, New Zealand and is perhaps best known for her book Language Learning in Distance Education. Her research interests include online and distance learning, agency, and autonomy. Her focus was firmly on pedagogic practices, highlighting the importance for teachers to remember that digital literacy involves exposure to multimedia that includes sounds, images, video, and text, all of which interact, sometimes simultaneously, and demands more of the student than the traditional reading text or listening activity. She went on to stress that digital literacy may also be a challenge for teachers unfamiliar with technology, and called attention to the TESOL Technology Standards which have been developed for teachers and teaching administrators and published by TESOL International Association. These are standards were, developed from practice and research and designed to guide English language educators and administrators on technology use in and out of the classroom. Specifically, she highlighted a point within Standard

2 (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., 2008), which suggests teachers "stay informed and learn about how to use new technologies for instructional and professional purposes."

The other two other plenary sessions were well attended. Randall Davis, creator of the website Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab (www.esl-lab.com), discussed the importance of embracing and celebrating imperfection on the road to better teaching. He shared experiences from his own career that served as examples of how teachers can learn from their mistakes as they try to overcome the challenge of selecting and using technology to stimulate the learning process and enhance learners' abilities. Additionally, he recommended teachers to 'find their niche' and specialize in one area of technology since keeping abreast of developments in different classroom technologies may be overwhelming.

Dr. Mike Levy, an honorary professor at the University of Queensland and the final plenary speaker, argued that while digital literacy is not a new concept, it is nevertheless of great importance for today's teachers, citing content evaluation and fake news as two examples of its continuing relevance. Levy also addressed a key idea echoed throughout various presentations, that technology should not and cannot replace the element most essential to successful classrooms: the interaction and rapport shared by teachers and students.

Building upon the plenary speeches, key themes of the conference emerged from within the presentations and workshops. Blended learning was especially popular, featuring in 14 different sessions, a number of which addressed issues of practical problems, such as creating valid and reliable online assessments and motivating students through blended learning. Editor-in-Chief of the Regional Language Centre (RELC) Journal, Dr. Marie Yeo, noted that as blended learning has been firmly established within English language teaching, the key question left to educators now is "how to blend."

On the conference's second day, an entire room was given over to discussion of intercultural communication and the need within 21st century language education to develop intercultural competence as a means of fostering global citizens. A colloquium "Increasing Intercultural Competence in Ourselves and Our Students" stressed the importance of teachers being aware of and appreciating intercultural communication issues if they are to teach it themselves.

A final key theme was the use of social media in language teaching, especially in providing motivation and interest for students through authentic and real-world applications. Additionally, the uses of social media by students outside the classroom was highlighted, especially (as mentioned in the keynote speech) in economically developing areas. Mir Sadia Siddequa shared her experience teaching adult learners in Bangladesh and how she uses Facebook groups to develop students' English when they are unable to attend classes due to work commitments.

Both Thailand TESOL and the Empress Hotel did an excellent job organizing and managing the event. Attendees were treated to a feast of a lunch during both conference days. Our only suggestion is perhaps in the future Thailand TESOL can select a venue with more centralized rooms for presentations, as a problem of this conference was many attendees found it difficult to locate several rooms.

Overall the conference was a success. It provided everything important to an academic conference, including intellectual stimulation, new ideas to improve teaching, a better understanding of the latest research relating to the conference theme, and ample opportunities to network and engage with the wider academic community in a welcoming and stimulating environment. For more about the conference, and future Thailand TESOL conferences, please consult the website: http://tesol.conferences.in.th/

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TALKING WITH ... VANESSA FORTYN

Yan Wei

Vanessa Fortyn began her ESL teaching career in 1998 and has taught across all levels of learners in different tertiary institutions in Japan, China and Australia. Since 2013, she has been Head of Studies of the Monash English Program at the Monash University English Language Centre, in Melbourne, Australia. She has been part of the team that has overseen the Language Centre through extraordinary change.

Vanessa was recently the Keynote Speaker at the June Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University Language Centre Symposium. Yan Wei caught up with her to enlighten ETiC readers with issues regarding Change Management in English language centres.

YOU HAVE BEEN HEAD OF STUDIES OF THE ENGLISH PROGRAM AT THE MONASH UNIVERSITY, MELBOURNE SINCE 2013, AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTRE THERE IS RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE CENTERS IN AUSTRALIA. WHAT KIND OF CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN THERE OVER TIME?

I've seen a huge amount of change since I've been here. We basically tripled in size so there has been a huge increase in student numbers and staffing. Just prior to my starting, we had a new director who came in with a very strong vision of what we should be. She introduced us to strategic planning ideas that would enable us to become a quality English language provider. We overhauled our curricula, bringing greater consistency and alignment in our programs to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and also looked at what the university

wanted from the students. Our assessments were made tighter, more reliable, and more valid, and then they were externally validated so they reach a high standard. We also created a lot of new roles and changed our workplace culture, attracting teachers who are really passionate about teaching. We did this by really creating a strong culture of Professional Development. We expanded our partnerships overseas with the institutions that deliver our programs and introduced teacher training programs such as CELTA. Our centre grew too big for the premises we were on so we had to relocate, which involved using external venues and moving people from one campus to another. Another significant change was the introduction of blended learning as a core component of our programmes. Blended Learning being the use of E-learning as a natural part of classroom teaching.

REGARDING THE BLENDED LEARNING, WERE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING IT?

Yes, it was very difficult because five years ago, we didn't have the infrastructure to support an online learning approach with technology being a natural part of classroom teaching. Back then we had a computer lab with these cranky, old desktop computers and students were scheduled only one or two hours a week in the lab. So it wasn't a natural part of everyday teaching but something additional. It was recognized throughout our industry in Australia that a move towards blended learning and incorporating E-learning more in the programmes was needed, but it was hard. How did we do it? We sat down and discussed the infrastructure needed to make these changes. Then we had to imbed the use of technology such as using Quizlet, Kahoot and Google Docs into our curriculum via Moodle, and trained our staff to ensure they are well supported to manage E-learning activities. We also had to make sure that it could be used in class seamlessly and at any time, so we needed students to bring their laptops to class every day and to ensure they would be used.

Unfortunately, we were not

strict enough in the beginning with the classroom usage and hardware specifications, and I can remember one student coming with a heavy laptop. We were still in the transition stage so teachers were not using it all the time, so unsurprisingly this student got very annoyed that the laptop was not being used. To make matters worse, some of these laptops had different kinds of operating systems. We had an IT department, but they couldn't read the operating system in different languages and struggled to try and work out how to help students when they had connection issues. Teachers would say, "I'm trying to do an activity and it's taking an hour to make sure that everyone's connected so what's the point?" You had to really make sure that both teachers and students were getting the support and that the infrastructure was sound. We solved the laptop incompatibility issue by stating the necessary laptop specifications in their enrolment document that students sign before they start studying with us.

The next step was to incorporate more E-learning into the curriculum. After implementing some small teaching activities, we realized that teachers needed to be trained more. It's difficult to get your head around technology if you are not used to it, and so you need a lot of support. With technology, you need dedicated people who really can inspire others and can help to promote it. We identified teachers who are E-learning savvy and got them to become E-learning co-ordinators. The more "buy-in" we had from staff, the more we could say "Alright now, let's go back and look at the curriculum and see how we can add more technology-based learning and teaching." We are pretty pleased with where we are now in that it is just a natural part of what we do; we have made it so much easier for teachers, and it is a part of the day-to-day of the class. So it was a painful beginning but yielded great rewards at the end. Some of the things our teachers are doing with the technology out there are fabulous and exciting.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE HAS BEEN A CULTURAL SHIFT TOWARDS GREATER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR CENTRE. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

It's so important for teachers to be stimulated at any stage of

their career. I think teachers are naturally curious and if you feed into that curiosity and provide opportunities to learn, you will get amazing returns. When we were a small school, we didn't really have a professional development programme, but there were teachers who really wanted to develop and were hungry for more information and ideas. So as part of our cultural shift, we gave them a platform and asked them to talk about their ideas. Like the snowball effect, more and more teachers became interested, and it became the interest of the majority. From there, it's really easy to manage, because everyone just thinks that's a natural part of what the school should be.

A lot of what we do is about encouraging teachers to do new and innovative things, present at conferences and do more learning, which makes people feel excited about their teaching. With these ideas bouncing around the staff room, you end up attracting new teachers who are passionate, because they hear that Monash teachers have many professional development opportunities and lots of new ideas and chances to innovate and explore. When new people come in, new ideas come in. That's really the key, and it benefits everybody. So this shift in how we view and promote professional development is a part of our teaching and learning culture, and it has been highly beneficial. However, it has to be sustained. If you do it once a year or once every six months, it is not enough. You've got to keep it going and encourage it as much as possible.

WHERE ARE MOST OF YOUR STUDENTS FROM? HAVE YOU NOTICED CHANGES IN THE MAKE-UP OF THEM? HAS THIS INFLUENCED YOUR TEACHING?

Most of our students are from China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan, and Saudi Arabia. Of those, China contributes the greatest number of students. We have had more Chinese students over time, compared with when I first started in Monash in 2008. It's interesting having those different nationalities and cultures in the centre. Some cultures have a particular trait that is quite interesting for a teacher; for example, in Saudi Arabian culture, people have very strong oral traditions. They love to speak, and they tend to be very strong and confident speakers, but they quite often have difficulty in literacy. In

contrast, Chinese tend to be quite shy, so they might avoid speaking, but they might be quite strong in writing. So you've got these two different types of students you're balancing in class, which is always so interesting as a teacher. But regardless of their background, you always have to remember that every student is an individual, and as a teacher, you have to adapt to make sure you engage them in your class.

I HEARD THAT THERE WAS AN ANNUAL INCREASE OF 20% TO 40% IN STUDENT AND STAFF NUMBERS. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THIS?

Well, we were able to predict these large increases, so we were able to plan quite well for it. Our largest increase was in 2014 when, to meet the teacher demand, we had to bring in newly-graduated teachers who were young and inexperienced. I guess the challenge for us was to make sure that those teachers were well supported so they could deliver high-standard classes. We have a teacher development team who observed and encouraged them, and we made sure that we had other systems in place to support those new teachers.

They joined in with professional development activities and we also encouraged the young teachers to give us feedback, because many of them were a similar age to our students. It was an enlightening experience for us to hear their voices and experience their fresh take on the teaching and learning.

I HEARD THERE WAS A MAJOR CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT CHANGE IN YOUR CENTRE. WHAT WERE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES WITH THE NEW CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENTS? HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH THEM?

The biggest challenge was to follow through with that change and make sure that teachers were on board and that they understood and were actually making the change.

We had to really engage the teachers as much as possible in the initial stages and ensure they really understood the changes and reasons for them. Everyone agreed we should be aligning our programs to CEFR and becoming more valid to suit the needs of the students. The

momentum of any change needs to be maintained by continually reinforcing it and helping teachers to transition. It's also important to encourage them to communicate with each other, so they realise they are not alone. When you feel alone, it is easy to go back to your previous patterns, especially when you are taken out of your comfort zone.

There is a model that we used during our period of change, called ADKAR, which helps break down the aspects of change. A is for awareness, D is for desire, K is for knowledge, A is for ability, and R is for reinforcement. It is really about creating the Awareness of what the change is and the Desire to make sure people are motivated. You need to make sure teachers have the Knowledge to fulfill the requirements of the change that shows they have the Ability to actually do it once they are in this transition phase, and finally is the Reinforcement of making sure that you have the processes in place for it to continue. I like this model, because if you think about those different aspects, you can actually know when something isn't going well. For example, if a member of staff is struggling with a particular change in your organisation, it might be related to a lack of Awareness and you need to increase the understanding of why the change needs to take place.

YOU ALSO MENTIONED THAT YOU MOVED CAMPUSES. WHAT

HAPPENED AND WERE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES?

We tend to have fluctuating student numbers, with huge peaks at certain times twice a year when we have lots of students, then at other times it is quieter. With all our programs expanding, pressure was put on our classroom availability, so we had to look for external venues where we could hold classes during these really busy times.

Because we are based in the city of Melbourne, we had to look for suitable office space where we could hold our classes, which we finally found. But obviously if you're moving staff and support services across to a different building and it's only going to be temporary, it's going to be a challenge. It's no longer your building so the facilities that you were used to are not there. It is a big change, so you have to support the people who are working in those new spaces, and then of course it's another change when they come back. Things that may appear to be minor changes, such as teachers moving desks, can be more distressing for staff than is realised. We consulted with the teachers and offered support, trying to do as much as possible to make everything right for people. It's important to have good communication with staff and then keep those communication channels open so people feel that they can say "Actually, I'm really not satisfied with the way my desk is," instead of just sitting there unhappily for ten weeks.

IN CONCLUSION, WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU WANT TO GIVE TO LANGUAGE CENTERS THAT ARE UNDERGOING BIG CHANGES LIKE YOURS DID?

Well, I would say definitely use planning tools. There's a whole industry that's dedicated to Change Management which helps managers and staff to be aware of the stages of change. They help break it down into components, which can really help staff to overcome any difficulties.

It is also important to make sure that things that don't need to change, like the little routines, stay the same, to give people a sense of stability. For example, we offer professional development sessions nearly every week, and we have never changed the time and dates of that. We know how much teachers enjoy those, and it provides a little bit of stability.

THANKS A LOT FOR TALKING WITH US TODAY – I'M SURE READERS WHOSE INSTITUTIONS ARE GOING THROUGH CHANGES HAVE GAINED A LOT FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE.

You're very welcome.

FURTHER READING

Keesing-Styles, L., Nash, S. & Ayres, R. (2014). Managing curriculum change and 'ontological uncertainty' in tertiary education. Higher Education Research & Development, 33(3), 496-509. doi: 10.1080/07294360.2013.841655

Robertson, C., Robins, A. & Cox, R. (2009). Co-constructing an academic community ethos – challenging culture and managing change in higher education: A case study taken over two years. Management in Education, 23(1), 32–40.doi: 10.1177/0892020608096062

Westover, J. H. (2010). Managing organizational change: Change agent strategies and techniques to successfully managing the dynamics of stability and change in organizations. International Journal of Management and Innovation, 2 (1), 1-7. ○

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

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BOOK REVIEW: INNOVATION IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING: THE CASE OF CHINA

Alex Barrett

TITLE: Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching: The Case of China
EDITORS: Hayo Reinders, David Nunan, and Bin Zou
PUBLISHER: Palgrave Macmillan
AVAILABLE: https://www.palgrave.com/gp/book/9781137600912
COST: £82
PUBLISHED: 2017
ISBN: 978-1-137-60091-2
PAGES: 332

With a clear explicatory rationale, satisfying a critical need to characterize, inform, and expand the knowledge structures of English language education in China, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching: The Case of China is an excellent resource for both researchers and educators in the Chinese context. Part of the New Language Learning and Teaching Environments series, which currently has twelve titles focusing on themes of learner-centered and technology-enhanced approaches both in and out of the classroom, this book investigates the teaching of English in China with a central emphasis on innovation and change.

The opening chapter provides the historical context of English language education in China over the past 60 or so years, to acclimate the uninitiated or refresh the veteran to the current environment, which involves an interplay of key agents. Namely newly established national policies regarding English language education (which for the first time directly mention English for academic purposes (EAP), the private sector, consideration of foreign teachers, and the presence or absence of technology. A cursory outline of the ensuing 14 chapters indicates a rough grouping of the next four chapters (two through five) under the topic of general English, the following six chapters (six through 11) focusing predominantly on EAP, whereas the final chapters discuss intercultural communication (12 and 13) and learner autonomy (chapter 14).

Chapter two introduces the reader to a secondary-research study by Liu and Xu, addressing issues of assessment practice in China and positioning toward the need of assessment for learning. Noting resistance to any divergence from "exam-oriented traditions" (p. 24) in China, Liu and Xu establish a need for increased teacher assessment literacy. As China is home to one of the most well-known national testing traditions in the world, the Gaokao, it's no surprise to find researchers, like Liu and Xu, being critical of the system. Yet, as they conclude, for China to rely less on summative forms of assessment will require a transformation of both heart and mind.

Similarly lamenting the exam-oriented educational culture in China, in chapter three Snow, Sun, and Li delve into the counterintuitive coda that the majority of Chinese students have poor English speaking skills, despite upwards of twelve years of classroom instruction in English, and a decade-old shift in national curriculum that emphasized speaking skills. With the obvious question of why, these researchers address students' independent language learning (ILL) to understand which, if any, out-of-classroom and self-motivated strategies were employed by students who managed to graduate with successful English speaking abilities despite the aforementioned trend. Snow, Sun, and Li's research offer valuable insight into the out-of-classroom innovations that students themselves develop, independent, and often in spite of, what they are exposed to from their teachers.

Focusing on the other productive skill, writing, chapter four's authors, Ng and Cheung, review 60 studies from the past decade in search of innovative practices in writing instruction with the hopes of establishing a foundation for future research. Again, placing learners and teachers as culturally embedded beings, Ng and Cheung define innovation here as "western" non-product-oriented pedagogies; for example process-based, genre-based, or metacognition in writing (pp. 65-66). Although their research is focused on the microcosm of Hong Kong, this is one of the few chapters that includes secondary and primary contexts instead of solely focusing on colleges and universities. Ng and Cheung touch on some of the bigger issues in writing practice and make suggestions on the use of process-oriented approaches, task and genre approaches, metacognition, the teaching of textual borrowing, and dealing with plagiarism.

Concluding the general-English chapters, the fifth chapter includes two primary-research studies by Zhao and Lei who examine the effect of technology-enhanced learning environments in a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) context. An interesting look on how technology is being implemented in China, the studies herein demonstrate to the reader the challenges that arise in technology use for language learning at the tertiary level, for example garnering participation from students. Examining how students engaged with non-compulsory online tech (such as wiki-spaces and discussion forums) demonstrated that participation was a signifier of overall performance. A number of other challenges are illustrated that any educator would do well to heed if employing similar approaches, such as ensuring student access to the technology, and teaching students how to collaborate in online learning spaces.

Heading off the six chapters that deal specifically with EAP is a remarkably informative overview, by Cai, of how English language education developed in China from the end of the Cultural Revolution to the present day. Cai explains how the Ministry of Education's (MOE) evolving policies were interpreted and realized in the tertiary context. A major takeaway from this chapter is that the MOE policy on English education is a slowly changing one, reflecting the political, economic and national security climate. This is often in opposition to the academically-produced policy which instead aligns with prevailing second-language acquisition theory. Cai concludes the chapter with a self-written 19 page appendix, explicating how he thinks English as a Foreign Language (EFL) should be taught at the tertiary level.

Chapters seven through nine take on the increasing prevalence of English-medium instruction (EMI). Zhang and Zhang, of Tsinghua University, begin their chapter on the premise that tertiary level English education in China is in need of improvement. They continue by explaining the informed decisions which shaped Tsinghua's current English program, the success of which is centered on the implementation of EMI, shifting from the general English of primary and secondary school to academic English, and focusing on language using over language learning. Jiang and Zhong pick up the baton in the following chapter with a case study describing four teachers' insights and practices in delivering EAP in an EMI setting. The researchers highlight the troubles language teachers find in balancing content knowledge with language learning and how they overcame these challenges by adopting new roles whereby they co-construct knowledge alongside students and content teachers. This is followed by Ruan and Chen's study in chapter nine which looks at the students' perceptions of disciplinary writing at an English medium university. The researchers examine the dichotomy of learning-to-write and writing-to-learn, which is especially pertinent in an EMI setting where writing is a practice to develop both content knowledge as well as writing skills ▷

in English. Amongst their findings were student's reliance on L1 for source information and outlining of writing assignments; using expert writing as a model for their own writing; and a preoccupation with grammatical accuracy in their writing.

In chapter 10, Zhao and Yu take the reader into a close analysis of EAP education at a local university. They describe the evolvement of their university's English program and the ultimate implementation of EAP. The obstacles they describe that derived from this implementation are informative, and their experiences and pedagogical model are valuable assets to any institution making similar innovations to what English they teach and how they teach it.

Two of our editors, Zou and Reinders, finish off the EAP-themed chapters with their own chapter on the use of corpora to investigate Chinese EFL university students. As EAP becomes increasingly prevalent in the Chinese context, needs have arisen in the realms of materials, training, and understanding, which Zou and Reinders attempt to remedy with a corpus study that can inform EAP practitioners on best and necessary practices. Their study highlights many of the common errors Chinese tertiary students exhibit and speculates on the probable causes of these errors through a review of relevant literature. Their study also revealed the glaring absence of advanced language learner corpora data for China, which they strongly campaign for.

The final three chapters engage with intercultural communication as well as learner autonomy. Starting with Zheng and Gao, who provide a refreshing perspective that challenges the oft-held belief that cultural education in

English language learning is akin to knowledge and skills of English "native speakers", advocate for a "productive bilingualism" where the learning of the target language and culture stimulates an appreciation for, and integration of, both the target and native language and culture. In examining a large body of data, the researchers noticed a lack of depth in students' understanding of the target culture and describe the strategies the teacher implemented to help students overcome this. This chapter is then followed by a critical review of intercultural teaching in China by Li, who likewise rejects the native-speaker model for EFL. His review found much wanting in information about how much intercultural communicative competence (ICC) was taught, how it is taught, and the attitudes of teachers who cover it. He then concludes with the recommendation that ICC be the foundation of teacher training and that more longitudinal studies be conducted of teachers' shifting beliefs on ICC. Finally, the ultimate chapter gives the reader a well-researched look into learner autonomy in China. Lin and one of the editors, Reinders, focus on three elements of learner autonomy: self-management ability, consciousness of and attitudes toward autonomy, and autonomous leaning practices. The study is focused around the creation of a questionnaire as a tool for measuring learner autonomy as an effort to advance the research in the field. Creation of reliable instruments such as this will be much needed, according to the researchers, as China puts increasing importance on students' abilities to administer their own learning.

Although China has long been a powerhouse in English language learning, the landscape of innovative practices is a constantly changing one as China's intermittently

evolving policies on English education continue to be explicated. This volume serves to remedy the need to stay abreast of change and provide readers with knowledge and tools that can enable the sustained advancement of innovative practices. Scholars interested in discovering pathways to needed research will find this book useful. Teachers in tertiary education eager to expand their knowledge of contemporary innovative practices will also discover something of use here.

Reinders, Nunan, and Zou offer a range of information on English education and learning, yet the spirit of the book lies in innovative practices, and as EAP is seen as innovative in China, it seems fitting that proportionally more of the book is dedicated to it. However, the editors have done well to include chapters on general English which highlight original methods or, at least, lament the lack of them. Critically, as China continues to make headlines on its investment in technologies (e.g., Veugelers, 2017; Chandler, 2017) it's disappointing that there is only one chapter which focuses on technology, which corresponds with an observation made in the first chapter that "technology has not played a key role as an agent of change in China" (p. 10). Also, though contributors often made their case for future progress, the volume could have been enhanced with the addition of a concluding chapter, summarizing the projected course of China's English learning and teaching.

Overall, this book provides a well edited and encompassing review of the innovation taking place in English language education in China. Interlacing theory and practice, this volume would be a practical and informative asset to both teachers and researchers.

FURTHER READING

Chandler, C. (2017, November 21). Why China is emerging as a tech superpower to rival the U.S. Fortune. Retrieved from http://fortune.com/2017/11/21/china-innovation-dji/

Veugelers, R. (2017, August 30). China is the world's new science and technology powerhouse. Bruegel. Retrieved from http://bruegel.org/2017/08/china-is-the-worlds-new-science-and-technology-powerhouse/ ○

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INSITES

Sarah Butler and Jackie Hemingway

This section highlights some useful learning and teaching websites that can help with planning, teaching, and professional development. This time we look at a collection of teaching and learning materials and a resource for using technology in EAP.

LEARNHIGHER

http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/

Learnhigher collates peer-reviewed teaching and learning resources which are free to use in education under a Creative Commons Licence. Authors are from a variety of UK institutions and all materials must be acknowledged when they are used. Although the website states resources are for staff in higher education (university study) and are generally by UK-based authors, many of them are transferable to other contexts and classrooms around the world – including EAP.

There are two key sections on the website – **Teaching and Learning Resources** and **Learning Development Research** – which are subdivided further (see Fig. 1). The Teaching and Learning Resources section is broken into several parts: Learning at University, Working with Others, Research Skills, and Writing at University and Employability. On each page there is a banner menu at the top, but there

is also a useful drop-down menu at the side that makes navigation on this site relatively easy. For example, the **'Working with Others'** section has three areas of focus with relevant materials listed (Group work; Oral communication; Listening and Interpersonal Skills). The most

popular resources are also shown in this side panel.

As can be seen with the **'Creating Your Team'** and **'Effective Communication'** examples in Fig. 2, each resource has a brief overview

▲ **Figure 1**. Homepage menu: http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/

allowing the user to identify the most appropriate resource for their needs. Resources range in type, focus, approach, and length, which gives a variety of choice. Many of the activities have associated materials (e.g. hand-outs, audio, links), although at the time of writing some of these sections had fewer resources than others.

Selecting a given resource takes the user to an activity page which has further information, including the author, license, categories that it is tagged in, and the date the resource was added. There is also an overview of the activity, sometimes with background or helpful tips. At the end of the section are links to downloadable materials. Many of the resources are templated with the **Learnhigher** logo which gives them a professional consistency. Although the sound quality of some audio materials is not consistent, the content is extremely useful (e.g. Revision Techniques Podcast; Academic Writing for Exams Podcast). The award-winning Making Group-work Work video resource is extremely valuable on courses which have group work components and can be used for self-study or in class.

Within the Teaching and Learning Resources section is also the Writing for University tab which consists of three sections: Academic Writing, Referencing, and Report Writing. Some well-developed materials in these sections include the Academic Writing: Essay writing pack, Referencing Exercises, Identify sections of a Report, and

Approaching the Question. The Learning at University tab has materials focusing on critical thinking and reflection (an increasingly common need in higher education [HE]). Also of note are the sections on Time Management (with useful advice and downloadable materials) and Assessment (with assessment advice and approaches to assessment podcasts¬). There are sections on Numeracy, Maths and Statistics, and Visual literacy, both of which are more discipline-specific but less developed.

Resources in the Research Skills tab include research skills, reading skills, effective note-taking strategies, and activities to build information literacy. Activities worth flagging are Analyse This! and Collect This! (both related to research data) and Notemaker which explores different note-making formats. As employability is receiving an increasing amount of attention within HE institutions, it is hoped that this will receive more attention as it currently has only one resource listed.

The Learning Development Research section includes materials specifically for practitioners giving insight into the theories of and research into teaching and learning. However, the resources in this section do not appear to have been updated recently and the Useful Websites section has not yet been developed.

Learnhigher has opportunities for tutors to submit or review materials

and possibly become part of a review group. Guidelines for submissions can be found in the Submit resource tab and further information about reviewing in the Get involved tab. It appears that the Learnhigher staff review the materials before allowing them on the platform.

Overall, this site has some useful resources for teachers in the field of higher education. However, the user might need to do some research (some of the most useful resources have been identified above) and it would be beneficial to see more up-to-date resources. As this site is built through contributions by practitioners working in the field of HE, it is hoped that the resources will continue to develop.

Learning Technologies in EAP

http://learningtechnologiesineap.org/

This blog site presents posts on a range of issues related to using technology in EAP. The site is managed by David Read, Director of Technology-Enhanced Learning at the English Language Teaching Centre at the University of Sheffield. In his posts, he reflects on his practical experience implementing various technologies as an EAP teacher, both in and out of the classroom. This makes it of interest for those curious about how others in the profession use and apply technology in the EAP context.

Browsing topics can provide inspiration that may benefit teaching practice. Discussion topics include using technology tools to manage a course, to assess students (e.g. e-portfolios), and to support EAP classroom activities. While some of the tools featured may be prohibitively expensive, there are also recommendations for software, websites, and apps which are free to use. The site itself is accessible in China without a VPN, but some of the resources recommended are Google-related and so are restricted in China.

Scrolling on the homepage displays about twenty of the most recent posts (see Fig. 3). Since they are displayed chronologically, it is worthwhile navigating back to older posts to find ideas which are still relevant. Tagging by key words also facilitates searching. Posts are generally made several times a year, although at
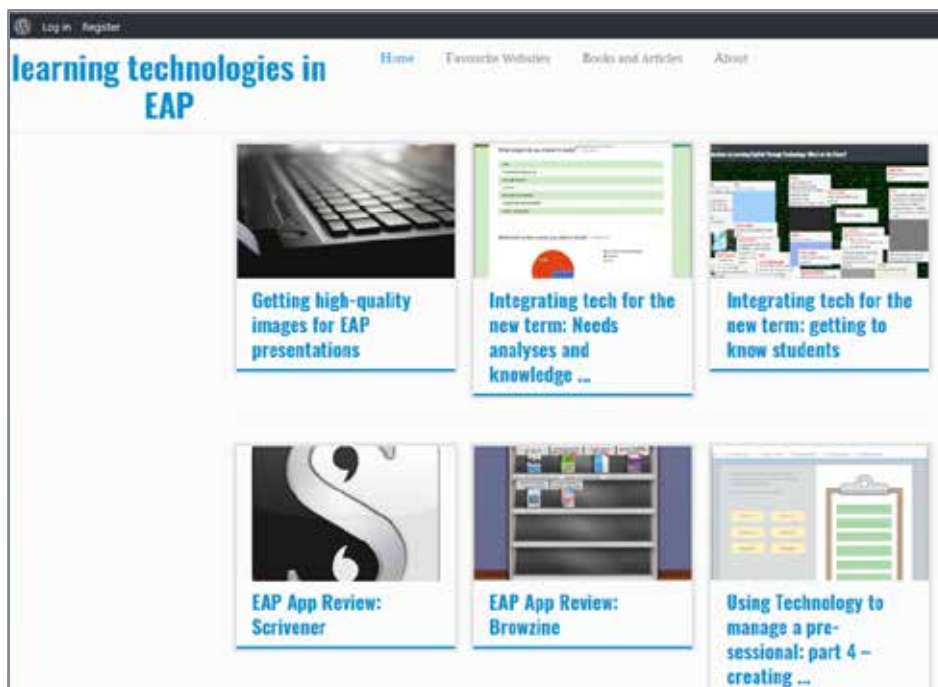

CREATING YOUR TEAM

Activity time: 15 minutes   Types of media: Webpage

An overview of some tips for creating your team. It covers some of the steps to take at the outset of a group work project to ensure that the group works together effectively.

View this resource

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Activity time: 10 minutes   Types of media: Webpage

Advice on how to communicate effectively, particularly in a group working environment. Areas covered include active listening, body language and clarity of expression.

View this resource

▲ **Figure 2**. Example resources: http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/working-with-others/group-work-working-with-others/

the time of writing the most recent was July 2017. From the homepage, move the mouse over the picture for each post and a brief introduction appears. Users can post their own comments on each article, and the Twitter feed (#ltineap) allows further user interaction and possible networking opportunities. Users can also stay informed of new content on the site by subscribing via email the RSS feed button at the bottom of the page.

Read shares ideas he has discovered at conferences he has attended or presented at, sometimes providing links to his presentation slides. Regular features, EAP App review and EAP tech tool, highlight specific products (e.g. Audio Notetaker and Quizlet) and offer practical advice on their use in class or for self-study. Since these are not organised separately from other blogposts, finding all the tools and app reviews which may be of interest requires looking back at earlier posts. Other blogposts focus on using technologies to deal with common EAP themes such as developing better vocabulary learning habits and motivating students. While well-informed, the tone is generally informal and non-intimidating, especially for practitioners less confident with technology.

Posts focusing on classroom activities include ideas that can be applied without too much set up time and that are engaging for students. For example, the QR codes blog (Fig. 4), suggests linking codes displayed on classroom walls to ice-breaker questions or new vocabulary. Such use of technology can add an extra layer of challenge and motivation to more traditional activities. Posts are often well-supported with either images, explanatory videos, or interactive content, which illustrate the functions of the technology described and serve to inspire teachers to create their own content for learners through online web tools or apps (e.g. screencasts or digital storytelling).

▲ **Figure 3**. Example topics from the homepage: http://learningtechnologiesineap.org/

▲ **Figure 4**. Example task using QR code: http://learningtechnologiesineap.org/using-qr-codes-to-promote-self-study/

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XJTLU

Content and Language Integrated Learning Conference

Taking an Integrated Approach to Teaching Content and Language in English Medium Universities

The Language Centre
Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
Suzhou, Jiangsu, China
May 24th – 26th 2019

XJTLU CLIL Conference 2019:
Taking an Integrated Approach to Teaching Content and Language in English Medium Universities

We are pleased to announce that the Language Centre at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University will host its first CLIL Conference in May 2019. Over the past 5 years the Language Centre has developed an integrated approach to delivering content-based modules in collaboration with multiple departments in the university. XJTLU, with an international student body of over 10,000, is one of the only English medium universities in China to implement a CLIL approach. This conference will provide an opportunity for us to not only share our pedagogical practices and scholarship but also allow for exchange of ideas and approaches with researchers and practitioners from within China and around the world.

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
西交利物浦大学

Presentation Formats:

- Presentations (20 – 25 minutes) on a single topic followed by the opportunity for questions and discussion.
- Round table discussions (45 minutes) with multiple participants.
- Workshops (45 minutes) in which a facilitator leads attendees in discussing, reflecting on or applying the theme of the activity.
- Posters which present research results, pedagogical approaches, etc. will be displayed. Time will be allocated for presenters to discuss their posters and answer questions from conference attendees.

Presentations might address (but are not limited to) the following topics:

- Teaching to large groups
- Educational technology and its role in supporting cooperative and collaborative learning
- Collaborative teaching methods
- Teacher identity
- Challenges of combining content and language instruction
- Structuring and managing integrated learning at universities
- Establishing integrated learning at universities
- Student support
- Designing and marking assessments from a content and language perspective
- Curriculum design
- Pedagogical approaches

Details about how to submit abstracts and register for this conference are forthcoming. For further information please contact the Integrated Learning Manager in the Language Centre at XJTLU (Helen Beech – helen.beech@xjtlu.edu.cn).

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
西交利物浦大學

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Although every effort has been made to supply accurate information, readers should visit the conference websites to receive the latest updates. Many conferences choose to extend the date for abstract proposals to ensure the maximum number of presenters.

Seth Hartigan

CONFERENCES WITH OPEN PROPOSAL DEADLINES

THE IAFOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION – HAWAII 2019: INDEPENDENCE & INTERDEPENDENCE

January 3-5, 2019, Hawai'i Convention Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A.

Proposal due: October 19, 2018

https://iicehawaii.iafor.org/

39TH THAILAND TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: CHANGES AND CHANCES IN ELT PROFESSIONALS

January 18 - 19, 2019, The Ambassador Hotel Bangkok, Thailand

Proposals due: August 15, 2018

Website: http://tesol.conferences.in.th/

15TH CAMBODIA TESOL (CAMTESOL) CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING 2019: TEACHERS AS LEARNERS

February 16-17, 2019, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Proposal due: September 11, 2018

Website: http://camtesol.org/

40TH TESOL GREECE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

March 2-3, 2019, Greece
Proposal due: TBD

http://tesolgreece.org/?p=217

41ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE GERMAN LINGUISTICS SOCIETY: POST-TRUTH: THE SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS OF SAYING "WHAT YOU BELIEVE TO BE FALSE"

March 6-8, 2019, University of Bremen, Germany

Proposal Due: August 15, 2018

https://sites.google.com/view/post-truth/

TESOL-SPAIN 42ND ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

March 8-10, 2019, Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos Ciudad de Oviedo, Oviedo
Proposal due: TBD

Website: http://www.tesol-spain.org/en/pages/1/convention-2019.html

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS (AAAL) CONFERENCE

March 9-12, 2019, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.

Proposal due: August 20, 2018

http://www.aaal.org/page/2019CFP

54TH RELC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER PURPOSES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

March 11-13, 2018, SEAMEO Regional Language Centre, Singapore

Proposals due: TBD

https://www.relc.org.sg/facilities/conferences-events-2019

53RD INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (IATEFL) CONFERENCE

April 2-5, 2019, ACC, Liverpool, U.K.
Proposals due: September 13, 2018

https://conference.iatefl.org/index.html

ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION (EMI) PRACTICES IN EUROPE CONFERENCE

April 4-5, 2019, Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lecturers (TAEC), Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Proposal due: October 14, 2018

https://cip.ku.dk/english/projects/taec/activities-and-events/emi-conference/

BALEAP CONFERENCE: INNOVATION, EXPLORATION AND TRANSFORMATION

April 12-14, 2019, University of Leeds, U.K.

Proposal due: TBD

https://www.baleap.org/event/baleap-2019-leeds

THE ASIAN CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE LEARNING 2019: ACLL2019

May 16-18, 2019, Toshi Center, Tokyo, Japan
Proposal due: TBD

Website: https://acll.iafor.org/acll2019/

ELTU CONFERENCE 2019: ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

May 27-28, 2019, Chinese University of Hong Kong
Proposal due: November 30, 2018

https://eltu.cuhk.edu.hk/conference2019/

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY (IALLT) CONFERENCE 2019

June 19-22, 2019 American English Institute, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, U.S.A.
Proposal due: TBD

http://iallt.org/

2019 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CROSS-CURRICULAR LANGUAGE LEARNING: PUTTING CLIL INTO PRACTICE

June 21-22, 2019, Sheffield Institute of Education, Sheffield Hallam University, U.K.
Proposal due: January 31, 2019

https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/institute-of-education/events/cross-curricular-language-learning-2018

TWENTY-SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING: LEARNING TO MAKE A SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

July 24-26, 2019, Queen's University Belfast, U.K.
Proposal due: August 24, 2018

http://thelearner.com/2019-conference

THE 5TH WORLD CONGRESS ON EXTENSIVE READING

August 9-12, 2019, Feng Chia University, Taichung, Taiwan
Proposal due: TBD

http://erfoundation.org/wordpress/events/5th-world-congress-2019/

CONFERENCES WITH CLOSED PROPOSAL DEADLINES

TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPO

March 12-15, 2019 Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.

http://www.tesol.org/attend-and-learn/international-convention/tesol-2019-call-for-proposals

2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (EAC)

December 4-5, 2018, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

https://elc.polyu.edu.hk/conference/EAC/index.php/EAC/EAC2018

CO-CONSTRUCTING EXCELLENCE: RECOGNIZING, SCAFFOLDING AND BUILDING EXCELLENCE IN UNIVERSITY LEARNING AND TEACHING

December 18-19, 2018, Centre for Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, University of Hong Kong

http://www.cetl.hku.hk/conf2018/

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Seth Hartigan has taught Academic English for the last thirteen years in China at Renmin University, Tsinghua University, and Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. His academic interests include the philosophy of education and the science of learning.

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CALL FOR PAPERS

We accept submissions on an ongoing basis. More details about the types of article we accept, author guidelines, and our style guide are all available on our website, http://www.xjtlu.edu.cn/en/etic.

The following is a summary of what we are looking for.

SUBJECT MATTER & FOCUS

The majority of our readers spend most of their time in classrooms, teaching. They are practitioners, and we aim to publish articles that will inform their practice. We will gladly accept theoretical articles, but they should not be so esoteric as to be irrelevant to the majority of teachers. A relevance to teaching Chinese students is, of course, a must.

If you yourself are a teacher working in a Chinese context, ask yourself if your colleagues would be interested in your topic, and in reading your piece. Better still, ask them. If the answer is unequivocally 'yes', then there's a good chance our readers will want to read it also.

If you are in any doubt, please contact us, the co-editors! We look forward to hearing from every potential author, whatever stage in the process you are at. Moreover, we try to be as supportive as possible, as a large proportion of our contributors are first-time authors.

ARTICLE TYPES

Original research articles
See Dawson (2016) in Issue 7 for a good example.

Reflections on previously published research
See Huckle (2017) in Issue 8.

Book reviews
See McCallum (2017) in Issue 8 for a concise and mostly descriptive example, and McAleer (2017), also in Issue 8, for a longer and more critical example. Please contact the co-editors to confirm the suitability of the book.

Materials reviews
We accept reviews of any type of teaching material. Our regular feature - 'Insites'- is a good example of what we are looking for. Please contact the co-editors to confirm the suitability of the materials.

Interviews
See 'Speaking with … Professor Don Snow' by Critchley (2014), Issue 4. Again, please contact the co-editors to confirm the suitability of the interviewee.

Key Concepts
This is a regular feature which aims at providing a concise overview / introduction to an area relevant to English teaching. See Zhang (2017) in Issue 8.

Reader's Responses
Readers are encouraged to respond to anything they have read in this, or older, issues. This could take several forms: challenging an argument expounded in the journal; showing how a teaching approach featured within these pages was applied successfully or otherwise; spotlighting resources which might help other readers investigate a topic further. All constructive responses are welcomed.

Conference Reports
See Touchstone (2016) in Issue 6.

Others
We are always open to new ideas. If you would like to propose an article which does not fit into any of the categories above, please contact the co-editors. We would love to hear from you!

Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
西交利物浦大学