Let Us Elaborate on Textual Signposts in Reading Comprehension!

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Reading ability is one of the language skills which has been and is at the focal attention of many researchers and teachers in SL and FL settings because of being the only readily available exposure to the target language (Celce-Murcia 2000) and of being critical for those at the advanced level of proficiency and those with a need for English academic purposes (Carrell 2002, 1988). Reading comprehension can, in one sense, be defined in terms of the understanding of the meaning connectedness across the text. This coherence is brought in the text, by the writer, either explicitly or implicitly. Overt coherence, of interest in this study, is signaled through the application of cohesive ties (Halliday et al 1976) such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, lexical relations and conjunctions. Familiarizing language users with the various types and arrangement of these ties in the textual organization places them in a better position to comprehend the text (Lotfipour 2006). Discourse marker is one of those textual ties that overtly establish meaning relationships within and between clause complexes.

To study the impact of the discourse markers on the reading comprehension among advanced EFL learners, the authors opted for a reading passage from IELTS Academic Module published in 2004 and manipulated the logico-semantic relationships of extension and enhancement type (Halliday et al 2004), either paratactic or hypotactic, to come up with three varied reading texts; one with inter-clause discourse markers being deleted while inter-clause-complex discourse markers being kept constant, another with inter-clause-complex discourse markers being omitted while inter-clause ones being kept constant, and the third being the original text without any changes. Each type of the reading text along with the same follow-up comprehension questions was administered to a different group of EFL learners from the same advanced English course class. Conclusion showed that both the existence and lack of discourse markers, in general sense, affected reading comprehension. Towards the end of the exam, to elicit the subjects’ idea as to the text
understandability and coherence, they will be requested to fill out a questionnaire as well.

To conclusion, it is recommended that EFL readers be instructed how to grasp the meaning relationships across the text with the aid of discourse markers.

**Keywords**: Discourse Markers, Logico-semantic Relationships, Clause, Reading Comprehension
Cultural Competence: Effects and Applications on L2 Readers

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In this study we investigate how cultural competence benefits L2 readers. We also explore teaching cultural competence in the L2 classroom. It is common to find language classrooms where general culture is taught, but no cultural skills are imparted to the L2 students (Strzalka, 2005). Our idea of cultural confidence is defined as the adequate and appropriate knowledge of customs, habits, values and ideas from a target language and their necessity for L2 readers when encountering authentic L2 texts. One of the most useful tools the L2 reader has available are different types of schemata stemming from content, formal, or linguistic areas (Aebersold & Field, 1997). We review concepts of culture, cultural awareness, and schema theory in the classroom, and also investigate some pedagogical uses for promoting cultural competence in the L2 reading classroom. After all, teaching culture and teaching intercultural competence go hand in hand (Dybiec, 2005), both of which benefit L2 students. Furthermore we see how the proper selection of EFL textbooks, presentation of cultural competence in the classroom, and technology can benefit L2 readers. L2 readers and instructors should approach the idea of cultural competence openly, and be prepared to adapt to the ever-changing environment of ESL / EFL reading.

Keywords: cultural competence, L2 reading, L2 students, L2 classroom
Using Critical Thinking Activities as Tools to Integrate Language Skills

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Abstract

Every day communication is an event in which there is an interactional relationship between interlocutors. This interaction needs whole language in which language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing; associated knowledge of vocabulary, meaning, syntax, etc.; and also, thinking skills are interwoven. This means that language should be kept whole and “if language isn't kept whole, it isn't language anymore” (Rigg, 1991: 522, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 109). In ESL/ EFL learning settings, improvement in one skill can affect the development of other skills. A particular course may highlight certain skills, but if the teacher is creative or specific tasks and problems are used in language learning settings, learners are provided with the opportunity to improve multiple, integrated skills. This paper aims at elaborating on Critical Thinking approach to language learning and introducing practical ideas for helping teachers to integrate language and thinking skills. It introduces three critical thinking activities (Dialogue Journals, Reading Logs and Literacy Portfolios), and also discusses how implementing them can serves as a way to integrate language skills. It also maintains that engaging learners in these activities helps them use authentic materials and solve problems of their own interest that in turn has a positive effect on student’s motivation.

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Problems in Intercultural Communication: An Inter-university Study on Chinese Undergraduate Students in Hong Kong and Pedagogical Insights

Lee, Fong King, Associate Professor, Hong Kong Baptist University

This paper reports on the problems that university students encounter in intercultural communication outside the classroom, describes how students tackle problems they encounter during real life intercultural communication and makes pedagogical recommendations.

Eleven students from eight universities in Hong Kong participated in the study. Data were collected by means of qualitative self-report entries recording in real life. The students were asked to describe the occasions during which they used English, reflect on their use of English during the occasion, and to comment on the extent to which the university ESL courses had equipped them with the skills to cope with the occasions described. They were allowed to write freely but some guiding questions were also provided so that they could have a framework to follow in writing the journal entries. The students submitted their journals to the researcher through e-mail regularly for one semester. Clarifications with the students were made, when necessary, through telephone conversations or e-mails.

The most pressing issue identified from the journal entries is intercultural communication in which three problems arose, namely following the speaker’s accent and high delivery speed and the lack of conversation topics. The problems indicate both the importance of language skills, particularly comprehension skills, and knowledge about one’s own and other cultures in initiating and sustaining intercultural communication. The analysis shed some light on the imminent need to strengthen language skills on the one hand, and intercultural knowledge on the other in current university English language courses in Hong Kong. (247 words)
A Study of Placing Students into the Freshman English Program

Yu, Chi-Fang, Associate Professor, Soochow University

There are essentially two parts of this study. One examines the validity of placing students into the Freshman English program based on their grades on the English section in the College Entrance Exam. Because the Freshman English Program at Soochow University consists of two different courses, the reader (2 hours/2 credits) and the lab (2 hours/1 credit), it is necessary to examine whether using only the entrance exam grades (no assessment of students’ listening abilities) to place students into the two different courses is effective. During the period of September 15-19, 2008, proficiency listening and reading tests are administered among more than 2,000 students who are taking the two courses in the Freshman English program. Then correlation between students’ proficiency test results and their entrance exam grades are examined and analyzed with SPSS 10.0. The results indicate that students’ grades on the listening test and on the reading test as well as a total of the grades on the two tests are all highly correlated with their grades on the English section in the College Entrance Exam.

Another study investigates the correlation between proficiency tests and achievement tests. Subjects are students in two Freshman English classes. Correlation between students’ grades on achievement tests (the mid-term and final exam) and their grades on the English section in the College Entrance Exam (proficiency tests) is examined and analyzed with SPSS 10.0. The results indicate that for both the reader course and the lab course, these grades are all highly correlated. In other words, the proficiency test (the College Entrance Exam) can predict students’ abilities to cope with the two courses in the Freshman English program (achievement tests). However, it is interesting to note that in both courses, students’ attendance is not correlated with their performance in the mid-term or final exam.

Keywords: proficiency test, achievement test, Freshman English program, College Entrance Exam
Using English Authentically in the EFL Environment:  
A Project Work

Yeh, Chieh Yue, Associate Professor, National Chengchi University

How to help learners use English authentically and how to integrate the 4 skills in the EFL environment have been a challenge for many EFL instructors. This paper introduces a student project conducted in a listening and oral training class for freshman students at a university in northern Taiwan. The main topic of the project is “The Globalization of the Campus”. Each group of students decided the subtopic themselves. Students were required to interact with the international students on campus to complete the project.

The project followed the conventional three stages --work in classroom, work outside the classroom, and presentation of the project. The evaluation of the project presentation included both self- and peer-evaluation, and the results of the evaluation was reported by each group one week after the project presentation.

Through collecting data for the project, learners needed to interact with international students, practicing their listening and speaking authentically. Through designing interview questions, presenting both the results of the project, and the results of the evaluation about the projects, learners practiced the 4 skills.

One month after the project presentation, a feedback survey was conducted to collect information about students’ overall impression of the project, opinions on project skills, language skills, and their views about the most enjoyable, challenging, exciting, and frustrating part of the project. Besides, opinions on how the project work is different from regular oral training class activities are also investigated.

The major findings of students’ self- and peer-evaluation and the feedback survey indicated that students were able to evaluate among themselves and both project skills and language skills were acquired in the process of the project work. Moreover, students believed that doing this project was an interesting and fulfilling experience. Through the project, they understood more about their language proficiency and enjoyed meeting new people. The most challenging part of the project was to design questions for the interviewees, and the most exciting and challenging
part is to present on the stage. The students also learned to approach foreigners, cooperate with their partners, and understand more about their own learning environment and how international students view the campus.
Scores and Comments: Expanding the Feedback Arsenal

Cheryl Sheridan, Lecturer, National Chengchi University

The merit of using evaluation sheet scores combined with teacher written comments to increase student understanding of feedback and affect motivation for writing later drafts in an EFL composition class taught by a native English speaker in Taiwan

There has been a somewhat limited stream of research since at least the 1980s regarding written teacher feedback on student writing in L1, L2, and ESL contexts with much concern over how to respond effectively so that students can understand and use the feedback in later drafts (e.g., Bitchener, Young, and Cameron, 2008; Chandler, 2003; Cohen, 1987; Ferris, 1995; Ferris, 1997; Gascoigne, 2004; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994; and Hyland & Hyland, 2001) and recently there has been some discussion and debate over the merits of scoring papers with the use of standardized rubrics (e.g., Connors, 2008; Jonsson & Svingby, 2006; Martins, 2008; and Saddler & Andrade, 2004). However, in the EFL context there appears to be little to no research examining the possible merits of combining the two methods with the aim of providing students a clear message from the instructor as to what areas or aspects of their written work are effective, while encouraging further writing development. This paper explores this possibility in the cultural environment of Taiwan among students taught by a native English (American) teacher.

This study is focused on the following research questions adapted from Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994): (1) How do EFL learners react to teacher feedback in the form of written comments? (2) How do EFL learners react to teacher feedback in the form of scores on an evaluation sheet/rubric with comments? (3) How do these responses affect student motivation for writing later drafts? Fifty-six AFL majors in two two-semester-long English composition classes at a university in Taiwan responded to a questionnaire including a 10-item open answer section based on Hyland and Hyland’s (2001) “Student
retrospective interview prompts” and a 22-item Likert scale section created by the researcher-teacher containing questions related to student reaction to scores and comments. It also asked students about their motivation for writing their final drafts as a result of the scores on their first drafts.

Initial results and analysis reveal that scores on the evaluation sheets helped students understand evaluation sheet and in-text written comments and that they appreciated a score on the first draft. Respondents indicated that upon preliminary drafts being returned to them, they first looked at scores on the evaluation sheet, but they paid more attention to written comments on the essay and the evaluation sheet than scores when revising. In regards to motivation, they reported that the scores they received on first drafts had a strong effect on their motivation for the final draft. Therefore it seems that in an EFL context with a homogeneous class of Taiwanese beginning to intermediate college writers being taught by a native speaker for the first time, scores on first drafts of helped students clarify teacher written comments and affected their motivation when writing later drafts. It is hoped that this study will raise the idea of using rubrics as a part of a feedback arsenal available to the writing instructor.
Coordinating Aesthetic Stance and Efferent Reading in Poetry Teaching

英詩教學中整合“美學欣賞的觀點”與“求知式的閱讀”

Shen, Fu Yuan, Assistant Professor, National Taitung University

The pendulum of poetry teaching has swung between the two extremes, the conventional critical-interpretation approach and response-based method (Rosenblatt, 1980). The critical-interpretation approach strongly emphasizes the importance of transmitting the knowledge of poetic conventions to students in order to develop their capability of comprehending and evaluating literary merits. On the other hand, the response-based method highly underscores the aesthetic stance students take in appreciating poetry to generate an unique, personal, affective experience with literature. In this study, I propose to coordinate aesthetic stance and efferent reading in teaching poetry. An exemplary syllabus of teaching Matthew Arnold’s “Dover Beach” is provided to illustrate the suggested eclectic model of poetry instruction. Before students develop their passion for reading poetry, it is improper for a teacher to engage his/her students with formal analysis of poem just taught. Through enriching their aesthetic experiences with poetic text, students can eventually cultivate the life-long interest in reading poems.

Keywords: aesthetic stance, efferent reading, poetry teaching, literature instruction
Critical Thinking Development Evidenced in EFL Classroom

Tsui, Cheng Fang, Assistant Professor, National Chengchi University

The current study examines the effect of critical thinking instruction on college students in an EFL context. The purpose is twofold: (1) to examine whether EFL students would benefit from learning critical thinking skills taught in English; (2) to understand whether students’ English proficiency levels have any bearing on the outcome of such learning.

A total of 112 freshman students taking the required Freshman English course in a public university in Taiwan were the subjects. The experimental group (N=50) received critical thinking training when learning the required English texts. The control group (N=62) received traditional grammar and vocabulary teaching for the same texts. Both groups were given a pretest that consisted of Cornell Critical Thinking Test, Level Z and the Chinese equivalent test. In the end of the 16-week treatment, the same tests were administered to all students as the posttest.

Results show that the experimental group outperformed the control group on both the English and the Chinese critical thinking tests, particularly given the fact that the two groups did not differ significantly on their English proficiency level, as measured by the College Entrance English Exam.

As for students’ susceptibility to the critical thinking instruction due to their English proficiency, the treatment effect was most evident on the English low achievers. The lower end of the students in both treatment conditions started out on the same proficiency level, but the experimental group showed significant progress on the English critical thinking test than the control group. The encouraging results demonstrate that students of lower English proficiency are just as capable, if not more, of benefiting from critical thinking teaching. Pedagogical implications and future research are suggested as well.

Keywords: critical thinking, EFL learning
Should ESP Courses Replace EGP Courses in Polytechnic Universities?- A New Look at Students’ Needs and English Use in Workplaces

English for professional purposes (ESP) has been attracting much attention since the mid of the 20th century till today, which leads to a great number of researching, publication and academic events and even the discussion of replacing EGP (English for General Purposes) with it. In the polytechnic university investigated, ESP has been executed to substitute general English courses; however, researching in this change and its acceptability is still scant. The aims of this paper attempts to examine how the students’ reflects on their English use and proficiency in the workplaces and the ESP courses of the University after the placement year following by the abandoning of EGP. The research involves a survey, comprised of a set of semi-structured questionnaire concerning the above inquiries; 303 students of the fourth year in a national hospitality college participated in the study. The quantitative analysis of the questionnaire was conducted through descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation in order to indicate the direction and relationship among different variables i.e. departments, industry locations, industry categories and working positions. Results of this study showed the students’ strong demands for English speaking and listening training, which is highly job-related and situation-based, and their low satisfaction with the current EGP courses together with the strong expectation for completely replacing EGP with ESP curriculum. To conclude, this study may be of importance in confirming the possibility of transforming EGP into ESP in polytechnic universities. Furthermore, the students with various majors and internship in assorted locations, industries and positions expressed differentiated expectations and applications of English about their future careers, which highlights the necessity of accommodating different learners’ needs while English language curriculum is planned and executed.
The value of written corrective feedback (CF) has been an issue of considerable debate in the literature (e.g. Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2004, 2007; Ferris, 1999, 2004), and this polemic has lead to a trend in recent research to draw on SLA findings as a way to further comprehend the intricacies of this complex issue. Indeed, Ellis, Sheen, Murakami and Takashima (2008) delineate between focused CF (the provision of feedback solely on errors of a target form or small number of target forms) and unfocused CF (providing feedback on all errors). For direct CF, the provision of corrections for errors, they found that both types of focuses were effective in new pieces of writing, and this effect was durable. As only this one study has examined these focuses of direct CF for the target form of articles, arguably further research is needed with different target forms. With this in mind, the study presented here contrasted the effectiveness of focused direct CF for past tense forms, unfocused direct CF and a control group (no CF) on the accuracy of student writing. Using ANOVAs, it was revealed that all three conditions improved between a pretest and a posttest; however, both the focused direct CF and unfocused direct CF performed significantly better than the control in the posttest.
Student Presentations Using Authentic On-line Videos

Paul Cameron, Lecturer, National Chengchi University

The internet is a resource widely used by teachers to add authentic material and cultural content to the EFL classroom. Authentic video material on a variety of topics can now easily be found on Youtube, CNN, and a multitude or other sites on the internet. Most students love watching authentic video material such as TV shows, movies, and music videos for relaxation and entertainment, but the use of such videos in the classroom is often regarded by teachers as a fun extra and not as an important pedagogical support to English learning. In addition, authentic video is frequently perceived by many teachers as being too difficult for most students to comprehend. Therefore, this study investigated the students’ attitudes and perceptions towards using authentic on-line video as the main component of student presentations in an English Listening course. These attitudes and perceptions were categorized according to the motivational, listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and social-interactional value of using authentic on-line videos and the perceived level of difficulty in presenting and listening to these videos. An important goal of the use of the authentic video with the student presentations was to develop the English language competency of the students. Other goals of the study were to gather some insight into how to better utilize authentic video in the classroom and how to provide better support for autonomous English learning with on-line videos. The students in this study were asked to present a short clip or clips of authentic video found on the internet in the form of a thirty to forty minute lesson to their classmates. Some guidelines with suggested general topic areas for the video presentations were provided by the teacher but the students had a high degree of autonomy in selecting and presenting their videos. The participants in the study were 30 sophomore, junior, and senior students, with different majors, enrolled in an English laboratory class entitled Honors Advanced English Listening at a university in northern Taiwan in the Fall, 2008 term. This qualitative study included a retrospective questionnaire, an open-ended question, prompted written student feedback on the presentations, and oral interviews. Analysis consisted of some descriptive statistics with the questionnaire and a multi-stage synthesis of the qualitative data including categorical and thematic analysis. The study showed that the students had a positive attitude toward using authentic on-line videos in
presentations in their English listening classroom. The students perceived the presentations to be an interesting and motivating way to help them with their English ability, especially with their listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. However, the students felt that the available quality of on-line videos, the complexity and culture bound nature of some of the language used in the videos, as well as the technical difficulties with computers presented some challenges to the use of on-line video in the classroom.

**Keywords:** authentic video, autonomy, internet, listening comprehension, motivation,
Instructing culture in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning environment has received considerable attention from researchers (Kramsch, 1993; Brown, 2002). English teachers have also been concerned about instructing culture in English classes in Taiwan recently since understanding Chinese and foreign culture is one of four goals for the educational policy, General Curriculum Guideline from first grade to ninth (Chuang, 2002).

Most studies (Chuang, 2002; Lai, 2002; Tsai, 2002) about instructing culture focus on instructing culture in lower education, such as the elementary and junior high schools’ levels. Furthermore, cultural instruction in English class at the university level has largely been ignored. Previous studies only examined teachers’ perceptions of instructing culture by employing questionnaire and interview (Chuang, 2002; Tsai, 2002; Yang, 2004). These studies did not provide direct observational evidence about whether teachers actually do teach cultural components or how they actually instruct culture in their classes. Only a few studies have been conducted by classroom observation at the university level (Lin 1995; More & Jerningan 1997). Lin (1995) examined how culture would be instructed in an English writing class, and More & Jerningan (1997) did in a Portuguese class in America. However, no study has explored the issue in the English conversation class in Taiwan. The conversation class is believed to involve more cultural instruction since cultural knowledge is an imperative requirement for understanding one another in conversation. Samovar, Porter, & Jain (1981) stated that “culture is the foundation of communication” (p.24). Although university students have learned many grammatical structures, they still may fail to communicate in English. One of the reasons may be because they lack knowledge of culture. Thus, it is important to examine how culture is instructed at the university level English class in Taiwan.

The present study investigates English teachers’ perceptions concerning
instructing culture at the university level English class in Taiwan. One Taiwanese and one Canadian English teachers’ English conversation classes were observed and videotaped for a period of one semester. Two kinds of data, the cultural instruction parts in the classroom observations and the interviews with the teachers, were transcribed verbatim and analyzed qualitatively. The present study will report 1) English teachers’ attitudes toward teaching culture in English classes at the university level in Taiwan and 2) ways to instruct culture in English classes at the university level.

The results of the present study will reveal English teachers’ perceptions concerning instructing culture as well as how culture is actually instructed at the university level English conversation class. As a result, it is expected that some suggestions about how to instruct culture at the university level could be provided. The results may also be helpful not only for teachers to adjust ways of teaching culture but also for publishers to integrate more cultural components into English textbook in order to achieve more successful English teaching in Taiwan. Discussions and implications of the findings will be provided.
Incorporation of Service Learning in College English: 
Curriculum Design for Academic Writing

Liu, Yi Chun, Assistant Professor, National Chengchi University

Academic writing research and theories have been mushrooming and updating rapidly nowadays. Regardless of the ever-changing research in writing, most writing teachers in Taiwan, however, are satisfied with teaching writing by simply following writing textbooks which feature writing conventions, rules, forms, and process. As a result, student writers are likely to focus mainly on learning linguistic structures, superficial writing variations, and abstract procedures of writing process. Writing, in a sense, becomes an isolated classroom exercise of English or personal activity constrained within detached writing samples or decontextualized memories retrieval.

However, from the perspective of critical academic writing, writing is a representation of reality and a presentation of self. Writing texts should be situated in contexts, and shaped by interactions among the writer, the reader and the community. In order to help students develop writing literacy beyond textbooks, recognize impacts of social interactions on their writings, make critical arguments about social issues of their communities, and construct their authorial identity in their writings, a curriculum of academic writing is designed by incorporating service learning (S-L) method.

S-L, rooted in experientialism, is considered as an effective method to help students learn content related knowledge through participating in volunteer works and hands-on engagement of service and writing. The real context experiences and service roles enable students to observe issues behind surface as insiders, hence empower them to make their writing arguments more critical and insightful. In particular, the complexity of real-world projects help students develop their rhetorical knowledge beyond linguistic skills, such as constructing their writing identity and voice, being familiar with community discourses, and recognizing writers’ negotiation between texts, context and audience. The presentation attempts to report the designed S-L curriculum and discuss its advantages and disadvantages on writings and writers.

Participants (N= 20~30) are requested to take volunteering community services and use their service experience as writing sources to complete three writing tasks. Besides the three writing tasks, students need to write four journals to reflect their service learning experience. A qualitative research, based on students’ interviews, surveys, journals, and writing texts, is conducted to explore the effects of S-L on students’ English academic writing.

The purpose of this presentation is to suggest a writing pedagogical model of S-L, investigate the effectiveness and difficulties of S-L application, and rouse more research and discussions on S-L.
Using the *Common European Framework: Costs and Benefits for University Language Programs*

Abstract

The language proficiency scales published in the *Common European Framework of Reference* (CEFR) have exerted a strong and growing influence on English language teaching and assessment worldwide. In 2005, Taiwan’s Ministry of Education (MOE) implemented a policy under which the CEFR scales became the basis for reporting English proficiency levels in Taiwan. The CEFR consists of a manual containing (among other things) 54 scales describing language proficiency in different areas. The CEFR scales contain six proficiency levels, beginning with A1 and moving up through A2, B1, B2, C1 and, finally, C2. The MOE has announced the goal of having 50% of Taiwanese university graduates at or above the B1 level of proficiency in English. This paper will discuss the issues surrounding use of the CEFR in English language testing at the university level in Taiwan. The presentation begins with a discussion of the potential costs and benefits to a university English program associated with adopting the CEFR. The numerous published commentaries which have discussed the advantages of using the CEFR have focused on the benefits arising from the combination of flexibility and standardization that it offers. Critics, on the other hand, have warned that the CEFR is built on weak theoretical and empirical foundations, and that it threatens to impose a single particular view of language teaching and learning and thereby reduce diversity and stifle the development of local approaches. Moving beyond these larger issues, the presentation will also focus on the practical difficulties involved in using the CEFR, particularly in the area of properly implementing the standard setting procedures required to link the tests used by a particular university to the CEFR proficiency scales. Throughout, the authors will draw on examples from their own university’s program, where a project is underway to link assessment to the framework.
Task-based Instruction in English for Academic Purpose (EAP) Context

Chang, Chung Chien, Ph.D., Arizona State University

Currently, most colleges and universities in Taiwan offer students a maximum of two-year English courses which focus on providing students with instruction in general English. As most students are not required to take English courses in their junior and senior years, many schools, in the attempt to improve students’ language proficiency, have adopted a different *compensatory* approach – offering professional courses instructed in English. These courses generally are offered in two formats: one taught by English teachers and the other instructed by teachers from various disciplines. Although the effectiveness of such courses remains unclear due to limited research, one key feature shared by teachers who employ either format is the focus on task-based instruction at varying degrees (using English for specific purposes in the academic setting). Students are expected to use English to perform the task content, and these tasks are often related to real-life scenarios to help students see the connection between what they have learned in class and how they can apply the knowledge. To ensure the instruction students receive in English reinforces what they have acquired from their professional fields, this project examines how the textbooks of business English reinforce the professional core texts and suggests how assignment criteria be established to assess students’ learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** EAP courses, business English, assignment criteria, learning outcome assessment
The current study examined the use of the first language (L1) in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Based on Krashen's Natural Approach (1983) and Communicative Language Teaching (Richard & Rodgers, 1986), many university language courses take on the second language (L2) input only policy. However, the L2 input only policy is not necessarily effective for all students, especially low-proficiency students (Atkinson, 1993; Macaro, 1997; Turnbull, 2001; Widdowson, 2003). Furthermore, L1 is one of the cognitive tools that can facilitate the completion of L2 tasks as well as facilitate L2 learning (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). However, teachers are unaware of when and how they use the L1 (Polio & Duff, 1994) or how their L1 use can be changed to achieve more in the classrooms (Lin, 2008). Taking an action research approach (Crookes, 1993) as a teacher-researcher, and informed by conversation analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974) the study aimed to a) identify the sequential organization of L1 use in the EFL classroom and b) investigate the effective context to use the L1 by self-analyzing one’s classroom interactions. Classroom interactions during a four-month semester of one teacher in two EFL classrooms at a Japanese university were recorded and analyzed. Student interviews and questionnaires were conducted to triangulate the data. The findings support Ustunel and Seedhouse’s (2005) study of a sequential organization of the L1 use in the L2 classroom. In addition, the teacher-researcher was found adjusting her context and frequency of the L1 use depending on the class and after self-analyses. Through this study, I contribute to our understanding of sequential organization of L1 use in the EFL classrooms, as well as how L1 use of a teacher can be systematically shifted to enhance student responses and L2 interaction. Moreover, the findings have implications for the role of action research in teacher development.
Language Teaching beyond Language Learning: ‘Academicizing’
Language Programs at Universities in Taiwan

Herbert Hanreich, Assistant Professor, I Shou University

Too often foreign language departments at (not only private) universities in Taiwan are considered by a majority of the students as institutions in which language learning is the main priority of the program, with teachers functioning predominantly as language instructors, providing other aspects of the subject as mere side-dishes. The genuine academic aspects of such a study remain rather in the background if compared to foreign language departments in the West (in this case: Europe). The reasons are manifold; they are cultural (abstract thinking is not really practiced in Asian education), historical (English learning is ‘in’ in Taiwan), and ingrown: There is a growing number of teachers at those departments with the academic background and expertise of English teaching.

I consider such a situation (and further development) rather disturbing. An academic subject focusing on techniques and strategies how best learn (and teach) a foreign language is narrowing down the intellectual scope of what teaching and learning at universities could and should be (I would play down the difference between college and graduate school). Language students at universities need intellectual challenges which could only be delivered if students are to inquire the vast fields of knowledge which surround the language they wish to master at a high level. Such fields include old and new subjects of the humanities (history, literature, literary theories, cultural history, history of ideas, etc.) which should have a much more prominent stance within the foreign language curricula in Taiwan than they have now. They, as I try to demonstrate, might help to leave behind the bad practice of memorizing instead of understanding.

In my critique I would combine my experiences as professor of philosophy at various departments and countries in Europe and as professor at language departments in Taiwan. Intellectual pioneers such as W.v.Humboldt or Stanley Fish would help to pave my way.
Online EFL Reading

Kong, Nam Hee, Assistant Professor, Seoul Cyber University

Online education has now become one of the fastest growing segments for colleges and universities in Korea, and is becoming commonplace as a useful learning tool. To date, however, there are few studies on college language instruction for adult learners delivered entirely online and how course design for online learning takes place in practice. This paper outlines an English course of an online university and aims at examining the effectiveness of teaching reading online using particular materials and teaching techniques for adult learners. Based on the students’ reactions in a questionnaire completed at the end of the course, the authentic materials for counseling and advice on ethical issues featured in the columns of “Dear Abby” and “The Ethicist” can serve as alternative texts in EFL reading classes for working adult learners. By using these articles in their instruction, EFL teachers may discover challenging new ways to integrate new language and content in context. Various teaching techniques online can also be utilized to motivate students to stay in class and take a greater interest in their learning.
A Process of ‘Reaction’: Skills Training and Development for the EAP Reading and Writing Classroom

Kristofer Bayne (Teacher at Seisen Women's University)
Frederick Fearn (Associate Professor at Soka University)

EAP contexts, either on study abroad or via in-house programmes, often requires learners to undertake cognitive processes in thinking about sources and then demonstrate evidence of these processes in their writing. For Asian students, in particular, who may not be completely familiar with either the expectations of academic/critical writing or critical thinking in English, this can be very stressful and confusing. This presentation will introduce a training and familiarization process of critical reading, thinking and writing structured around ‘reaction papers’, which can frame and foster a better understanding of such requirements.

In brief, ‘reaction papers’ are a common genre of writing in academic environs, particularly in North America. They require writers to firstly interact with a source of information and secondly to record their reactions to it. While being a common academic assignment, there is great variation in what may be required, particularly in terms of academic conventions. The authors propose and will demonstrate that the use of reaction journals and more academically-oriented reaction papers can be of great benefit and use. ‘Reaction’ is taken to mean the application of critical and analytical thinking skills both in the reading and writing process. This involves understanding and assessing the quality of what is read (the content, strengths and weakness of argument, evidence etc.) and being able to demonstrate this understanding and present, in writing, a careful and considered discussion and response. First in the process, the non-threatening requirements of a reaction journal can encourage and provide a format for the development of critical reading and thinking. Next, the two-part aspect of reaction papers, critical thinking via interacting with and then reacting to a source, is fundamental to academia and can be highlighted as ‘summary’ and ‘discussion’. Thirdly, clear and strict conventions can be set for writing reaction papers to familiarise writers with a wide range of academic requirements. Finally, as reaction papers are relatively short, novice academic writers can undertake a series of assignments that build up and extend thinking and writing skills.

This presentation will first briefly examine the generic ‘reaction paper’ then move on to detailing a reaction journal-Academic Reaction Paper process. Next, specific academic features and conventions will be identified using models and samples. Finally a possible progression of ARP will be outlined.
Graduate Students' Citation Learning and Attitudes

Abstract
Research in recent years has demonstrated that construction of knowledge is a social process. Explicit reference to previous research, or citation, is one feature of this interactivity. Citation is used to credit sources, to demonstrate writers’ familiarity with the field, to support writers’ arguments, or to “create a research space” [Swales, J., (1990). Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press]. Therefore, appropriate and strategic use of citation is an essential skill for academic researchers and for graduate students at an early stage of their academic writing career. Nevertheless, very little is known about how graduate students perceive and learn citation use in the discipline. Therefore, adopting the discourse-based interview method, this study aimed to explore graduate students’ knowledge of citation use in research writing, their difficulties in using citation, as well as the factors that influenced their citation preferences. It was found that the student participants enumerated a more limited range of citation functions, compared to published scholars. Students learned citation use from sources including advisors, model theses, graduate courses and their readings. In fact, citations in their readings helped them learn field knowledge, generate research questions, expand reference resources, and learn ways of presenting information. The findings also suggest that thesis students’ citation practices can be influenced by disciplinary cultures, advisors’ feedback, and their respective research writing experience. In addition, it was found that sometimes students could theorize their citation-related decisions, but in a number of occasions they did not seem to be able to verbalize a rationale for their citation choices. It is therefore argued that students should be made more aware of the purpose and functions of citation in academic writing.
Developing Students’ Cultural Awareness through Cross-cultural Videoconferencing

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Language teachers understand very well that cultural elements are essential parts in the teaching of a foreign language. It is almost impossible to teach a foreign language without teaching its culture. However, traditionally in a language classroom, language teachers can only transfer the cultural messages stated in the textbooks to the students, who do not have direct contacts with native speakers of the target language. This paper aims at presenting a model of cross-cultural videoconferencing to show how college English majors can be benefited by cross-cultural videoconferencing with native English speakers in the United States in terms of developing their cultural awareness.

Drawing on her experiences of collaborating with teachers in the U.S. on cross-cultural videoconferencing, the researcher will present some cultural issues found in her studies. One typical cross-cultural videoconferencing was done in the Fall of 2004. Twenty-six freshman English majors at Tamkang University, who were taking English Language Drills as a required course, had experiences of communicating with teachers and students at Regent University, Virginia, U.S.A. in the class through videoconferencing. Teachers and students from the two universities met at nine videoconferences in the entire semester. Topics for discussion at each conference were decided by consensus among the teachers and students of both classes. Examples of topics discussed at the videoconferences were: sports, movies, music, holidays, and cultures. Other videoconferences will also be presented in this paper.

Findings of these studies showed that cross-cultural videoconferencing has led to EFL students’ heightened cultural awareness, and self-motivated learning. Some cultural issues worth discussing were also found in these studies. Finally, this paper will recommend some alternative activities or projects that can be done through videoconferencing to teach culture and to develop students’ cultural awareness.
Learners’ Anxieties on Posting Their Own Speeches on Youtube.com: Facilitative or Debilitative?

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In recent years there have been numerous studies on anxiety, particularly anxiety and its relationship to motivation. However, very little research has been done with respect to anxiety in public speaking courses EFL learners. If public speaking often brings about a high level of anxiety for those speaking in their L1, for EFL learners the anxiety may be compounded by the awareness of their limited language proficiency as well as their very limited opportunity to practice public speaking. Yet, public speaking courses may be required if English language is their major area of study. As a result, EFL learners may often feel an overwhelming amount of anxiety, to the point of becoming debilitative.

Horwitz and Young (1991) explained that there are primarily two types of anxiety: facilitative and debilitative. Facilitative anxiety motivates the student to “fight” the new learning task and prepares the student emotionally to approach the learning task as a challenge. On the other hand, debilitative anxiety motivates the student to “flee” the new learning task and stimulates the individual to adopt avoidance behavior. MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) found that those with high anxiety seemed to be in a viciously debilitative cycle, where high anxiety led to lower participation, which led to even greater anxiety, and hence even lower participation.

The participants are 32 third-year college students in Taiwan with all learners at the low-intermediate to intermediate-level proficiency. They are all English language majors at a university of technology located in a rural section of northern Taiwan, and all were enrolled in a required two-semester course on public speaking and presentation in English. In order to study EFL learners’ perceptions of the role of anxiety in their public speaking course to find ways to help students to best cope with such anxiety, journal writings and surveys were designed to address the following research questions:

I. Do learners experience facilitative or debilitative anxiety with regard to the notion
of posting their own delivered speeches on Youtube.com?

II. Of the major themes that emerge from the learners’ journal responses, to what extent does anxiety interrelate with these themes?

III. Do highly desired student activities yield minimal anxiety and why?

This study provides evidence that for low-intermediate to intermediate proficiency EFL learners in a public speaking course, the issue of anxiety is particularly relevant. As this study shows, these learners are willing to put up with moderate to substantial level of anxiety in more than a few instances if they perceive the activity to be of great value. That is, even though anxiety may be unavoidable for many students, if activities selected are those that students regard as highly beneficial, useful, or practical, students may go as far as to want those types of activities despite the significant level of anxiety that it may induce, rationalizing that the gains from such activities outweigh the anxiety costs. Thus, major emphasis should be placed on the interest level of a particular activity in preparation for a major goal such as posting a well-prepared video of oneself on Youtube.com. The challenge is for the instructor to create the necessary learning environment that will enable learners to channel that anxiety into a facilitative instead of debilitative form.
Who Wants ELF? Attitudes towards English as a Lingua Franca in the World: A Comparison between College Teachers and Students in Taiwan

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English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has been a major research topic of applied linguistics and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL) education since the last decade. 80% of the users of the English language in the world are non-native speakers (NNS), making the traditional Native Speakers (NS) the minority group of this language. Speaking English varieties in inner, outer and expanding circle countries (Kachru 1985) are celebrated as an approach expressing personal, as well as national identity. Accordingly, the concept of ELF challenges the conventional ownership of English, and has become a source to change teachers’ and learners’ sense of competence and expertise. There have been numerous studies and suggestions concerning how to teach English as a lingua Franca. However, little empirical research has been conducted to understand NNS English teachers’ and learners’ perception of the spread of English as a lingua franca in the world – particularly in those countries where English is a foreign language. EFL teachers’ and learners’ perspectives are lacking in the ELF studies that intend to create possible repositioning for them in the TESOL industry.

This research investigates how Taiwanese college students and teachers perceive the issues related to ELF. Based on 126 responded questionnaires from college English teachers and 529 from college students, this study presented data of Taiwanese NNS English teachers’ and learners’ attitudes towards the notion of ELF. The analysis focuses on the comparison between teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards their command of English in different social context, their perception of NNS and NS English teachers’ teaching competence, and their attitudes towards the English educational policy in Taiwan. The findings of this study provide empirical insights into understanding how the notion of ELF will be perceived in EFL countries.