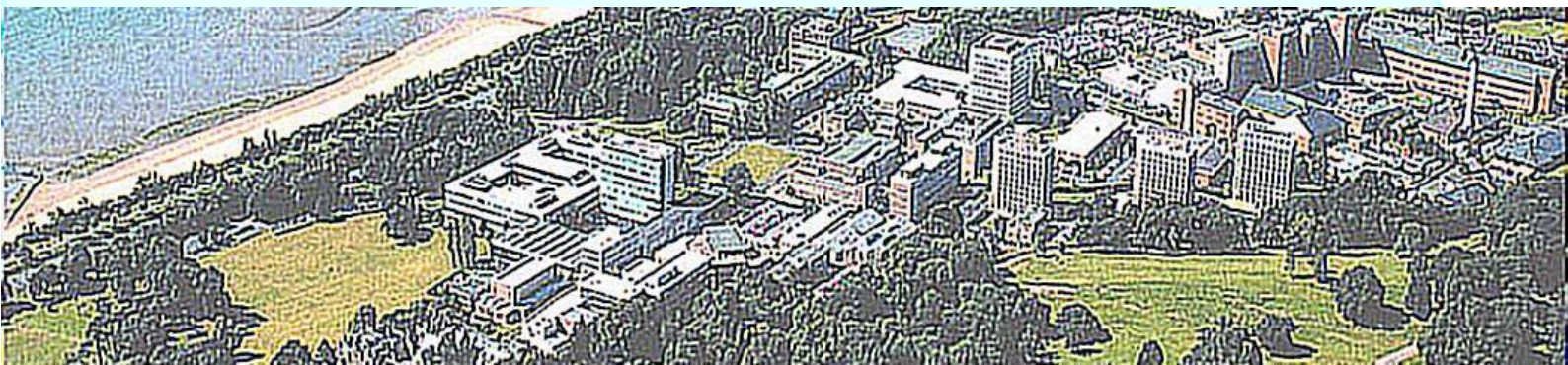


# Taking the Measure of Applied Linguistics

Proceedings of the 41st Annual Meeting  
of the British Association for Applied Linguistics

Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe  
11-13 September 2008



Edited by

**Martin Edwardes**



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# MEETINGS SECRETARY REPORT

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The conference theme of BAAL 2008 was “Taking the measure of applied linguistics”. Circa 300 delegates attended the conference. Plenary speakers were Paul Meara (Swansea University), Ben Rampton (King’s College London), and Alison Wray (Cardiff University).

Very many thanks and congratulations to Tess Fitzpatrick and other staff and students at Swansea University for a highly successful conference. Delegate feedback forms and emails abound in comments such as “very friendly and well-organised conference – inspiring sessions – excellent – wonderful – amazing – great experience – excellent venue – the student helpers were wonderful – many thanks to all the helpers and organisers – well done LOC!”

84% of delegates who filled in forms rated the presentation facilities ‘good’ and ‘very good’. The work and friendliness of the local organisers and staff at Swansea University conference services received particularly high praise generating comments such as “smooth and efficient registration – prompt replies from organisers – helpful and friendly staff”.

Almost all delegates who filled in forms rated the programme and the balance of SIG tracks and colloquia with individual papers “good” or “very good”.

The conference organisers raised the profile of posters at their conference by organising a much larger poster presentation session this year than usual. There was a prize for best poster displayed at the conference which went to Hilary Nesi from Coventry University for her poster “A multidimensional analysis of student writing across levels and disciplines”.

There were two proposed colloquia: “Classrooms as cultural context: the legitimacy of educational exchange” and “Communication, discourses and interculturality”. Six SIG tracks were organised: Corpus Linguistics, Language Learning and Teaching, Gender and Language, Psycholinguistics, Language in Africa, and UK Linguistic Ethnography Forum.

Cambridge University Press organised a drinks

reception before dinner on Thursday night, and Multilingual Matters organised a reception on Friday night. The BAAL book prize was announced before the BAAL Gala dinner on Friday night. Alastair Pennycook received the prize for his book *Global Englishes and transcultural flows* published by Routledge. The BAAL Gala dinner was followed by a very entertaining and successful ceilidh. The conference closed the following day with a tribute to John Holmes, the last of the three plenaries, and closing remarks by several representatives of BAAL and Swansea University.

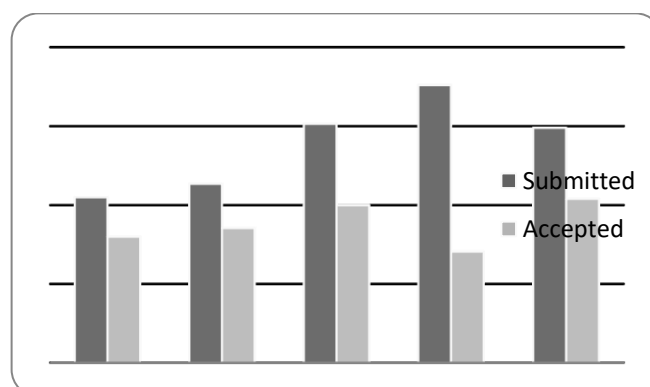
## Papers Submitted and Accepted

As table 1 and figure 1 show, the number of papers submitted was about the same as in 2006 and has fallen from last year which saw an unusually high number of paper submissions. 298 abstracts were submitted to the conference organisers, and 208 were accepted this year. The number of accepted papers has increased sharply compared to last year (40%) and is back to the usual 65-75% acceptance rate. The number of posters has increased. SIG track submissions have increased, and colloquia submissions have fallen.

	2004 Sub.	2004 Acc.	2005 Sub.	2005 Acc.	2006 Sub.	2006 Acc.	2007 Sub.	2007 Acc.	2008 Sub.	2008 Acc.
Individual	106	69	146	92	232	141	277	100	197	127
Colloquia abstracts	50	50	41	41	13	13	18	14	8	8
SIGs	27	22	29	17	47	24	47	17	72	52
Posters	27	19	11	21	11	22	14	10	21	21
TOTAL	210	160	227	171	303	200	352	141	298	208

Sub. – Submitted; Acc. – Accepted

**Table 1: Abstracts submitted and accepted  
by category**



**Figure 1: Total abstracts submitted and accepted**

## Scholarships

BAAL gives two international scholarships (one of which is the Chris Brumfit award) and ten UK student scholarships.

There were 29 applications for the ten UK student scholarships; nine were accepted.

The International Scholarship went to a scholar from Russia, Svetlana Gorokhova, and a scholar from Iran, Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini, was awarded the Chris Brumfit award. There were 38 applications.



## What Do We Mean by Writing Fluency? Proposing a new measure for assessing fluent written language production

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Fluency has been given peripheral attention and it may be the term with the most varied definitions in writing research. This variance in defining writing fluency reflects the different ways researchers conceptualize it. As Bruton and Kirby (1987) put it:

The word fluency crops up often in discussions of written composition and holds an ambiguous position in theory and in practice...Written fluency is not easily explained, apparently, even when researchers rely on simple, traditional measures such as composing rate. Yet, when any of these researchers referred to the term fluency, they did so as though the term were already widely understood and not in need of any further explication. (p. 89)

The various definitions proposed for writing fluency may have resulted from the different indicators used for measuring it. Many L1/L2 writing process studies (e.g. Chenoweth & Hayes, Hataso & Soeda, 2000) measured writing fluency in terms of the composing rate, i.e. the number of words written per minute obtained through dividing the text quantity by the time spent writing. Other reported measures of writing fluency include holistic scoring of the text (Ballator, Farnum & Kaplan, 1999), number of words and t-units (Elola, 2006), number of correctly spelled words written, number of sentences written, and number of letter sequences (Rosenthal, 2007). Of all these indicators, the composing rate has been the most frequently used one for assessing writers' fluency. It may be argued that the validity of the composing rate and the above product-based indicators of writing fluency is questionable. Some product-based indicators of writing fluency such as the number of t-units or the sentences written in the text are more likely to reflect some quality aspects in writers' texts than the flow of their composing processes. On the other hand, producing longer or shorter text may be dependent on some factors such as writers' pre-task decision to include a specific amount of words, lines or paragraphs in the text,

and/or their familiarity with the topic of writing. In addition, judging students' writing fluency through dividing the amount of text they produce by the time they spend on the task may be refuted by the hypothesis that some students do not spend much time performing a given task due to their negative attitude to writing. Similarly, some competent writers may produce fewer words per minute not because they are less fluent writers but because they are monitor overusers. Therefore, researchers need to use some process-based indicators that could mirror writers' text production fluency.

A few researchers have addressed or referred to the issue of writers' fluency from a process-based perspective. Kaufer *et al.*'s (1986) and Friedlander's (1989) studies showed that the length of the proposed text for writing interacts positively with their language experience. Over three quarters of the words newly proposed as sentence parts by Kaufer *et al.*'s (1986) L1 writers were included in their translating episodes. Finding that the writers with more L2 experience proposed texts in longer bursts, Chenoweth and Hayes (2001) point out that the length of the newly proposed text for writing, or the length of the burst in their terms, is a main contributor of writer' fluency, measured by the composing rate. Another aspect of writing fluency referred to in writing process research is producing text in larger chunks. Perl (1979, p. 322) refers to her twelfth grader participants' fluency by contrasting fluent writing that can be observed when 'sentences are written in groups or 'chunks' to non-fluent writing occurring 'when each sentence is produced in isolation'. Similar remarks were made by Kelly (1986) whose proficient writers produced their texts in larger chunks, and by Wang (2005) about how the length of the chunks written by her participants to clarify the flow of their writing. These observations reported indicate the possibility of measuring writers' fluency in terms of the mean length of the chunk of text produced.

The idea of using the mean length of the text parts written or the translating episode as a measure of writing fluency is not new but is rarely highlighted. Van Bruggen's (1946) study in which he used a motor driven, time recording kymograph to examine the rate of flow of written words may be the only empirical attempt relevant to this issue. Van Bruggen found that the more fluent and competent writers had longer pauses *between* groups of words representing thought units and shorter pauses *within* the groups of words than the less fluent and competent writers.

Taking the critical view of text-based writing fluency indicators into account, the observations

made by Perl (1979), Kelly (1986), and Wang (2005) in their think-aloud protocol studies have inspired the researcher to revitalizing Van Bruggen's old idea via examining the mean length of the translating episodes in writers' think-aloud protocols instead of using the kymograph. The study defines the translating episode as a segment of the protocol that represents a chunk (one or more words) that has been written down, i.e. translated, and terminated by 3-or-more second pause or any other composing behaviour. This idea also owes much to the studies of Kaufer *et al.* (1986) and Friedlander (1989) Chenweth and Hayes (2001) investigating the length of proposed burst for writing as a contributor to writing fluency measured in terms of composing rate.

The study drew its data from the think-aloud protocols generated by 30 Egyptian EFL university student writers. The mean length of their translating episodes was compared to their linguistic knowledge and text quality scores. The results reached by the study suggest that due to its stronger and positive correlations with the participants' linguistic knowledge and the language-related aspects in their texts, the mean length of the translating episode seems to be a more valid indicator for measuring EFL writers' fluency than the text-based ones extensively used in the previous studies reviewed. The study also found that the mean length of the participants' translating episodes correlate with some of their composing behaviours. In light of these results, the study proposed a profile of the composing process characteristics of fluent versus less fluent EFL writers.

## Acknowledgments

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## Sources of Pressure in Multilingual Education in Eritrea

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This is a report of a multidisciplinary research that aimed to compare literacy acquisition in different languages and scripts in Eritrea (Horn of Africa), where linguistic and cultural diversities are acknowledged in the language and education policies. The country's nine languages and the alphasyllabic Ge'ez, alphabetic Latin and Arabic scripts are used in primary education. As an investigation of comparative literacy acquisition, literacy attitudes, and values, the study employed theoretical frameworks and methodologies from different disciplines such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and education. The findings of the studies on literacy and script attitudes, literacy instruction, and literacy acquisition are discussed here as possible sources of pressure and opportunity in the multilingual primary education.

As part of the bigger research, a survey investigated the attitudes of adult Eritreans towards literacy in general and to the different scripts in particular. The study included 25 interviews and a survey of 670 adults, about 60-80 respondents from each of the nine language groups. Results showed that people value literacy highly for a variety of reasons that can be reduced to two main factors pertaining to intrinsic and economic values of literacy. Comparative analysis revealed that literacy is valued more among the less educated. In some of the smaller language groups, the high value attached to literacy in general by group members contrasted with considerable disapproval of the script of the minority languages. The outcomes of the literacy and script attitudes survey showed that the majority (75%) of the respondents in the survey voiced approval for the education policy that prescribes the languages and scripts to be used in primary schools.

Literacy instruction methods across different languages and scripts were examined through classroom observations of beginning readers (grade 1) during their first and second months in school. The main aim was to examine and compare the introduction of the written code in Tigrinya, Kunama, Saho and Arabic classrooms. In all the instructions observed, there was a concentrated effort on teaching the child how to learn (memorize mostly) the letters of the specific orthography. Chanting after the teacher, memory driven games,

constant urging for reciting letters or syllable symbols, and repeated exercises of letter writing that emphasized graphic forms all aimed at teaching the letters and basic word reading. These mostly phonics based lessons rarely involved explicit explanations of the written language or print awareness or other similar whole language experiences that the curriculum prescribed.

In a reading acquisition study, we compared reading results in four Eritrean languages that used either syllabic Ge'ez (Tigrinya and Tigre languages) or alphabetic Latin scripts (Kunama and Saho). A sample of 385 Grade 1 children were given letter knowledge, word reading, and spelling tasks to investigate differences at the script and language levels. Results showed that the syllable based Ge'ez script was easier to learn than the phoneme based Latin despite the bigger number of basic units (*fidel*) in Ge'ez. These results lay to rest age-old worries about the "unmanageable number" of *fidel* symbols and their perceived negative effect on the development of reading in a child. In addition, the results have shown that the syllable based teaching of alphabetic Saho produced better results than alphabetic teaching of Kunama. The outcomes confirmed the importance of the availability of phonological units in the orthography and the teaching methods in early reading.

In a related reading study, we examined transfer of reading skills from the first to second language. Existing research, mainly carried out in Western contexts, have demonstrated that 50 percent of variance in L2 reading can be explained by L1 reading and L2 proficiency. Our study applied the L2 reading theory in the Eritrean context, where L1 reading is acquired in multiple languages and scripts. The study employed reading comprehension tests in five local languages (Tigrinya, Tigre, Kunama, Saho, and Arabic) and English administered to 254 fourth graders randomly selected from schools all over the country. Regression analysis revealed that L1 reading comprehension and L2 language proficiency significantly predicted L2 reading with both variables explaining 27 percent of the variance in L2 reading. L1 script was not a significant predictor of L2 reading in English. On the other hand, L1 language proficiency, L1 script and L2 reading significantly predicted L1 reading. All three variables explained about 32 percent of the variance in L1 reading. These findings highlight the importance of building L1 reading skills in educational contexts like Eritrea and other African countries where formal education is usually conducted in (English) L2.





## Putting the Culture into Intercultural Communication: intercultural awareness

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### Introduction

The increasing diversity of English language use on a global scale particularly in lingua franca settings has raised interesting issues regarding the relationship between languages and cultures. In such contexts the connections between languages and cultures are likely to be complex, dynamic and emergent, rather than a simplistic culture-language-nationality correlation. To investigate this research was carried out concerning second language learning and intercultural communication in an expanding circle ELF (English lingua franca) context. Data was collected from seven undergraduate English learners at a Thai university engaged in intercultural communication. The examples of intercultural communication revealed many participants making use of cultural frames of reference in a hybrid, mixed and 'liminal' manner; drawing on and moving between global, national, local, and individual orientations. It is therefore suggested that for successful intercultural communication language learners and users need to be equipped with 'intercultural awareness'. This involves an understanding of the role of culture in their own communicative behaviour and those of others, and crucially the ability to mediate and adapt to the fluid cultures of ELF communication. A model is presented below that represents the key elements of intercultural awareness, and illustrates the relationships between these different components.

### A model of intercultural awareness

The model of intercultural awareness in figure 1 is based on the empirical study described above and on theoretical foundations which view the relationship between cultures and languages as fluid, dynamic, liminal, and emergent in intercultural communication (Canagarajah, 2007; Kramsch, 1993; Rampton, 1995; Risager, 2006; 2007; Scollon and Scollon, 2001; 2003). It also makes use of the notions of intercultural communicative competence and critical cultural awareness proposed by Byram (1997; 2008). Finally, it has been developed in relation to the types

of ELF communication described by Jenkins (2007), Meierkord (2002), and Seidlhofer (2004) among others.

Intercultural awareness can be defined as a conscious understanding of the role culturally based forms, practices and frames of understanding can have in intercultural communication, and an ability to put these conceptions into practice in a flexible and context specific manner in real time communication.

The model attempts to draw important distinctions between different types of knowledge and skills, different levels of ICA, and to illustrate the relationships between them. To this end three levels have been proposed moving from basic cultural awareness to *intercultural* awareness. Furthermore, a distinction has been drawn between conceptual ICA and practice orientated ICA; with the latter concerning the application of the former in real-time instances of intercultural communication. However, the dashed lines between the different levels, and conceptual and practice orientated ICA represent the porous nature of the distinctions. Each level of ICA feeds into the other with the kinds of conceptual understanding envisaged at the higher levels influencing the concepts at the lower levels, and this is illustrated through the thick double headed arrows at either side of the model. Similarly, while practice orientated ICA concerns abilities and capacities these, as the arrows illustrate, are dependent on the ideas and knowledge developed in conceptual ICA. Furthermore, the experiences of intercultural communication should both influence and add to the knowledge/conceptual dimension of ICA, both in each instance of intercultural communication and in the long term development of ICA.

Level 1, basic cultural awareness (CA) shows aspects of CA which are related to an understanding of cultures at a very general level and more focused on the first culture (C1) then specifically orientated to intercultural communication. This level involves a conscious understanding of C1 and the manner in which it influences behaviour, beliefs, and values and the importance of this in communication. There is also awareness that other cultures may be different but this awareness may not include any specific knowledge of other cultures. This is combined with an ability to articulate our own cultural perspective and an ability to make general comparisons between our own culture and others.

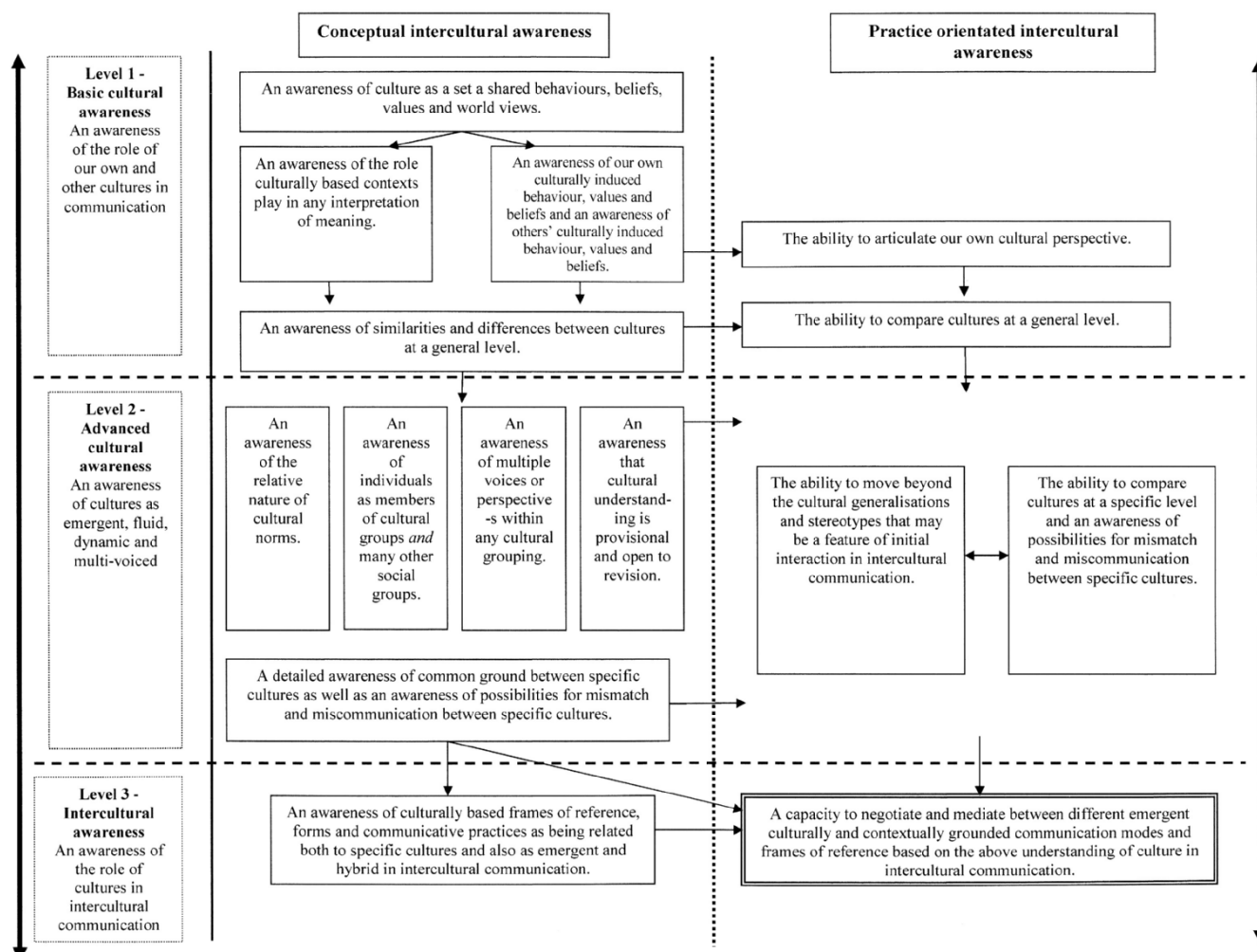
These basic elements of CA lead to level 2 of CA, which involves more complex understandings of cultures and cultural frames of reference. At this

level there is an awareness of cultures as one of many social groupings or contexts and of the fluid, dynamic and relative nature of any cultural characterisation or understanding. This is also combined with specific knowledge of other cultures and the effects this may have on communication in terms of possible misunderstanding and miscommunication. As regards skills or abilities, at level 2 participants in intercultural communication should be able to combine an ability to make use of cultural generalisations and to make predictions of possible areas of misunderstanding and miscommunication, with the capacity to move beyond generalisations in response to the specific instance of intercultural communication that they are engaged in.

The final level 3 is intercultural awareness (ICA). This stage moves beyond viewing cultures as bounded entities, however complex they may be, and recognises that cultural references and communicative practices in intercultural communication may or may not be related to

mediate and negotiate between different cultural frames of reference and communication modes as they occur in specific examples of intercultural communication. The ability to mediate and negotiate combined with an awareness of the emergent nature of cultural forms, references and practices in intercultural communication are crucial elements of ICA and are thus placed as the final component of model with double lines surrounding them.

It is suggested that such awareness and skills may be as vital to successful communication for English users in ELF contexts as more conventional linguistic knowledge of grammar and lexis. However, the data this model of ICA draws on is from a limited number of English users and in one context. To further establish the validity and usefulness of ICA more research is needed in different contexts and with larger numbers of participants.



specific cultures. In other words, there is also an understanding of the hybrid, liminal and emergent nature of much intercultural communication. This requires an engagement of many of the previous elements simultaneously, leading to the ability to

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## The Corpus and the Stereotype: a research tale

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It is well known that useful information can be obtained by comparing word frequencies in corpora, for example using measurements such as Mutual Information or Log Likelihood. Both calculations demonstrate what is relatively frequent and therefore distinctive. Comparative frequencies are useful but can also lead to results that appear to reinforce stereotypes, either of nationality (Stubbs 1996) or of gender (Rayson et al 1997). For example, Rayson et al comparing male and female speech in the British National Corpus identify keywords that appear to reinforce discredited stereotypes about how men and women talk. Possible conclusions are either that the stereotypes are correct after all, or that the relative frequency methods are not well suited to studying such topics.

What we wish to argue, however, is that what such methods demonstrate is how stereotypes come about. A stereotype might be defined as an observation of maximum difference, which becomes a stereotype if what is most different is interpreted as the most typical. Statistical measurements of relative difference mimic this process.

To illustrate these issues we examine the representation of two individuals (Tony Blair and Saddam Hussein) in a corpus of news articles from the Washington post and the New York Times (Bang in preparation). The study we report here focuses on the representation of the speech of the two leaders. The method is to identify and count the representations of speech occurring with the names Tony Blair and Saddam Hussein (henceforward TB and SH). These were classified according to grammatical type and according to semantic similarity. (Division into semantic groups is always subjective and open to challenge.)

	Tony Blair	Saddam Hussein
Total occurrences	5,477	11,546
Verbs of saying	1,894 (34.6%)	672 (6.8%)
SAY / TELL	849 (44.7%)	121 (17.9%)
Other verbs of saying	1,045 (55.3%)	551 (82.1%)

**Table 1: verbs of saying**

The first findings relate to raw frequency (see table 1).

The table shows that although SH is mentioned much more frequently in the corpus, TB is construed as a speaker both absolutely and relatively more frequently. Furthermore, while almost half of the utterances ascribed to TB are introduced by the relatively neutral verb SAY and TELL, the vast majority of those ascribed to SH are associated with other verbs that are less neutral and more mediated. It is important to recognise, however, that both speakers are represented in both ways.

	TB	SH
Total occurrences	246	65
Evaluating	129 (52.4%)	17 (26.1%)
Statement of fact	60 (24.3%)	38 (59.3%)
Promising	17 (6.9%)	1 (1.5%)
Persuading	6 (2.4%)	0 (0%)
Admitting or denying	29 (11.7%)	6 (9.2%)
Other	5 (2.0%)	3 (4.6%)

**Table 2: verb + that-clause**

Figure 2 presents the occurrences of ‘verb + that-clause’ with each speaker, divided into five semantic groups.

TB is most frequently associated with the ‘Evaluating’ group, which includes ARGUE, CLAIM and INSIST. SH is most frequently associated with the ‘Fact’ group, which includes ADD, ANNOUNCE and CONFIRM. Again, however, there is a considerable degree of overlap between the two speakers.

Finally, we examine instances of Narrative Report of Speech Acts (NRSA), comparing the frequency of this with that reported for newspapers by Semino and Short (2004). According to Semino and Short, 47% of speech representation in the press is NRSA. In the US press corpus, 44% of Saddam Hussein’s speech is represented through NRSA but for Tony Blair the proportion is only 29%. This suggests that TB’s talk is less summarised – or mediated – than the average, while the extent to which SH’s speech is summarised is closer to the average. The NRSA verbs can be divided into almost 20 semantic groups. Again, both TB and SH are represented in ways belonging to most groups. The differences are nuanced. The major differences include: a category labelled ‘Defending’ attributed to TB but not to SH; a category associated with permitted or forbidding actions attributed more frequently to SH than to TB; a category association with support attributed more frequently to TB than to SH. In

addition, it is noted that there is a more even spread of instances across the categories in relation to TB than to SH. It appears that the representation of TB's speech is more balanced, presenting him overall as more statesmanlike, and reasonable, and persuasive than SH. SH, by contrast, is presented as more dictatorial and single-faceted.

There are a number of conclusions that we wish to draw from this study. Firstly, when comparing the representation of two individuals in a corpus, similarities can be as important as differences. Secondly, although the differences in the representations of TB and SH are quite subtle, they are all the more insidious as a result. In other words, the speech of the two leaders is represented in a way that is slightly biased but not completely so. That bias can be linked to the notion of stereotyping. A stereotype of Saddam Hussein might emerge from a study of the newspapers concerned but only if we see the differences as more important than the similarities. A researcher might conclude that the presentation of each individual is stereotyped by looking at those verbs which occur with significantly different frequencies. The degree of overlap, however, might mask these differences from the reader. Because the representation is relatively balanced, the reader might not be aware of how attitudes might be influenced by the language of the newspapers. It is possible that the role of an apparently balanced press might be more influential in creating a stereotype than that of a tabloid newspaper where the prejudices are more blatant.

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## Measuring the Syntactic Complexity of Embedded Clauses

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This research was part of a larger twin study project which aimed to develop and refine tools of linguistic analysis for use in linguistic heritability studies, based on lexical, syntactic, psychological and personality-based linguistic features. A key area of investigation was grammatical complexity measured in embedding. The specific aim was to establish a methodology for quantifying embedding, and to find out how two what extent this one feature of syntactic complexity might vary between twins. The materials for investigation were 55 high-stakes exam essays, one by each of 26 identical / non-identical twins and 1 set of triplets. The essays were variable by length, genre, style and approach.

Most well-established existing measures of grammatical complexity, particularly in the study of language development or dysfunction, are usually based on various permutations of words, phrases or clauses per sentence or T-unit. There is also a smaller number of measures designed to test specific hypotheses, such as mean Yngvean depth per word (Yngve 1960; Sampson 1997; Roll, Frid & Horne 2007). The current study uses an original analysis based on scoring the degree to which clauses are embedded in a sentence.

Grammatical recursion was taken as the area for investigation precisely because it appears to be a design feature of language; indeed it has been claimed as the central feature of a narrow interpretation of the human language faculty (Hauser Chomsky & Fitch 2002:1569). Less specifically, there is a general but not unchallenged (Chipere 2003) assumption that recursion is ubiquitous and not subject to genetic variation. Finding a genetic influence on embedding ability might therefore challenge the widespread linguistic assumption that “individuals are indistinguishable (apart from gross deficits and abnormalities) in their ability to acquire grammar” (Chomsky 1975: 144).

The design starting assumptions for the analysis were that (a) all verbs represent clauses at some level (*clause* therefore includes both prototypical and ‘small clause’ types); (b) all clauses are at some level embedded in higher level structures

(sentence or clause); (c) increased cognitive effort accompanies increasingly deep embedding. A further assumption was that the ‘authorial sentence’ was the best base unit for analysis; despite considerable problems caused by non-canonical sentence constructions, one early decision was not to use T-units, in part because of some inherent unresolved issues with the methodology involved, but also because the sentence was felt to be a better reflection of authorial intent regarding construction.

Each sentence was analysed manually in turn and allocated a numerical score in the following way. Each main verb and any verbs in adverbial clauses with scope over the sentence scored 1. Other verbs scored according to their level of embeddedness. So any verb embedded one level below 1 scored 2; any verb embedded one level below a verb scoring 2 scored 3, and so on. Auxiliary verbs were not counted. Verbless strings scored 0. Using this basic data, a score for each sentence was produced by dividing total sentence embeddedness scores (E) by the number of scorable verbs per sentence (V). This scoring method does not entirely avoid the issue of length-dependence (cf. that which bedevils the standard type-token ratio), but it does at least reduce the effect of sheer sentence length. From the two data points E and V, a mean essay score for each author was calculated.

Example sentences are given below, with relevant verbs and their scores highlighted in bold, and E/V in brackets:

- (a) What really **matters(1)** in your life? (1/1 = 1)
- (b) I **woke(1)** up early, **jumped(1)** into a nice warm shower and then **headed(1)** off to the coffee shop. (3/3 = 1)
- (c) Did you **know(1)** that researchers have **found(2)** that smokebush (something Indigenous have **used(4)** for medicine) **holds(3)** the key to cancer... (10/4 = 2.5)
- (d) That **hurts(1)**, as friendships **matter(1)** a lot to me. (2/2 = 1)

Typical scores for an authorial sentence including an active verb ranged from 1 to 2.5; although there were higher scores they were fairly rare. Author scores (i.e. the mean of the scores for all eligible sentences) ranged from 1.06 to 1.98, with the majority falling between 1.20 and 1.40.

The analysis, then, does distinguish between essays, and although the embeddedness scores are uncorroborated the method seems on the face of it to tap into recursion, broadly defined, as a feature

of the text. There are clearly a number of problems with the analysis, however, which really only came into view while it was being carried out, and many of these apply to other attempts to quantify language output. The first problem was the sheer variability of the data: a significant number of the ‘sentences’ fit almost no criteria for a sentence other than the punctuation (and some lacked even that). Related to this was the lack of accepted definitions for many standard grammatical terms – in certain cases and at certain levels of analysis, despite intense consultation it was impossible to reach uncontroversial agreement on functions and features of certain elements of the data or even features of grammar (verbs ending in –ing were a particular problem). A second problem was the slowness of the manual analysis, which does not lend itself to machine-coding. To some extent this was counter-weighted through deliberation and consultation in difficult cases; the laborious hand analysis precluded the speed which goes with automaticity, but provided a relatively ‘clean’ result.

The results do not provide enough data to discern whether embedding has a heritable component, but the approach used here might after further refinement form the basis of a reliable analytical tool. Such refinements and further work would include re-analysis of the data and assessment of inter-rater reliability. At a different conceptual level, the project raises many questions which might defy easy answers. Can our standard definition of recursion stand up to the rather intense scrutiny of this kind of analysis? Is all embedding the same, and if not how does it differ? When subcategorisation ‘forces’ small clauses, is this actually optional recursion or might it be better described as the lexicalization of grammar?

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# Understandings of Gender and Silence in a Ghanaian Community of Practice

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## Background

This study is part of a growing network of studies of language use and gender in African contexts (extending to the Diaspora). Such studies are few in contrast to descriptive linguistic studies of African languages and dialects and African sociolinguistic studies.

The notion of ‘silence’ has always been important to gender (and language) studies. (By gender, we mean both ‘person-based’ gender (linguistic and other behaviour of men, women, boys, girls), and ‘ideas-based’ gender (what is said and written about men, women, boys, girls, gender relations and gendered practices) (Sunderland, 2006).) Women’s silence is usually interpreted as disempowerment, i.e. being silenced. In Ghana, women have played important traditional leadership roles (e.g. the Queen-mother has the final say in the choice of a successor, and the sole right to reprimand the Chief in public), yet key functionaries like chiefs’ orators have always been men (see Yankah 1995; Bota, unpublished).

Relevant here is Christianity, practiced by a majority of Ghanaians. One scripture widely considered as promoting women’s subordination is St. Paul’s ‘silencing’ of women in 1 Corinthians 14<sup>1</sup> (although the co-text suggests that Paul was not trying to literally forbid women from speaking). We used these verses to explore current understandings of gender and silence by members of a socio-religious community living in the African (Ghanaian) Diaspora.

We were guided by the following research question:

- How do Ghanaians living in a UK Diaspora interpret 1 Cor. 14: 34-35 in the contexts of the Bible and ‘traditional’ Ghanaian culture and

beliefs vis-à-vis wider, modern trends in gender relations and practices?

## Data Collection, Findings and Interpretations

Through semi-structured interviews, seven Ghanaians (3 women and 4 men) from the Church of Pentecost in Milton Keynes and London were asked:

- How do you understand ‘silence’ in 1 Cor. 14: 34-35?
- Is there any link between your understanding of what ‘silence’ means in this passage and what it means in the Ghanaian culture?
- How do you compare its relevance, or otherwise, for Ghanaians in Ghana and for those in the UK?

Understandings and implications of ‘silence’ depend heavily on the ‘context’ (or text) within which it operates. Some respondents argued that Paul’s ‘silencing’ can only be fully understood in its proper co-textual and historical context. As there were factions in the Corinthian church<sup>2</sup>, one woman respondent claimed that ‘silence’ was used to indicate orderliness, a local and specific issue. When another was asked “do you feel silenced?” she replied:

CE: ... not in this present time when education has taught us our rights. I also pay bills and others. you know. but I respect him. isn’t that what the Bible says? ... sometimes I keep quiet not because I feel suppressed but for the sake of peace

Grace: so how would you describe that kind of silence=

CE: =that is not ‘silence’. We::l, literally yes. but after all as the Akan adage goes <a precious bead does not talk>. and there is another one. yeah. <the hen does not draw attention to herself in public, i.e. a virtuous woman does not draw attention to herself, the virtues in her speak for themselves; Yankah 1995, 1998> so. both biblically and traditionally. it’s a sign of virtue. or ... power. if you like

CE was thus interpreting silence as ‘respect’ for the husband and for God, ‘virtue’, or even ‘power’ (perhaps in the sense that one does not need to talk

<sup>1</sup> Bible, King James Version:

- 34: Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law.

- 35: And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Cor. 1:11,12; 3:3,4; 11:18, also Mattison [www.auburn.edu/~allenkc/openhse/womenobj.html](http://www.auburn.edu/~allenkc/openhse/womenobj.html)

to get what one wants).

Other relevant analytical categories seemed to be geography (Ghana vs. UK Diaspora) and rurality. Especially in rural settings, fewer Ghanaian women have paid jobs in Ghana than in the UK – and even when in paid jobs, their hours do not usually equal their husbands'. Rural women may thus be particularly vulnerable to 'silencing' as a form of disempowerment (because of stronger traditional beliefs about gender roles, and arguably because of lack of a financial contribution).

Most of the male and female respondents reported working equal hours and contributing equally financially to the upkeep of the home and family. Women making a financial contribution appeared to be a major contributing factor to their communicative rights. From two married men :

PK: before I came here I always thought that the man is really the 'boss' and my words must be final. but when I came here and I noticed the kind of treatment the men here give their wives. yeah. my attitude changed. especially since my wife works almost the same hours as mine. she has to speak her mind. don't you think? I can't pay the bills alone ... expensive. back home she didn't have to work

ED: I don't expect her to just keep quiet. she also contributes financially you know. so I also do some house chores. she takes family decisions sometimes=

Grace: =and are you comfortable with that]

ED: [yeah. why not? it's normal here.

But whereas couples enjoying equal communicative rights in the UK may be 'normal', the story may be different on returning to Ghana. From ED again:

ED: this created lots of problems for me when we went home. my mom and sisters said my wife has made me "otoolege" <a damn fool> .....they didn't understand why I had to consult her before taking decisions. why I have to cook or bathe our son.....

Grace: and your reaction to their behaviour?

ED: oh my God. we practically ran out of the village ...

Ghanaians from the Diaspora thus reportedly find it difficult to return to the 'traditional' society. This may not be as serious in urban Ghana or in a community in which women often work outside the home –since the women easily find jobs and make financial contributions to the home. Such women

may have equal communicative rights to their husbands, as in the Diaspora. But if this invites disapproval, modern urban couples (it was indicated in the interviews) may end up performing traditional gender roles - including the woman being silent - in public, while enjoying equal talking rights in private.

### Transcription system

::	lengthening
=	latching
.	pause
?	rising intonation
...	omitted transcript
[ ]	overlapping speech
<>	transcriber comments or translation
“”	quotations from Akan

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## FS ≠ FS (Formulaicity and Prosody)

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Language is part of a human communication system which is based on social interaction. We speak in order to communicate, not to produce linguistic forms, and the actual words we use represent only one of the modalities involved in a communicative act. These spoken lexical tokens are overlaid on an intonational communication pattern and open to modification based on visual and oral feedback. Any cat or dog owner can testify to mammalian sensitivity to tonality in human-pet communication, yet pronunciation (particularly suprasegmental intonation) is a topic which is largely ignored because of the difficulties in approaching it in the classroom.

In her keynote speech to BAAL 2008 Alison Wray mentioned that all early languages were tone languages; and today the majority of surviving languages are indeed tonal in nature. Double the speed of production of a Chinese utterance and the spectrogram representations of both utterances will show a remarkable similarity, since the main intonational effort in Chinese goes into lexical distinction. Double the speed of an English utterance and the likely outcome is a Cauldwellian blur, since in English, intonation can be freed up to signal – among other things - speaker attitude. It is not needed for lexical disambiguation. With regard to Chinese and English, there is therefore an ‘intonational gap’ to cross.

This problem will be addressed by the Dynamic Speech Corpus (DSC) being developed at the Dublin Institute of Technology. The DSC incorporates natural, unscripted dialogues recorded at industry-standard audio levels (24/192), thus leaving open the possibility of instrumental analysis. The main thrust of the DSC, however, is to provide language learners, course authors and researchers with an asset which provides examples of high quality, native-to-native dialogic fluency, as opposed to scripted, monologic or other speech acts spoken ‘under duress’, such as during broadcast radio or television programmes. Samples of native speaker (NS) reductions, common in informal speech, can be sought and the utterances played back and compared so as to highlight the phonetic and pragmatic reasons for the phenomenon under investigation. Each utterance can be slowed down (without tonal distortion) so as

to highlight the production of the speech act itself rather than simply treat speech as a product in its own right, as is the case with most spoken corpora. The user will subsequently be able to ‘zoom’ out from the short sequence identified in a KWIC search to study the phonetic and interactional environment in which the utterance was produced.

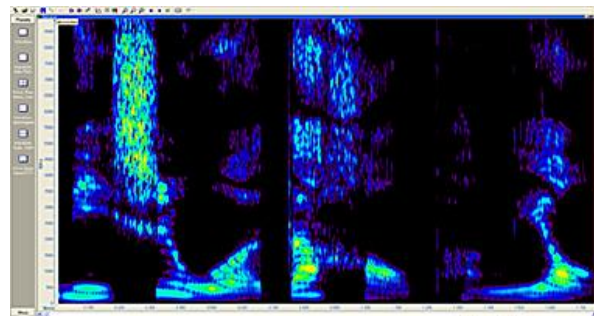


Figure 1: Chinese - Normal speed, 238 syll/min

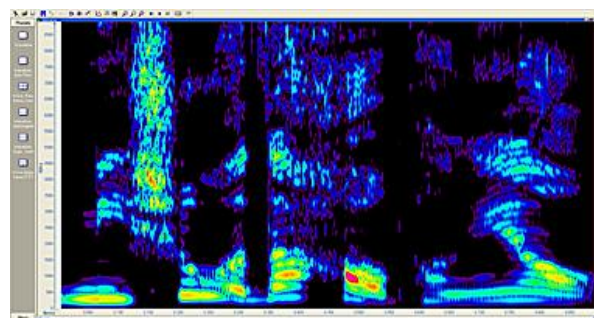


Figure 2: Chinese – Twice the speed, 471 syll/min

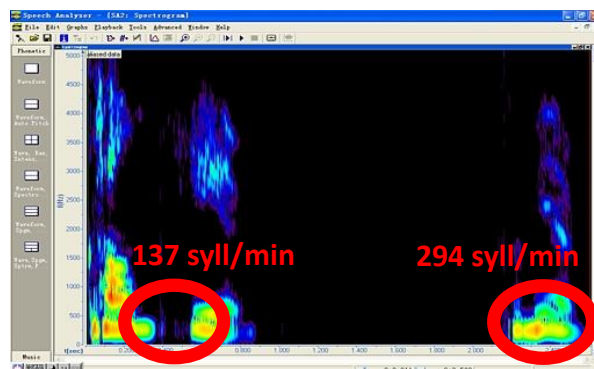


Figure 3: English - Double speed produces blur

Initial investigation of the nascent DSC indicates that native speakers, in communication with native listeners, deliver speech in short, speaker-determined units which allow the speaker maximum flexibility in nuancing the evolving, dynamic communication. While there is usually only one speaker at a time in NS-NS communication, there are two listeners, since speakers also monitor and modify their production in the light of interlocutor feedback, both oral and visual. The availability of the slowdown facility allows learners to study the flow of speaker delivery, including pauses for thought, nuancing or correction of miscommunications which become evident in interlocutor feedback. Using the DSC,

the learner will be able to study reduced, unstressed sequences in their natural, prosodic environment. The corpus interface, in combination with the slow-down facility, will allow for the blur of unstressed sequences to be studied, and it is precisely these which cause most difficulty for learners of English. Salient sequences are closer to the citation forms of the language which learners have internalised. But unstressed passages are prone to blurring and reduction, and deserve separate, more detailed attention, if learners are ever to integrate into a speech community and turn linguistic ability into communicative ability.

This need becomes most evident in the area of formulaicity, which, according to Erman and Warren, constitutes almost 60% of NS-NS speech. Formulaicity – with its prefabricated units, both syntactic and semantic – facilitates communication by allowing listener attention to concentrate on those sequences which the speaker intends to make more salient. Initial investigation of the DSC reveals that the intonational delivery of formulaic sequences (FSs) themselves can be more important than their lexical realisation. There is evidence for an inverse relationship between speed of delivery and tonal range in sequences. This should not surprise, as any form of salience comes with a production cost. It takes effort to deliberately lengthen a vowel, or change tonal direction or increase intensity – the key physical correlates of salience. By employing the slow-down facility at 40%, in order to afford learners two and a half times as long to listen to the utterance, the semantic element of the sequence is played down and the melody (i.e. prosody) highlighted. Tests with 100 students in China (within the framework of an ongoing PhD thesis) have clearly demonstrated not only the effectiveness of the slow-down with EFL students who have no other access to native speakers, but also a very high degree of learner acceptability.

It is hoped that the inclusion of prosody – specifically speed of delivery and tonal range – into the study of formulaic sequences in natural dialogue will lead to a better understanding of the role of formulaicity in NS-NS interchanges. Dialogic fluency and the proper use of common, short phrases and formulaic sequences with appropriate intonation patterns can best be learned by a principled exposure to their exemplification in a corpus such as the DSC.

The first prototype of the Dynamic Speech Corpus, which is funded by Enterprise Ireland, is due to be completed by August 2010.

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## A Preliminary Categorisation of Techniques of Simplification in ESL/EFL Graded Readers

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In the context of second and foreign language education, simplified readers are generally accepted by teachers and students as a good source of reading material; a numerous volume of simplified graded readers have been issued by various publishers to address their audience. However, most of the empirical studies focus on how simplification helps develop learners' comprehension. The techniques of simplification do not seem to receive due attention even though enough knowledge of these techniques will be the basis of any academic endeavour that tries to describe the nature of simplification and the role of simplified readers. Among past research efforts, Davies and Widdowson (1974) discuss 'situational features' (plot), 'lexical features' and 'syntactic features' but their model of situational, lexical and syntactic features is broad in scope and they do not distinguish among different types of simplification. Day and Bamford (1998) give a list of the methods that are applied in the process of simplification, including reordering text parts for clarity, elaborating difficult concepts, abridging, and replacing difficult words and structures with simpler ones; however, these methods are not well developed to permit clear distinctions.

In this study, in order to advance the understanding of the process of simplification, a preliminary categorisation is proposed. I use Katherine Mansfield's short story 'The garden-party' and two simplified versions (the *Penguin Readers* series and the *Oxford Bookworms Library* series) as the source texts. For ease of comparison, the original of 'The garden-party' is divided into thirty extracts according to the various phrases of the story. Each original extract is juxtaposed with its corresponding one in the two simplified versions. The process of contrast and comparison starts with (1) the categorisation of the types of simplification and next moves on to (2) a text analysis of the extract-pairs. The major types of simplification are four: (i) *retainment*, (ii) *replacement*, (iii) *summarisation* and (iv) *deletion*. Retainment refers to the text parts where no change at all is made. Replacement occurs where the simplified version

roughly keeps the original content but new words/forms are substituted for their original counterparts. Cases of summarisation give a summary of original stretches. In other words, the original topic remains, but the content is not given. Finally, deletion refers to changes where text parts are removed and so is the original topic. Among the four types, type 2 replacement has several subtypes (with a brief explanation to the right):

1. Lexical replacement:
  - (1) substitution: replacing less frequent words/phrases for more frequent ones
  - (2) reduction: words/phrases are removed
  - (3) supplementation: words/phrases are added
2. Syntactic replacement:
  - (1) reordering: words/phrases are reordered
  - (2) separation: sentences are separated
  - (3) combination: sentences are combined
3. Lexical-syntactic replacement:
  - (1) minimisation: avoiding repetition of words and phrases/reformulation
  - (2) reconstruction: reordering and rephrasing of a structurally and semantically complex expression
  - (3) elaboration: the explanation of the original message in a more developed, longer form
4. Graphological replacement: paragraphing change: using more/less paragraph boundaries (e.g. separating one paragraph into two or combing two into one)

The results are as follows.

Types of simplification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Retainment	39	7.78
<b>Replacement</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>77.64</b>
Summarisation	24	4.79
Deletion	49	9.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Subtypes of replacement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
substitution	138	29.18
reduction	135	28.54
reconstruction	53	11.21
supplementation	45	9.51
reordering	33	6.98
separation	16	3.38
combination	14	2.96
minimisation	13	2.75
elaboration	13	2.75
paragraphing	13	2.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Among the four major types being built, *replacement* is by far the most frequent categories (77.64%), followed by *deletion* (9.78%) and *retainment* (7.78%) while *summarization* has the lowest number of occurrences (4.79%). It is to be noted that the comparison of occurrences does not represent a difference in word numbers and the percentage of each type does not give a picture of the percentage of a specific type of simplification that the entire text undergoes. These numbers simply point out a fact that replacement is the most adopted (and therefore most needed?) option and summarization the least used. As to the 10 sub-categories of replacement, substitution and reduction are the two most frequent, both roughly equal in terms of frequency (29.18% and 28.54%). Reconstruction, supplementation, and reordering have fewer and only a very small minority of instances are tagged as minimisation, elaboration, and paragraphing.

The comparison yields a few trends relating to each individual type. First, non-protagonist characters' speech and activity as well as the protagonist's internal states are easily ironed out or edited down to the bare minimum (i.e. summarized). Second, among the cases of replacement (where the simplified version roughly keeps the original meaning but new words are substituted for their original counterparts), the semantic/pragmatic 'redundancy' that helps to build up the conversational expression of the characters, such as near-repetition, strengthening, discourse markers and intensifiers are easily removed. Besides, various techniques of replacement are used to produce a semantically and syntactically more assessable text: lexical replacement, minimisation, reconstruction, elaboration, combination, separation and paragraphing. Finally, the retained stretches are mainly dialogues that are central to the plot line.

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## Measuring Bilingual Proficiency and Grouping Participants: a different approach

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Reaction time (RT) is an extremely popular and highly recognised measurement in research on bilingual language processing. Initially, the RT difference between processing same-language and cross-language word pairs was regarded as evidence to support either end of the following two pairs of polar views: (1) language-selective (Scarborough, Gerard & Cortese, 1984) vs. language-nonselective access (Chen & Ho, 1986; Dyer, 1971; Preston & Lambert, 1969) and (2) separate vs. integrated language systems (see Paradis's 1987 work for a detailed review of the hypotheses on how languages are stored). More recently, RT tasks are used to examine cross-language interference or integration of different language systems (Grosjean, 1988; Li, 1996). Currently, RT tasks are used to examine the role of bilingual proficiency in language processing (Frenck-Mestre & Prince, 1997; Proverbio, Adorni & Zani, 2007; Proverbio, Cok & Zani, 2002).

This study compares the dependability between four grouping results via two cross-linguistic RT tasks and three other criteria (1) 'years of foreign language (i.e., Chinese or English) learning;', (2) 'use FL in job', and (3) 'place of FL learning gathered from a brief interview. The results suggest that grouping participants via RT tasks is more dependable.

### Participants

Eleven Chinese-English bilinguals and eleven English-Chinese bilinguals currently residing in Taiwan were recruited. The former are native Taiwanese learners of English, and the latter are native English learners of Chinese.

### Two reaction times (RT) tasks

#### Task 1

Task 1 was a language switch detection task. Below is an example of the trials.

#### (1) Trial

我好餓啊,	<i>let's go get some salty crispy chicken.</i>
'I'm starving	let's go get some salty crispy chicken.'

The participants were orally briefed with the instructions in their L1, and instructed to hit the right mouse key as soon as they detect a switch from L1 to L2. The participants were told that both of their languages were needed. This should call for full activation both of their languages (in Grosjean's term, the bilingual mode), and should therefore make it harder for the more proficient bilinguals to detect a switch (as shown by a longer RT).

#### Task 2

Task 2 was a semantic anomaly task. The task was checked for reliability (Cronbach's alpha,  $r = 0.625$ ). Below is an example of the trials.

#### (2) Trial

中文	+	<i>is very difficult.</i>
'Chinese		is very difficult.'

The participants were orally briefed with the instructions in their L1. Similarly, the participants were told that both of their languages were needed. This should call for full activation both of their languages (in Grosjean's term, the bilingual mode). Consequently, the more proficient bilinguals should find it easier to do the task (as shown by a shorter RT).

### Grouping result 1

Jointly considering the predictions of the 2 RT tasks, the bigger the *positive* RT difference (RT to task 1 minuses RT to task 2), the more proficient the bilingual participant is. Participants no 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, and 17 were sorted to the 'more' proficient group, and the remaining were sorted to the 'less' proficient group.

### Interview

The participants were each asked three questions: (1) how long they have learnt the FL (i.e., Chinese or English), (2) if they need to use the FL in their job, and (3) whether they learn the FL in the FL-speaking country.

### Grouping result 2

The sample's mean year of learning the FL is 6.8 years. Eleven out of the 22 participants (participants no 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 19, 20, 21, and 22) have learnt the FL more than 6.8 years, and

they were sorted to the 'more' proficient group, and the remaining were sorted to 'less' proficient group.

### Grouping result 3

Eight out of the 22 participants (participants no 1, 2, 3, 8, 19, 20, 21, and 22) have a job involving using the FL, and they were sorted to the 'more' proficient group. The remaining were sorted to the 'less' proficient group.

### Grouping result 4

Fifteen out of the 22 participants (participants 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18) have learnt the FL in the FL-speaking country, and they were sorted to the 'more' proficient group. The remaining were sorted to the 'less' proficient group.

### Four grouping results, which is more dependable?

This study argues that if a grouping is done dependably, that is, the 'more' proficient group consists of only the *more* proficient participants and the 'less' proficient group consists of only the *less* proficient participants, then the grouping result should satisfy the following condition:

The 'more' proficient group should perform *worse* than the 'less' proficient group in task 1; but *better* than the 'less' proficient group in task 2 because both tasks call for full activation of the participant's two languages.

### Grouping result 1 (GR1):

The more proficient group was 209 ms slower than the less proficient group in task 1. The more proficient was 312 ms faster than the less proficient group in task 2. This result satisfied the condition.

### Grouping result 2 (GR2):

The more proficient group was 81 ms faster than the less proficient group in task 1. The more proficient group was 35 ms slower than the less proficient group in task 2. This result did not satisfy the condition.

### Grouping result 3 (GR3):

The more proficient group was 96 ms faster than the less proficient group in task 1. The more proficient group was 1 ms faster than the less proficient group in task 2. This result did not satisfy the condition.

### Grouping Result 4 (GR4):

The more proficient group was 97 ms slower than the less proficient group in task 1. However, the more proficient group was 30 ms slower than the less proficient group in task 2. The result did not satisfy the condition.

### Conclusion

This study for the first time provides clear evidence that different grouping criteria lead to very different grouping results. This study proposes a procedure involving the use of RT to measure bilingual proficiency and group participants, which appears to be more dependable.

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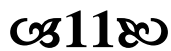
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## An Investigation of Gender Differences in EFL College Writing

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Speaking and writing are two major productive skills in language learning. However, the role of writing instruction has long been underestimated in university education in Taiwan. In particular, writing instruction is often ignored for non-English major students in Taiwanese universities based on the two reasons. First, writing instruction is not required for non-English major students. Second, heavy scoring workload may be a major concern. However, one of the serious learning problems of university students in Taiwan is that many of them cannot write in English well. Based on my observation, some of my students' English writing performance is far from satisfactory although they are English major students. English writing has been a challenge for English major students; what is more, non-English major students would face even much more difficulty due to their low English proficiency. Therefore, learning English writing becomes important for university students.

Through my teaching experiences, it is interesting to find that female students write better than male students in English writing. Consistently, Lee (1996) supports the fact that boys and girls perform differently in class. He found that while boys talk, girls write. Each of the girls in his study wrote more and wrote better than any of the boys. Besides, the literature dealing with language function and brain also arouses my interests in conducting this study. Dingwall (1998) suggested that men and women tend to function differently in their brain. He concluded that language function may be more organized in women.

To date, most empirical studies have mainly concentrated on describing the differences on students' conversational speech (Aukrust, 2008; Huang, 1999; Li, 2004; Yan, 2000). Only some authors concerned gender differences in writing, but most of studies were done from the literary works (Kintz, 1987; Shapiro, 1986; Wong, 2004). Obviously, the subjects in the literacy works were restricted to professional female and male writers. Few studies looked at the gender differences in their natural English written data, such as ESL/EFL written performance. Although Huang (2000) tried to analyze the written data from the four popular newspapers in Taiwan, the main focus in her study

was the conversational dialogues from the short stories of the newspapers. Kann (2001) mainly promoted on-line writing instruction in her study and investigated the gender differences on computer literacy, attitudes toward writing instruction, and their on-line writing performance.

In the field of Sociolinguistics, many studies have been conducted to investigate the gender differences in conversational styles in Taiwan. Less attention has been given to the gender differences of writing performance. Therefore, this study aimed to find out gender differences in students' English writing in terms of their amount of writing, their writing performance and their writing performance of different genres.

The subjects of the study were 70 non-English major undergraduates (35 males and 35 females) from a national university in southern Taiwan. All the subjects had to write four English paragraph-writing tasks, including one pre-writing test, two writing tests, and one post-writing test. In this study, the four writing tests represented four different writing genres. The four genres were the cause-effect paragraph in the pre-writing test, the comparison paragraph and descriptive paragraph, and the narrative paragraph in the post-writing test. The subjects' writing pieces were scored based on five analytic criteria, including content, organization, grammar, diction, and mechanics.

In terms of writing quantity, the results showed that female students wrote more than male students in all four writing tests. In particular, there were significant gender difference in the amount of writing for the descriptive paragraph and the total amount of writing for four writing tests. The finding corresponded with Lee's (1996) study in which he found that each girl consistently wrote more than any of the boys on writing assignments. The results also supported my observation. In my previous teaching experiences, female students often wrote more and took more organized records of their written works than male students. Thus, it could be concluded that female students tend to write more than male students.

Regarding the writing quality, female students wrote better than male students in both the total scores and the analytic scores of English writing. However, the results showed that the difference was not statistically significant. Nevertheless, the results do not support Kann's studies. In 2001, Kann indicated that girl students performed significantly better than boy students in terms of content, organization, grammar, and diction. Still, it was beyond the scope of the current study to draw

a concrete conclusion on gender differences in English writing performance. Therefore, further larger scale research can investigate the effect of gender on this issue.

In order to have a better understanding for the subjects' writing performance, the subjects' improvement from the pre-writing test to the post-writing test was further examined. In the pre-writing test, male students wrote slightly better than female ones. On the contrary, female students wrote much better than male students in the post-writing test. The results of t-test indicated that female students showed significantly greater improvement than male students after English writing instruction. It may conclude that female students acquired English writing better than male students.

To investigate the subjects' differences in English writing performance of different genres, I found that male students performed slightly better than female ones in the cause-effect paragraph and comparison paragraph. On the contrary, female students wrote much better than male students in the descriptive paragraph and narrative paragraph. In addition, statistically significant difference existed in the descriptive paragraph. These findings corresponded with some previous studies. In Goldberg and Roswell (2002) study, they concluded that girls were better at describing the worlds in texts than boys. Girls were more likely to use their own observations and experiences to construct meanings. On the other hand, boys were good at debating and reasoning.

Since the results showed that gender differences existed in English writing, EFL Language teachers could use the results as diagnostic information to provide appropriate assistances toward different gender to facilitate learning. EFL Language teachers could further understand students' weaknesses and help solve their learning problems.

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## Investigating the Construct of Productive Vocabulary: comparing different measures

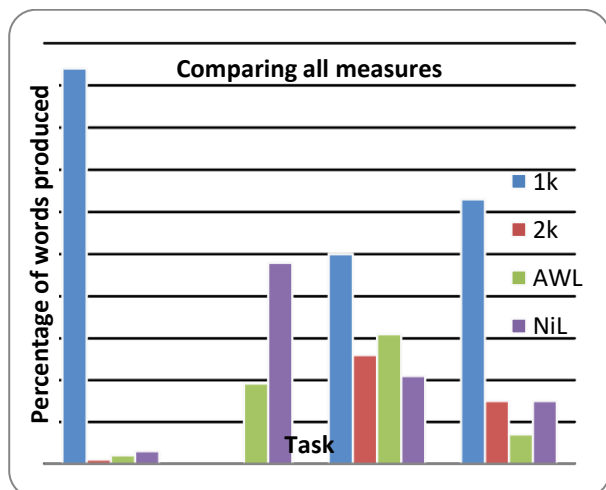
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This paper reports on a study designed to investigate the productive vocabulary construct. The study compares findings from four measures of productive vocabulary: Meara and Fitzpatrick's (2000) Lex30, Laufer and Nation's (1995) Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP), the productive version of their Vocabulary Levels Test (PLT) (1999), and an additional Brainstorm Frequency Profile (BFP) test. All four tests are based on the idea of using word frequencies.

80 Japanese L1 learners of English took part in the study and completed all four tests. A huge variation in strength of correlation between the test scores suggests that the tests may be measuring different aspects of knowledge in spite of the fact that the published tests claim to be valid measures of "productive vocabulary". The graph below, showing the percentage of words produced according to four frequency bands, appears to highlight the view that the subjects responded to each task in a different way.



A close examination of each of the measures raises several issues, the most important of which appears to be that different test tasks call on quite different aspects of lexical competence. Indeed, concomitant demands on a subject's grammatical competence and on receptive knowledge suggest that productive vocabulary is not being assessed in isolation here. A more detailed examination of the measures suggests that the lexical activation

process for each is quite different, and the tests cannot, therefore, be considered to measure the same thing.

The Lexical Frequency Profile (LFP) task appears to elicit a great proportion of function words and grammatical knowledge. The prompt for the Brainstorm Frequency Profile (BFP) task was the same as the LFP, and subjects brainstormed their responses to the BFP question. The BFP task appeared to elicit more varied vocabulary compared to the LFP. The Productive Levels Test (PLT) demands grammatical knowledge of items provided in the gloss sentences, which one might expect of a sentence completion task. Compared to both tasks, the word association task Lex30 appears to elicit no grammatical knowledge and makes a minimal call on subjects' semantic knowledge. Consequently, Lex30 appears more likely to test for productive vocabulary exclusively when compared to the contextual constraints of the LFP and PLT.

While these results suggest it is inconvenient for those wishing to assess vocabulary knowledge of learners in a straightforward way, they potentially offer a valuable insight into the usefulness and validity of the productive vocabulary construct.

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# Examining the Discursive Construction of 'Newmannism' in British Men's Magazines' Problem Pages

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## Introduction

Taking men's magazines' problem pages as an arena for masculinity construction in present-day Britain (Benwell, 2003), this piece means to examine the discursive construction of so-called 'newmannism' as a distinctive subject position in the 'gendered discourses' (Sunderland, 2004) on masculinity articulated in British men's lifestyle magazines' problem pages. In particular, we attempt to cast light on the processes whereby contemporary discourses on masculinity in the UK are articulated through interactions taking shape in specific genres like the men's magazine.

From a methodological perspective, a case study is undertaken consisting of the empirical analysis of the construction of the 'new man' in a problem page from *Later* magazine<sup>3</sup>. Fairclough's (1989, 1992, 1995, 2003) 'socio-cultural-change-and-change-in-discourse' CDA framework in employed to this regard. For CDA attempts to unveil identity-construction processes (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak and Meyer, 2001), 'identity' (Wetherell, 1996; Petersen, 1998; Hall, 2000) and 'gender' (Butler, 1990; van Zoonen, 1992) being accordingly herein conceived of as constructed in and through discourse.

## Case study results: constructing the 'new man' in the problem page, from text to interaction

This contribution is based on the analysis of the following problem page, published in *Later* magazine in September, 1999 (p26):

*Q: My girlfriend told me that I spend more time in front of the mirror and worrying about how I look than she does. She says it's a real turn off that I'm so vain. But I know she also likes the fact that I look good, so what's the problem?*

## THE EXPERT

*A: Your problem can be broken down into two parts. First, maybe your girlfriend likes you looking good, but not if you make too much of a fuss about it. This leads onto the second part of the problem. Are you making yourself look good for her or for yourself? The sad part of the story of Narcissus was that by falling in love with his reflection he was condemned to isolation. Many women give up on narcissistic men as they feel that they can never love them as much as they love themselves. So be warned.*

At a strictly textual level, lexis evidences the construction of men's concerns over personal looks (e.g. *spend more time in front of the mirror; worrying about how I look; look good*); male narcissism (e.g. *vain; narcissistic men; the story of Narcissus; falling in love with his reflection; love themselves*); and its negative results (*problem; a real turn off; make too much of a fuss; condemned to isolation*). The narcissistic reader is accordingly constructed as 'identified' participant of relational process (e.g. *...how I look...; ...I'm so vain; ...the fact that I look good; ...you looking good; ...making yourself look good...?*). Not surprisingly, this man's behaviour is justified on account of his partners' desires, which represents the girlfriend as 'sayer' of verbal processes (e.g. *...told me...; She says...*) and 'senser' of mental ones (e.g. *...she also likes...; ...likes you ...*).

Through modality markers, the counsellor questions the reader's attitude on account of his girlfriend's likes (e.g. *First, maybe your girlfriend likes you looking good, but not...*). In fact, from a cohesive viewpoint, comparative connectors manifest the competitiveness in the couple over personal looks concerns (e.g. *... I spend more time...than she does; ...they can never love them as much as they love themselves*). Also, adversative *but* hints at the hindrances of an excessive narcissism in men (e.g. *She says it's a real turn off that I'm so vain. But I also know...; ...your girlfriend likes you looking good but not if...; etc.*). Lexical repetition similarly stresses male narcissism as highly conflictive for life in couple (e.g. *problem* [three times]; *girlfriend* [twice]; *look good* [three times]).

These textual features contribute to shaping a discursive practice where a subject position is

<sup>3</sup> The so-called 'new man' is often taken to be "the ideal partner for the modern, liberated, heterosexual woman, [...] a softer, more sensitive and caring individual, who

also avoids sexist language, changes nappies and loves to shop all day for his own clothes" (Edley and Wetherell, 1997: 204).

projected amongst magazine readers constructing men as highly worried about personal appearance. Based on the problem-page generic conventions, this type of discourse incorporates features of media discourse, which accounts for the massive distribution of this variety of counselling discourse. Through the interaction between the individual reader writing in, *Later* magazine's counsellor, the section's editorial board and the plurality of magazine consumers, reading the magazine becomes an identity-negotiation process for men as magazine consumers. Admittedly, in drawing upon the characteristic schema of problem pages as a genre, magazine readers come to comprehend men's relation with personal looks as problematic.

Negative statements presuppose the existence of men excessively preoccupied with personal appearance (e.g. *Maybe your girlfriend likes you looking good, but not if you make too much of a fuss about it: ...they feel they can never love them as much as they love themselves*). Besides, the intertextual allusion to Narcissus by the counsellor produces an apparent flouting of the maxim of relevance, the reader thereby drawing the implicature that the same may apply to himself. Directives contribute to making the reader aware of his narcissistic behaviour in this respect (e.g. *So be warned*), although mitigation devices on the part of the counsellor trigger the use of indirect speech acts (e.g. *Are you making yourself look good for her or for yourself?*).

### Discussion and conclusions: 'newmannism' as a socio-cultural practice

The underlying ideology in the type of discourse of problem pages like this is consistent with the ideological apparatus of the 'new man', and his "sanctioning of a highly staged narcissism through the codes of dress and grooming" (Nixon, 1996: 202), which is part of the wider cultural practices of representation of masculinity in British popular-culture artefacts within the social matrix of hegemonic-masculinity crisis resulting from feminist challenges and the impact of consumerism upon men.

**This individual analysis has allowed for the thorough examination of identity-construction processes in specific discourse genres, where textual features are clearly determined by socio-cultural practices and contribute to their constitution as well. The potential of CDA for analysing the discursive construction of gender identities is thus substantiated on the whole.**

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# An Analysis of Second Language Acquisition by Non-Native Speakers of Japanese

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## Introduction

People have to acquire not only grammar but also pragmatic competence and different cultural values that accompany the language when they learn their second language. How do people acquire their additional language? Which elements do people acquire first and which elements do people have difficulty learning?

This study is an attempt to investigate the acquisition of a second language by non-native speakers of Japanese, focusing on the acquisition of grammatical elements in conversational interaction. The study will shed light on the process of second language acquisition from syntactic perspective. This will be done by analysing the conversations of speakers at different stages of their second language acquisition and comparing their conversation with native speakers of Japanese. It will consider how the way the speakers use the different patterns correlates to their level of ability in their non-native language. When studying how people acquire their second language, this study attempted to identify which elements people acquire first and which elements prove to be more difficult to acquire.

## Data of conversational interaction

The data in this study consists of naturally-occurring interactions videotaped and transcribed in which pairs talk about given topics freely in Japanese. Speakers are bilingual in both English and Japanese, and are either:

- (1) English native speakers who live in the United States and have experience of studying Japanese, or
- (2) English native speakers (from the United States, Britain, Canada and New Zealand) who live in Japan.

The conversation data is divided into three, according to the level of second language acquisition and the length of time they have studied

Japanese and by the length of time they have lived in Japan.

The levels are:

### 1. Elementary level

Speakers who can use simple Japanese expressions and use easy daily expressions and / or have studied Japanese less than 2 years and speakers who have lived in Japan less than 1 year

### 2. Intermediate level

Speakers who have no problems in daily conversation in Japanese and have lived in Japan for several years

### 3. Advanced level

Speakers who have the same level of Japanese, or close to, Japanese native speakers and have lived in Japan for more than 10 years

## Analyses

In observing the communication patterns of non-native speakers of Japanese at different levels of acquisition, this study indicated that different processes of acquisition exist in grammatical elements, such as (1) the use of post-positional particles, and (2) the use of complex sentences that contain a subordinate clause.

### Postpositional Particle

[I] Grammatical mistakes in using postpositional particles.

#### Example (1)

watashi ha, Nihon de, Nihongo **ga** benkyo shima su.  
[wo]

In analysing videotaped conversation data, advanced level speakers of Japanese seldom make mistakes in using “postpositional particles” such as “ga”, “wa” “wo” and “ni” except for small mistakes. However, as seen in this example, non-advanced speakers of Japanese often made mistakes when using these. Perhaps unsurprisingly, incorrect usage was most common amongst elementary-level speakers, with fewer mistakes made by intermediate level speakers. In example (1), the speaker is using the postpositional particle “ga” (the nominative case), where he should have used “wo” (the objective case).

#### [II] Deletion of postpositional particles

The elementary level speakers often failed to use postpositional particle at all.

#### Example (2)

Watashi to tomodachi ha, France [X] sunde ima su.  
[ni]

In example (2), the speaker failed to use postpositional particle “ni” (meaning “to”).

### [III] Self-correction

Speakers sometimes realized their mistakes when using postpositional particles and corrected themselves.

#### Example (3)

Nihongo wo, no kurasu ga aru.

As can be seen in this example, speakers corrected themselves by replacing the underlined expression with the word surrounded by the square.

### *Complex sentences & Simple sentences*

The elementary level speakers of Japanese tended to use more simple sentences than complex ones, whereas advanced speakers use much more complex expressions.

### **Conjunctives**

The advanced level speakers of Japanese often used complex sentences. They sometimes made mistakes when they used conjunctives connecting a subordinate clause to the main clause, as is shown in the following examples.

#### Example (4)

u-n... sou ne, suteru ha, mono wo suteru [X] ha muzukashii.  
[no]

As observed in this example, the advanced level speaker failed to use “no” when they connected the subordinate clause to the main clause.

We can say that this grammatical element may be difficult even for advanced level speakers.

### **Discussion**

Considering these examples, this study indicated there are notable differences in the process of second language acquisition by non-native speakers of Japanese, according to their level of ability.

### *Post-positional particles*

It was observed that elementary level speakers of Japanese often make grammatical mistakes in using post-positional particles when they speak Japanese and that they sometimes, incorrectly, omit them. The study also revealed that speakers gradually acquire the correct use of post-positional particles. The longer the speaker had studied Japanese, the more likely they were to realize mistakes when using them and correct themselves. Advanced learners of Japanese were using post-positional particles correctly in most cases, except for some minor mistakes.

### *Complex sentences*

The elementary level speakers of Japanese tend to use more simple sentences than complex sentences, whereas speakers who have lived in Japan and studied Japanese for many years use more complex sentences. The study also found that not only elementary level speakers but also advanced learners sometimes make mistakes when using conjunctives, connecting a subordinate clause to a main clause and when using quotations between clauses.

### **Conclusion**

This study revealed that different processes of second language acquisition exist for different grammatical elements, such as (1) the use of post-positional particles, and (2) the use of complex sentences that contain a subordinate clause. The study demonstrated that students of Japanese gradually learn the correct use of post-positional particles according to their level of acquisition. It also revealed some common difficulties encountered when learning the correct grammar used to connect clauses.





# Examining the Pragmatic Competence of Greek Cypriot Learners of English in Oral Requests – A comparison with American native speakers

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## Introduction

As an investigation of the speech act performance of L2 learners, this study lies within the field of Interlanguage Pragmatics. It compares the requesting performance of a number of Cypriot EFL learners with that of American English native speakers, with the aim of revealing any deviations from native speakers' (NSs) performance as far as strategy directness and request modification is concerned.

Empirical descriptions of how learners perform everyday requests in English as a foreign language can help teachers to guide students towards a more native-like pragmatic behaviour and increased cultural competence. The study therefore focuses on foreign (EFL) rather than second (ESL) language speakers by examining the requestive production of Greek Cypriot (GC) university students who live in Cyprus and have never lived in an English-speaking environment. Such EFL learners, unlike ESL learners, do not have the same pressure of making themselves understood, establishing and maintaining smooth relationships with native speakers in the host environment (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei 1998).

Most research, so far, has concentrated on investigating the pragmatics of *advanced* non-native speakers rather than speakers of *lower* language levels. This study examines the performance of lower intermediate EFL learners and aims to make a contribution to this understudied area. Following the argument by Bardovi-Harlig that 'although grammatical competence may not be a sufficient condition for pragmatic development, it may be a necessary condition' (1999: 677), this study also examines the effect that the learners' limited linguistic ability has on their pragmatic performance and more specifically on the internal and external request modification.

A few studies have so far concentrated on the pragmatic performance of Greek speakers (see for example Economidou-Koetsidis 2005, Pavlidou 1994, 1997, Sifianou 1992, Tannen 1981), yet very few studies examined the performance of Greek Cypriot speakers (Terkourafi 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005). The Greek Cypriot speech community offers particular interest as it can be characterised as diglossic (or bidialectal). Greek Cypriots 'use the Greek Cypriot dialect (GCD) throughout their daily activities but code-switch into Standard Modern Greek (SMG) in certain situations' (Papapavlou & Pavlou 2005:16). No study, to my knowledge, has so far examined the interlanguage production of Greek Cypriot EFL learners. The present study aims to also contribute to this understudied area.

## Method of Data Collection and Subjects

### Subjects

Subjects comprised 14 Greek Cypriot (henceforth GC) learners and 17 American native speakers (NSs). The GC learners were full-time first-year students at the University of Nicosia in Cyprus, all doing various Bachelor degrees. The American NSs were also full-time university students at various universities of the USA, and were spending one semester at the University of Nicosia as exchange students. The age of the learner group ranged from 18-22. Similarly, the age of the native speaker group ranged from 18-21.

The GC learners had lower intermediate English language proficiency. Their proficiency was assessed by means of an in-house computerised placement English test and they were attending an intensive English course of 6 hours a week.

### Data collection

The data from learners and native speakers were collected by means of interactive role-play, a method frequently employed in empirical studies of pragmatics (see for example Felix-Brasdefer 2008, Hassall 2001, 2003, Kasper & Dahl 1991). The subjects were asked to role-play 5 different scenarios with an English native speaker. Their dialogues were then audio-taped and transcribed. The social situations role-played were as follows:

- Asking professor to borrow book (situation 1)
- Asking professor for a lift home. (situation 2)
- Asking a friend for lecture notes (situation 3)
- Asking for menus at the restaurant (situation 4)
- Giving an order at the restaurant (situation 5)

The social situations varied by design according to low/high distance, low/high social power, low/high imposition.

## Preliminary Results and Discussion

As this study is still ongoing, these results are only preliminary and need to be confirmed with further analysis and statistical testing. However, it can already be observed that both groups share the same preference for conventionally indirect requests, and more specifically for query preparatory requests ('can you'/'could you...'). It could be argued that in the case of the GC learners this seems to be the result of pedagogical instruction, as the use of 'can you/could' is taught as the typical way in which requests are performed.

Despite this similarly, learners have so far been found to use direct requests more frequently, strongly favouring 'want statements'. Such want statements are also mostly unmodified (e.g. '*I want one book...erh.....for...for my (long pause) project*'). This tendency on the part of the GC learners is in line with other learners who were also found to prefer the use 'want statements' in order to restore clarity to discourse (Hassall 2003). Another possible explanation might be L1 transfer, as Greek speakers have been found to favour higher request directness in previous studies (Economidou-Kogetsidis 2005, Sifianou 1992).

Regarding the modification of requests, results so far show that the NS group invests more on external modification through the use of grounders and 'discourse orientations moves' (Economidou-Kogetsidis & Woodfield 2007), and primarily on internal modification through the use of consultative devices ('would you mind', 'do you think', 'would it be all right if', 'is it/would it be possible', 'do you think I could...', 'is it all right?') and the use of subjectivisers ('I'm afraid', 'I wonder', 'I think/suppose'). GC learners' query preparatory requests, on the other hand are, by-and-large, unsoftened and therefore have a blunt effect (e.g. '*Can I ...can you get me ...erh.....to my home?*').

These results relating to the learners' underuse of internal modification are consistent with findings from other studies which also supply evidence that intermediate and advanced learners modify their requests less frequently than native speakers (e.g., Economidou-Kogetsidis 2008, 2009, Harlow 1990, House and Kasper 1987, Otçu and Zeyrek 2006, Trosborg 1995, Woodfield 2007). In explaining this finding, appeals may be made to the extra processing effort required to add complex

structures to bare head acts (Trosborg 1995) and to the linguistic competence required in internal modification (Bardovi-Harlig 1999). The latter can be particularly true for this specific group of learners who had low English language proficiency. Learners' interlanguage was characterised by constantly halting and hesitant delivery, frequent serious errors of grammar and syntax, and long pauses when 'stuck' for essential vocabulary. Many of the learners' requests were also poorly aligned to the ongoing discourse. Bardovi-Harlig (1999) makes the point that for a number of devices such as hedges and understaters, a speaker must have enough syntax to properly position them in the sentence and learners need knowledge of the complements that particular formulas take. This also agrees with Sasaki's (1998:471) argument that the lack of linguistic development in the Japanese EFL learners in her study was the result of the restricted range of internal modification strategies supplied in their English requesting behaviour.

## Conclusion

The present study aims to investigate the pragmatic performance of Greek Cypriot EFL learners in everyday requests. It examines how their performance differs from American NSs' performance, as far as strategy selection and request mitigation is concerned and investigates the extent to which the learners' limited grammatical ability and low language proficiency level have an effect on their pragmatic performance.

Although this study is still ongoing and the results presented here must be treated as tentative, it is so far apparent that despite the subjects' common preference for conventionality in requests, the learner group employs a higher number of bald-on-record requests. In addition, the learners seem to fail to adequately internally and externally modify their requests something which consequently has a blunt effect on their requests. It is argued that the GC learners' low proficiency in English has a direct effect on their pragmatic ability and, more specifically, on their requesting performance.

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## **Why Applied Linguistics is not Enough. Contemporary early foreign language learning policy in Europe: a critical analysis**

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This paper questions why research in applied linguistics appears to have substantially failed to influence the growth of state policies for early foreign language learning across Europe. It proposes that a bottom-up process of societal pressure appears to have found a willing partner in the form of a top-down initiative for covert subsidiarity operating at a European level to promote the increasingly earlier start of foreign language learning (ELL) in state school systems across the nation states of the European Union (EU). In this process, the voices of applied linguists have held little sway.

This shift is strongly supported by a series of EU publications prioritising the importance of an early start, summarised by the EU Report on the Action Plan 2004-06 (European Communities, 2007, p9) which confirmed that, increasingly, “the trend is to start a second language (whether a foreign or minority language or a language with co-official status) earlier, generally in the first three years of primary education”, although there is some evidence of continuing movement towards an even earlier start (Enever, 2008, p30). In this response, we can identify the EU adopting a role whereby, as Borg & Mayo (2005, p207) have described, it has become “the one supranational organisation [globally] that has the power to influence the educational policies of sovereign states”. Such evidence suggests a move away from the concept of subsidiarity, a principle that acknowledges the autonomy of each EU nation state over its national language policy in education.

Research in the field of early language learning has been somewhat contradictory on the potential benefits of an early start, in schooled learning contexts. A recent substantial review of relevant research (Edelenbos *et al*, 2006, p147) noted that: “An early start by itself [...] guarantees nothing; it needs to be accompanied minimally by good teaching, by a supportive environment and by continuity from one year to the next...” This review reflects emerging evidence from an on-going longitudinal study of ELL in state schools across seven European countries (ELLiE 2007-

2010) which is already revealing the difficulties of maintaining continuity of quality in some contexts. The following summary briefly pinpoints some early indicators.

An initial analysis of policy in the seven ELLiE study countries from the perspective of cross-cutting themes (Spolsky 2004, p15) suggests evidence of supranational influences in the choice of a start age of 6-8 years for all seven study contexts. Further evidence of uniformity appears in policy documentation which strongly reflects the descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), with the noted exception of Croatia (currently an EU applicant country). This finding is particularly surprising considering that CEFR descriptors were formulated on a base of the language use of young adults (Fulcher, 2008)

Johnstone (forthcoming) critiques use of the CEFR noting that “the assumed linearity of such scales does not equate to how learners actually learn language”, further reporting that children’s progress in ELL, “...is not akin to climbing a ladder” (p9). In identifying this cross-cutting theme as evidence of supranational policy impact, within a climate of global forces at work it appears that in six of the seven countries studied a priority has been what Grin (2002) describes as “external efficiency” related to economic issues whilst ignoring evidence of non-linearity in ELL. Croatia has proved to be a noteworthy exception to this pattern.

Similarly, the choice of first FL in the seven study contexts also appears related to language economy. With the obvious exception of England, English is overwhelmingly the first choice. This reflects published data (Eurydice network, 2008) which reports English to be the first choice of 90% of EU language learners in schools.

Evidence from the ELLiE study (ELLiE 2008) on teacher qualifications and national frameworks for teacher development reveals a substantially more mixed pattern. Whilst all countries appear to value a model whereby the class teacher teaches the full curriculum, including the FL, only three of the study contexts fully reflect this pattern (Sweden, Netherlands, Spain). The remaining four contexts (England, Poland, Croatia, Italy) vary in their provision of both generalist and specialist FL teachers according to local availability. Whilst some evidence of supranational policy may be identified here, both national histories of pedagogy and the high economic costs may limit potential for implementation and sustainability over time.

The research briefly summarised here indicates the importance of adopting a multidisciplinary approach to the study of ELL policy, not relying only on applied linguistics, but also drawing on the fields of education, social policy and economics.

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# Applied Linguistics and the ELT Profession

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## Introduction

Applied linguistics is by definition linguistics applied for some purpose. One of those purposes is to understand how foreign or second languages are learnt, and how that learning may be supported and enhanced by the intervention of teachers (Widdowson 1990: 6, Yule 2006: 237). This is also the concern of organizations dedicated to the professionalization of English language teaching (ELT), such as ACELS in Ireland. This paper explains how one view of professionalism can help define roles and responsibilities for teaching and research.

## Professionalism

Professionalism in language teaching is variously understood as being highly qualified (for example Pennington 1992), or engaged in professional development (for example Richards and Farrell 2005), or as expertise informed by reflective experience (for example Tsui 2003). All of these approaches focus on qualities and characteristics of the teacher rather than the purposes of teaching. The concept of professionalism in this paper is one based on the accountable delivery of expert services (Farmer, 2006). ELT professionals, in this model, are required to provide a complete learning support service, a significant part of which is linguistic in nature. One problem which ELT shares with other teaching disciplines is that teachers train teachers to do what teachers do. However well read teacher trainers are, or however good the research they read, or however good their intentions, they are working in a closed loop where they are not accountable to anyone outside their own group. Teachers are constantly required, by the nature of their work, to make decisions and take independent action which affects their learners. Other professionals such as architects and medical doctors earn the right to make independent professional judgements by accepting responsibility for how things turn out, even though there is rarely enough scientifically validated knowledge available to the practitioner to cover all aspects of each client's or patient's problem. Professional judgements are evaluated in the courts, where society, through the legal system,

decides whether something the professional did or did not do caused harm to someone, and how much. These verdicts feed back into professional education and development to reduce the vulnerability of clients to professional errors and at the same time reduce the vulnerability of professionals to court action. It is not suggested that professional teachers should in fact be vulnerable to court actions for incompetent teaching, but that they should behave as if they were.

## Professionalism in language teaching

The value of taking a professional approach to language teaching is that the findings of the research literature can be integrated with practice in a responsible way that protects learners from teaching ideas that are inadequately formulated or tested, while ensuring that defensible actions are taken to support learning and to prevent or minimize undesirable outcomes. In this context, defensible action means the kind of action that may seem reasonable or necessary in the circumstances to a judge hearing a (hypothetical) case for professional negligence or incompetence. Teaching actions will be expected to be informed by applied linguistics research where such research is available and relevant. Similarly, although research may not determine appropriate action, what a teacher does or does not do should not conflict with the findings of relevant research. The rest of the teacher's actions will be expected to conform to locally and socially defined norms of the appropriate use of authority and responsibility in managing the student's learning. Here teachers may find more support from their professional organizations than from linguistic sciences, provided these professional organizations are constituted in such a way as to support learners' rights to be fully supported in their learning as well as to defend competent practitioners.

## Applied linguistics in language teaching

Applied linguists, for their part, need to maintain scientific detachment in doing and reporting research. It is less important to teachers that research is obviously relevant to teaching than that findings are carefully presented and that the significance of results is not exaggerated. Where issues such as learner autonomy or educational technology, for instance, are researched mainly by those who wish to show that it works, there may be a lack of the necessary rigour and impartiality. The view of professionalism presented in this paper calls for comprehensive knowledge of what to do as well as how to do it, backed by research where

appropriate. Applied linguistics as a resource for teachers can contribute to both these areas, clarifying what has to be done as well as how to do it. In the area of knowing what to do, a willingness to take on problems of a philosophical and political nature and examine them with rigour and impartiality is required. In the area of knowing how to do it, we need to know who may be helped, who may be harmed, how much and under what circumstances in relation to individual actions or approaches adopted by teachers. This requires clinical trials in well documented culture specific contexts, and more universally applicable results may or may not be obtained. Classroom research carried out by teachers is a possible way of doing clinical trials, provided the teacher has an appropriate research orientation, but this research needs to be clearly distinguished from the description, analysis and corrective action that characterizes action research associated with classroom problems in a professional context. Both forms of research are rigorous in their own terms, but while clinical trials have the objective of generating knowledge, action research has the objective of protecting students from harm and protecting teachers from accusations of negligence.

## Conclusion

There is common ground between applied linguistics and professional language teaching, but there are also areas where the concerns of each discipline diverge. While applied linguistics research rarely generates appropriate teaching actions in a professional sense, it is fundamental for validating and improving them.

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# Beyond the Academic Word List: providing ESP learners with the words they *really* need

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## Introduction

Providing learners of English for Specific Purposes with the language necessary for their studies to a large extent means giving them the *words* they need. This paper reports on a study which aims to quantify the vocabulary required by students of pharmacology. The findings are of special interest, as the medical field, notorious for its “difficult” lexis, has largely been neglected in work of this kind.

Previous studies have had some success in creating specialised word lists which can help ESP learners reach satisfactory levels of reading comprehension (e.g., Baker, 1988, Farrell, 1990, Salager, 1983, Sutarsyah, Nation and Kennedy, 1994, Konstantakis, 2006, and Fraser, 2007). It has been suggested (Laufer, 1989, 1992; Hirsh and Nation, 1992) that a lexical coverage of 95% in a text is the threshold for learners to achieve adequate reading comprehension. Specialised word lists are usually learned in conjunction with general purpose and academic word lists in order to reach this kind of coverage. However, there are some doubts as to the efficiency of this approach: Chen and Ge (2007), for instance, found that many high frequency academic words are seldom used in medical research articles, which means that learners may spend a lot of time on words they don't need to know.

The method adopted here, therefore, was to construct a single list based on frequency and range which does not distinguish between general, academic, and specialised vocabulary, and to determine the coverage that different frequency levels provide. Ward (1999) was able to create a 2,000-word family vocabulary list that provided over 95% coverage of engineering texts, and I wondered if this could be done for a medical discipline such as pharmacology.

## Creating a pharmacology word list

A specially created corpus of 100 pharmacology research articles (360,000 running words) taken

from a wide international selection of pharmacology journals was used to construct a list of 2,000 word families based on frequency and range. A frequency list of words in the Pharmacology Corpus was produced using Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 1999), and the words in the list expanded into their word families (level 6, Bauer and Nation, 1993). Words had to appear in at least two articles (the vast majority appeared in far more than this). The resulting Pharmacology Word List (PWL) was run against Nation's RANGE computer program (available at <http://www.wuw.ac.nz/lals/>) to determine its coverage of the pharmacology corpus.

Tables 1 and 2 show that this list gives a far higher coverage of various pharmacology corpora than does a 2,000-word general word list (West's General Service List) coupled with the 570-word Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000).

Word list	Coverage of corpus (%)
Most frequent 1,000 words (GSL)	56.5
2 <sup>nd</sup> most frequent words (GSL)	4.5
Academic Word List	9.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70.5</b>

**Table 1: Coverage of the Pharmacology Corpus by the most frequent 2,000 words and the Academic Word List**

Word list	Coverage of corpus (%)
Most frequent 1,000 words (PWL)	82.3
2 <sup>nd</sup> most frequent words (PWL)	6.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89.1</b>

**Table 2: Coverage of the Pharmacology Corpus by the Pharmacology Word List**

In order to see whether this level of coverage could be replicated using different pharmacology corpora, the RANGE program was run on a 60,000-word corpus created from a pharmacology textbook (*Medical Pharmacology at a Glance*, Neal, 2003), and on a 266,000-word corpus extracted from the web using the WebBootCat toolkit (Baroni and Bernadini, 2004). The coverage figures of well over 80% for both these corpora are very respectable (see Table 3), supporting the general applicability and validity of the list.

<b>Corpus</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> 1,000 Words (%)</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> 1,000 Words (%)</b>	<b>All 2,000 Words (%)</b>
Pharmacology	82.3	6.8	89.1
Pharm. textbook	78.7	7.6	85.3
Pharm. BootCat	74.3	7.6	81.9

**Table 3: Coverage of other pharmacology corpora by the Pharmacology Word List**

Sub-dividing the word lists into groups of 500 words is illuminating (see Table 4): we see that well over 70% coverage is given by as few as 500 words. It will certainly be well worth our while to focus on this group of words, especially as the next 1500 words increase coverage by only 16%. What, then, are the characteristics of these most useful words, and what kind of difficulties are they likely to present learners with?

<b>Word list</b>	<b>Coverage of corpus</b>
Most frequent 500 words	73.0%
2 <sup>nd</sup> 500 most frequent words	9.3%
3 <sup>rd</sup> 500 most frequent words	4.1%
4 <sup>th</sup> 500 most frequent words	2.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89.1%</b>

**Table 4: Coverage of the Pharmacology Corpus at different frequency levels**

Table 5 shows the most frequent 100 words in the PWL. The first ten words or so differ little from the most frequent words in a general list; then follow the words which could be said to be at the “core” of pharmacology, and tell us quite a lot about the field. Most striking, however, is the fact that most, if not all, of these words will be familiar to the layperson. This implies that many of the most frequent words will be found in general or academic lists, and this is indeed the case (see Table 6).

1 THE	19337	2 OF	15785
3 BE	12956	4 AND	11457
5 IN	10277	6 TO	7032
7 A	6266	8 WITH	3902
9 FOR	3461	10 THAT	3010
11 BY	2756	12 THIS	2663
13 AS	2279	14 ET AL	2087
15 ON	1979	16 EFFECT	1827
17 OR	1753	18 FROM	1752
19 ACTIVITY	1727	20 AT	1716
21 STUDY	1674	22 USE	1647
23 CELL	1429	24 AN	1308
25 RECEPTOR	1303	26 INCREASE	1260
27 NOT	1180	28 IT	1156
29 TREATMENT	1125	30 INHIBITION	1118
31 SHOW	1040	32 CONCENTRATION	1039
33 RESPONSE	1037	34 FIGURE	1024
35 INDUCE	1024	36 DRUG	988
37 PATIENT	987	38 DOSE	935
39 SIGNIFICANT	915	40 DAY	911
41 RAT	909	42 LEVEL	835
43 CONTROL	830	44 RESULT	822

45 DIFFERENT	803	46 WHICH	799
47 MG	789	48 OUR	759
49 ALSO	757	50 EXPRESSION	738
51 HIGH	724	52 AFTER	711
53 PRESENT	706	54 DATA	697
55 GROUP	663	56 NO	663
57 PROTEIN	651	58 CALCIUM	650
59 MAY	647	60 RELATE	643
61 HUMAN	633	62 BETWEEN	630
63 ANALYSIS	624	64 MOUSE	621
65 COMPARE	616	66 MODEL	603
67 THAN	598	68 EXPERIMENT	595
69 THEIR	584	70 FUNCTION	578
71 OTHER	575	72 BASE	563
73 DEPENDENT	561	74 PRODUCE	560
75 MIN	558	76 BOTH	556
77 LOW	549	78 TIME	537
79 REDUCE	533	80 BUT	527
81 THERAPY	517	82 TEST	514
83 FIND	510	84 ALL	503
85 MEAN	497	86 ADDITION	495
87 REPORT	484	88 OBSERVE	482
89 ADMINISTRATION	472	90 STIMULATION	472
91 ASSOCIATE	465	92 SUGGEST	459
93 MEASURE	458	94 EACH	455
95 REGULATION	455	96 DO	452
97 INDICATE	449	98 BLOOD	448
99 VARIOUS	448	100 FOLLOW	446

**Table 5: The top 100 words in the Pharmacology Word List and frequency of occurrence**

1 ACTIVITY**	2 ADDITION	3 AGE
4 ASSOCIATE**	5 BASE**	6 BLOOD
7 COMPARE	8 CONTROL**	9 CHANGE
10 DEPENDENT**	11 DEERMINE	12 DIFFERENT
13 EFFECT**	14 EXPERIMENT*	15 EXPRESSION**
16 FIGURE**	17 FIND	18 FOLLOW
19 GROUP	20 HIGH	21 HUMAN
22 INCLUDE	23 INCREASE	24 LOW
25 MEAN**	26 MEASUE	27 MIN
28 MODEL**	29 MOUSE	30 PATIENT*
31 PRESENT**	32 PRODUCE	33 RAT
34 REDUCE**	35 RELATE	36 REPORT*
37 RESULT*	38 SHOW	39 STUDY*
40 SUGGEST	41 TEST	42 TREATMENT**
43 USE	44 VALUE**	45 VARIOUS

\* “Lay-technical” words with a technical flavour, but likely to be known by the layperson

\*\* “Cryptotechnical” words which have an additional, more specialised meaning

**Table 6: “General” words in the top 100**

When we look closely at the words that are also found in general lists, we see that a sizeable proportion of them have technical meanings in addition to their commonly-known meanings: we might label these polysemous words “cryptotechnical” because their specialised meanings are, in a sense, hidden. Words such as “base” and “reduce”, for instance, have meanings in pharmacology quite removed from their general ones. Similarly, a number of the words which are found in the AWL also are used with a quite different sense in pharmacology (see Table 7).

1 ADMINISTRATION*	2 ANALYSIS
3 CHANNEL*	4 CONCENTRATION*
5 DATA	6 FUNCTION
7 INDUCE*	8 INHIBITION*
9 POTENTIAL*	10 REGULATION*
11 ROLE	12 SIGNIFICANT *

\* Cryptotechnical words

**Table 7: AWL words in the Top 100**

If we turn our attention to those high frequency words which are not found in either general lists or the AWL (Table 8), we see that perhaps only one of these words – “receptor” – is what we might call “strictly” technical; the others are mainly either lay-technical (e.g., “drug”) or cryptotechnical (e.g., “stimulation”).

1 ADDITION	2 CALCIUM*
3 CELL*	4 DOSE*
5 DRUG*	6 EFFECT**
7 ET AL	8 INDICATE**
9 MG	10 PROTEIN*
11 RECEPTOR	12 REPORT
13 STIMULATION**	14 STUDY

\* lay-technical words

\*\* cryptotechnical words

**Table 8: Words in the Top 100 not found in general lists or AWL**

Tables 9 and 10 show that many of the words that are also found in the GSL or AWL are used with a specialised meaning in pharmacology. Learners who “know” these words will not necessarily be able to use them correctly in pharmacology.

1 ADMINISTRATION	2 BIND
3 CHANNEL	4 COMPOUND
5 CONCENTRATION	6 CONTRACTION
7 CULTURE	8 DISTRIBUTION
9 INTERACTION	10 INHIBITION
11 MEDIUM	12 POTENTIAL
13 REACTION	14 REGULATION
15 RELAXATION	16 RELEASE
17 RESPONSE	18 SIGNIFICANT
19 SOLUTION	20 STABLE
21 STRESS	22 TARGET
23 TRANSPORT	24 VEHICLE

**Table 9: Cryptotechnical AWL words in the Pharmacology Top 500**

1 EFFECT	2 ACTIVITY
3 BASE	4 CONTROL
5 DEPENDENT	6 EXPRESSION
7 FIGURE	8 MEAN
9 MODEL	10 PRESENT
11 REDUCE	12 TREATMENT
13 VALUE	14 TABLE
15 ACTION	16 RATE
17 BLOCK	18 SAMPLE
19 SENSITIVE	20 TRIAL
21 PRESSURE	22 POPULATION
23 ORDER	24 RESISTANT
25 SMOOTH	26 DELIVERY
27 FAILURE	28 TERM
29 GROWTH	30 LOCAL
31 FATTY	32 ASSOCIATE

**Table 10: Cryptotechnical GSL words in the Pharmacology Top 500**

1 RECEPTOR	2 AGONIST
3 NEURON	4 ANTAGONIST
5 PLASMA	6 OXIDATION
7 ACETYLCHOLINE	8 ENZYME
9 ASSAY	10 MEMBRANE
11 SYNAPSE	12 KINETIC
13 CHLORIDE	14 TRIGLYCERIDE
15 PEPTIDE	16 VIVO
17 LIGAND	18 PGE
19 PH	20 MOLECULAR
21 OXIDE	22 SERUM
23 VASCULAR	24 ENDOTHELIUM
25 VITRO	26 ATP
27 CYTOKINE	28 OPIOID
29 MACROPHAGE	30 HYPERTENSION
31 PHYSIOLOGICAL	32 ADENOSINE
33 PLATELET	34 SUBSTRATE
35 ISCHEMIC	36 ANTIBODY
37 SUBUNIT	38 GLUTAMATE
39 KINASE	40 RENAL
41 NUCLEUS	42 PANCREAS
43 DNA	44 SALINE
45 AORTIC	46 HEPATIC
47 RENIN	48 ARTERIOLE

**Table 11: Fully Technical Words in the Top 500**

Table 11 shows, perhaps contrary to expectations, that even the fully technical words in the pharmacology list will be familiar to some extent to the layperson; they are, at least, pronounceable! This should be somewhat reassuring to the ESP teacher who lacks expert knowledge in the subject.

## Conclusion

We have seen that it is possible to create a single, manageable, list of words that will be useful to learners of a medical discipline. Coverage is short of the magic 95%, but is respectably close to 90%. What is noteworthy is that coverage of over 70% is given by as few as 500 word families, many of which are found in general lists or the Academic Word List.

The list also functions as a starting point for investigations into the characteristics of the most useful pharmacology words and the factors affecting their learnability. Importantly, a large number of frequently occurring words are found to be potentially confusing cryptotechnical words with hidden technical meaning, and surprisingly few are the strictly technical words incomprehensible to the layperson.

The findings question the usefulness of the AWL for medical ESP learners, and suggest that it is difficult to support the view that ESP vocabulary should be separated into lists of general, academic, and technical words. Rather, there should be a move away from the general towards specialisation at an early stage.

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# How to Deal with Linguistic Variation: a conceptual approach to Swiss-German youth talk

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## Introduction

The research reported here is based on a corpus of Swiss-German youth talk which is marked by a high degree of intra- and interlingual variation. In this paper the focus lies on the interlingual variation between the peers' native Swiss-German and English. As the young peers not only competently switch back and forth between Swiss-German and English but also create their own new linguistic elements, regular code-switching concepts do not capture and describe all the features of this linguistic process. In this empirically-based work I therefore use the concept of *bricolage* as a sensitizing concept.

## Data and instruments

The data I am working with is part of the project "Youth Talk in the German-speaking Part of Switzerland"<sup>4</sup> – an empirical survey of youth talk and its resources in four different dialect areas of the German-speaking part of Switzerland, methodologically following Hymes and Gumperz. The approach of using *sensitizing concepts* is based on Denzin (1989: 15) and allows the specification of a concept in a certain setting in an iterative process of data analysis, concept development and theory reception.

The focus of this paper is on the self-recorded peer group communication of one of our male "gate-keepers" at the age of 17 and five of his male peers between the ages of 17 and 19. All but one are enrolled in the academic stream of a high school. Our gate-keeper (LUT) recorded 18 hours of talk over the period of one year and I frequently met with him and some of his peers for qualitative interviews in order to validate the data and my etic analysis from an emic point of view.

<sup>4</sup> Directed by Prof. E. Werlen and funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation for 27 months. cf. [www.jugendsprache.ch](http://www.jugendsprache.ch).

<sup>5</sup> To some extent Henne, Neuland and Schlobinski et al. have described this discourse strategy on the semantic and textual level for the German youth talk in Germany.

## The concept of *bricolage*

In my analysis, I depart somewhat from Clarke's (1975: 178) notion of *bricolage*, which he used in the context of subcultural styles in Great Britain in the 80s. According to him, *bricolage* is a process of taking on elements of existing cultural styles, transforming them and recontextualizing them to give them a new meaning.<sup>5</sup> In a linguistic context and as a sensitizing concept, the process could be described as follows: taking on linguistic elements; transforming them; and creating something new through recontextualization. On the basis of my data analysis, I claim that the sensitizing concept of *bricolage* can also be very useful when describing some types of interlingual code-switching occurring quite frequently in my corpus.

## An example of *bricolage*: "neighborhoober"

In the following example, the six peers were hanging out together in the evening, listening to music on a portable phone and chatting about various things. They all seemed in a light-hearted and very good mood.

### "neighborhoober"<sup>6</sup>

HEZ: aa, das isch dii rucksack!  
HEZ: aa that's your backpack!  
SIT: ahehehe (HOHE STIMME), was hesch gmeind?  
SIT: ahehehe (LAUGHING AT HIGH PITCH), what did you think [it was]?  
HEZ: **irgendöppis <komischs>**  
HEZ: something strange  
SIT: <es marei> ischs scho nid : gar nid meine  
SIT: it's not <a mary> (a girl): don't dare think so  
LUT: hesch zwar a scho gmeind oder was?  
LUT: but you've thought so before haven't you?  
SIT: (LACHT MIT HOHER STIMME)  
SIT: (LAUGHING AT A HIGH PITCH)  
LUT: **sauhu<ber>** (NEOLOGISMUS)  
LUT: pighoo<ber> (NEOLOGISM)  
SIT: <ich?>  
SIT: <me?>  
LUT: ja  
LUT: yes  
SIT: ja de HEZ  
LUT: yes HEZ (ONE OF THE GUYS)

<sup>6</sup> snf\_jspr\_I4\_S4\_lut\_mas\_070221\_6 (min. 9:00–9:30). <> overlapping, : pause, (CAPITALS) comment, *italic* Engl. translation

OLZ: **there's something weird** (SINGT MIT MELODIE VON GHOSTBUSTERS, ENGLISCH, SWISS ACCENT)  
 OLZ: *there's something weird* (SINGING THE MELODY OF GHOSTBUSTERS, ENGLISH, SWISS ACCENT)  
 ALLE: **in the neighborhoober** (SINGEN MIT, ENGLISCH?)  
 ALL: *in the neighborhoober* (SINGING ALONG, ENGLISH?)  
 SIT: *hesch das a druffe?* (AUF MUSIKPLAYER)  
 SIT: *you've got that on there?* (ON THE MUSIC PLAYER)  
 OLZ: **in the neighborhood** (ENGLISCH), *nä*  
 OLZ: *in the neighborhood* (ENGLISH): *no*  
 SIT: **who can you call** (SINGT MIT MELODIE VON GHOSTBUSTERS, SCHWEIZER AKZENT)  
 SIT: *who can you call* (SINGING THE MELODY OF GHOSTBUSTERS, SWISS ACCENT)  
 HEZ: *aber ich ha das vom homer druffe*  
 OLZ: *no but I've got the one from homer on it*

This sequence shows one of the peers' neologisms "hoober", which they frequently use to express all kinds of things in many different contexts. Here LUT creates an ad hoc compound with "sau" ("pig") with the function of cursing at SIT and suggesting that SIT had dirty thoughts when he touched the backpack. In the second part of the sequence OLZ takes up the notion of "strangeness" citing the first verse of the Ghostbusters song<sup>7</sup> in English with a very noticeable Swiss accent.<sup>8</sup> All the other peers sing along for the second verse and introduce another compound with "hoober" – "neighborhoober". OLZ picks up on "in the neighbourhood" again, this time using it as the title of the Ghostbusters song. This time he pronounces it with a perfect English accent, proving his skills in English and the different function of this second phrase in English.

What the peers do in this sequence is take on whole chunks of an English song they apparently seem to understand and know by heart (OLZ comes up with it after SIT calls the backpack "komisch" ("strange")). Together they sing their own version of the second verse, competently integrating an English-Swiss-German compound, a new kind of "we-code" of their own (Gumperz 1982), which becomes a sign of their group identity.

When I asked them in the first interview what their notion of "youth talk" was, they spontaneously came up with the word "hoober". They explained that it was their own creation and that it changes its meaning according to contexts and to the people in their group who use it. They also pointed out that no other groups they know were using this word at the time or understood it when they themselves used it. In their emic perspective it was a symbol of the cohesion of their peer group – of their common identity.

## Conclusion

When *bricolage* is used as a sensitizing concept, it is a useful tool to capture many of the processes going on when young people talk to each other. Even interlingual variation, if linked with the notion of competence, can be described adequately with *bricolage*. In this setting, code-switching to English can be seen as a stylistic choice that the peers sometimes use to create their own new stylistic elements.

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<sup>7</sup> Title song of the movie "The Ghostbusters" (1984) sung by Ray Parker Jr.

<sup>8</sup> Their native language is Swiss-German, and they have had five years of English lessons at high school.



## Evaluation across Disciplinary Groups in University Student Writing: the critique genre family as texts and text

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This paper compares evaluation in student assignments across the four disciplinary groups of Arts and Humanities (AH), Social Sciences (SS), Life Sciences (LS) and Physical Sciences (PS). It combines a genre analysis of the BAWE<sup>9</sup> corpus as texts with a multidimensional register analysis of the corpus as text and a frequency analysis of specific amplifiers and attributive adjectives used across the disciplines. This approach is intended to complement more detailed manual analysis which can uncover the prosodic nature of evaluation, the range of grammatical resources (Hood 2004), the functions of evaluation (Thompson & Hunston 2000), and how evaluation occurs even where texts "[do] not contain what is commonly thought of as evaluative language" (Hunston 1992:197).

The 2896 BAWE corpus texts, from thirty-five disciplines, fall into thirteen genre families, or groups of genres with similar social purpose, generic stages and genre networks (Gardner 2008, Gardner & Nesi 2008). Critique genres describe and evaluate something. This affords comparison across reviews of books/films/plays with analyses of systems/businesses/organisations, and evaluations of Tools/Machines/Equipment. In the Humanities the Book Review is a typical Critique genre, whereas in the Social Sciences the most typical Critiques are evaluations of research articles, theories and techniques, and in the Physical and Life Sciences the most typical Critiques are evaluations of equipment and systems. Space does not permit an account of all Critique genre types here, but the following assignment titles suggest their scope:

Article Critique (Archaeology/6157b, Computer Science/0212b)

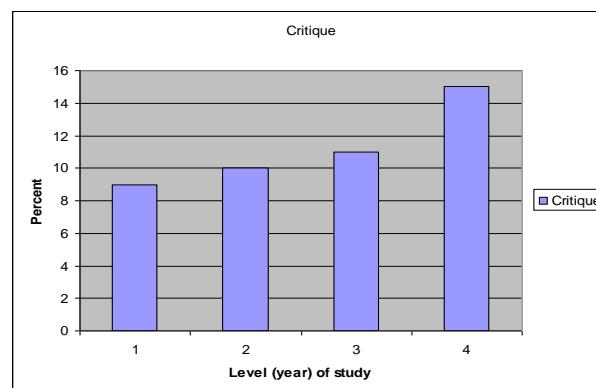
Journal Refereeing (Chemistry/0388g)

<sup>9</sup> The project *An investigation of genres of assessed writing in British Higher Education*, which was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (project number RES-000-23-0800) from 2004 to 2007, includes the development of the *British Academic Written English* corpus at the Universities of Warwick, Reading

'A critical review of two research papers' (Health/3059b)  
 Evaluate Esping-Anderson's classification of welfare states (Politics/00751)  
 Critically assess the aims underlying the rationale of the EU Single Market. (Business/0152a)  
 Outline and evaluate the doctrine of transcendental idealism. (Philosophy/3147j)  
 'Critically assess the Research Methods used in "Street Corner Society" By W. F. Whyte' (Politics/0276d)  
 An Evaluation of the use of COSMOS in designing Microneedle Arrays (Engineering/0250f)  
 Critical analysis of a diagnostic tool used within clinical practice (Health/3156a)  
 A Critical Analysis of Extension Approaches undertaken by CATI in Brazil (Agriculture/6031b)  
 CFS Insurance Restructuring Proposal Review (Computer Science/0258d)  
 Analysis of Jules Verne's 'Journey To The Centre Of The Earth' (pp.24-27) (Meteorology/6200i)  
 Analysis of Pepper vs Hart (Law/0132a)  
 Evaluation of FCE Reading paper (Linguistics/6028d)  
 Bread-Maker Critical Review (Engineering/6103b)  
 Teaching Evaluations (Health/3119d)  
 'The bigger, the better?' (Publishing/3067c)

**Table 1: BAWE corpus text families**

The 322 BAWE critiques account for 11% of all texts, and 10% of all words, with most in social sciences, and in taught postgraduate (level 4) modules.



**Figure 1: BAWE critiques by level**

and Oxford Brookes under the directorship of Hilary Nesi and Sheena Gardner (formerly of the Centre for English Language Teacher Education, Warwick), Paul Thompson (Department of Applied Linguistics, Reading) and Paul Wickens (Westminster Institute of Education, Oxford Brookes).

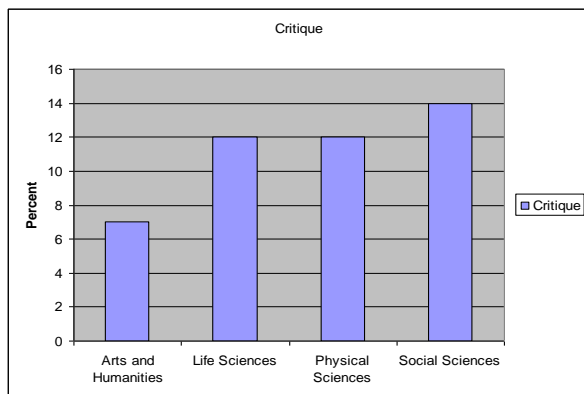


Figure 2: BAWE critiques by type

These higher proportions reflect the frequency of Critiques in research methods modules, and the contested nature of knowledge in the Social Sciences.

The multidimensional analysis of Critiques (Gardner 2008, Nesi this volume) suggests a trend along one Dimension only, Informational-Involved: Critiques become more 'informational' with each successive year of study, while Critiques in the Life Sciences and Social Sciences are most informational. Biber et al. (2002b:48) found a similar informational trend in textbook years, showing increases in nouns, word length, prepositions, type/token ratio and attributive adjectives with years (*ibid*:15). Exactly how progress along the Informational-Involved Dimension is reflected in the language of Critiques requires further investigation, but an obvious place to start is with the use of attributive adjectives across the disciplines.

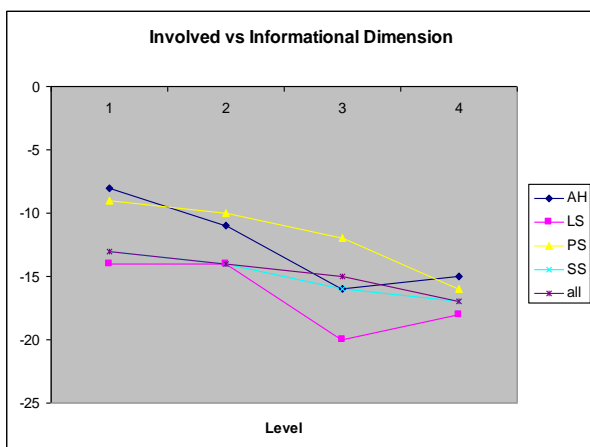


Figure 3: Critiques by dimension

Biber et al. (2002a:200) found that *good*, *best*, *right*, *important*, *simple* and *special* were frequent attributive adjectives in academic prose; Thetela (1997:114) identifies *significant*, *important*, *interesting*, *remarkable* as frequent in research articles. In the BAWE corpus as a whole particularly frequent collocates of *very* (+/-5) were

found to be *different-important* in Arts and Humanities, *important-similar-small-little-useful* in Life Sciences; *difficult-important-limited-little-good-different* in Social Sciences, and *useful-accurate-important-simple* in Physical Sciences. Interestingly SS is the only disciplinary group with frequent negative evaluation (*difficult*, *limited*). Examples of these in context from specific disciplines can be easily found using the corpus query tool SketchEngine ([www.sketchengine.co.uk](http://www.sketchengine.co.uk))

*Important*, *significant* and *useful* are in the top ten most frequent collocates of *very* in all four disciplinary groups. They are used with the following collocates in Critiques ( $F > 5$ ,  $MI > 4$ ):

Important	Significant	Useful
aspect, factor, element, consideration, implication, role, issue, tool, objective, step, technique, principle, thing, feature, part, development, quality, information, stage, area, point, approach, decision, analysis, question, change, research, study, process, model	Impact, reduction, difference*, growth, effect, amount, benefit, change, role, figure, development, influence, research, term, evidence, result, factor, number, cost, increase	Tool, information, model, source, site, analysis, method

Table 2: Collocates of *very*

*Important* is the most frequent, and widespread, of the three, occurring in over 200 Critiques across 28 disciplines. Its collocation with *aspect*, *feature*, *element* and others suggests a pervasive analytical perspective to evaluation. In contrast, significance is associated with impact and change in size, where usefulness is associated with tools and information. Figure 4 shows how the terms *important* and *significant* are relatively most frequent in SS, whereas *useful* is relatively more frequent in PS.

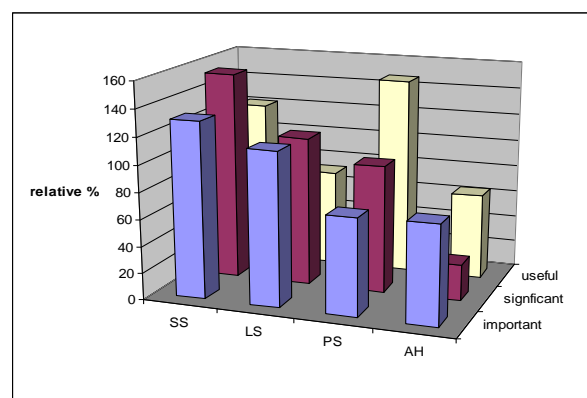


Figure 4: Collocates of *very* by type



*Importance* is attached to a wide range of entities, across all disciplines, and frequently to analytical features: *aspects, factors, elements, roles* and *issues*; *Significance* is attached to change and growth features: *impact, effect, change, results, reduction, and growth*; where usefulness is attached both to tools and to information. Explicit evaluation involving the three adjectives is most evident in SS, and least evident in AH, but of course this does not necessarily mean that Critiques in AH do not use evaluative language as there are many alternative, more topic specific ways of expressing evaluation.

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## **Book Review Writing at University: applying genre theory to the classroom**

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### **Introduction**

Being critical is one of the most complex tasks a teacher can ask of his/her students. If students are required not only to be critical but also to write critical, evaluative texts, levels of anxiety and discouragement rise significantly. However, there is no doubt that reading and writing critically are essential in the development of the student as an individual and also in his/her pursuit of an academic career.

In general, EFL students in Spanish universities find it difficult to express their critical judgments and opinions in an effective way within the academic context. This paper reports the results of a university course aimed at teaching undergraduate English philology students how to write a book review (BR) from a genre-based perspective.

### **Methodology**

The course involved 26 last-year undergraduate students at Universitat Jaume I (Castelló, Spain), and the main assignment consisted of reading four books and writing corresponding reviews. The course started with a preparatory phase in which students received specific instruction on BR writing, especially regarding communicative structure and most salient linguistic features (Gea-Valor, 2000; Marshall, 1991; Motta-Roth, 1998; Paltridge, 2002).

Communicative purpose stands out as the defining factor of genre, which influences rhetorical organisation and language use (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993). The primary purpose of the BR is to recommend or not recommend a book to other readers by means of evaluation. In general, a BR must provide enough information to help the reader decide whether he/she wants to read the book. This purpose is reflected in the rhetorical structure of the BR, which consists of four main communicative steps or moves (see figure 1).

#### **Move 1**

#### **OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK**

**Sub-function 1** Introducing the book

**Sub-function 2** Describing the book: anticipating plot and characters

#### **Move 2**

#### **INFORMING ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Sub-function 3** Influence of author's life on the book

**Sub-function 4** Author's previous works

#### **Move 3**

#### **ASSESSING THE BOOK**

**Sub-function 5** Focused evaluation on the book's strengths and weaknesses

**Sub-function 6** Comparing book with other books by same author

#### **Move 4**

#### **PROVIDING CLOSING EVALUATION OF THE BOOK**

**Sub-function 7** Definitely recommending or disqualifying the book

**Sub-function 8** Recommending the book despite indicated weaknesses

**FIGURE 1: Schematic description of rhetorical moves in non-academic BRs (adapted from Motta-Roth, 1998; Gea-Valor, 2000)**

Within this generic structure, obligatory and optional moves can be distinguished: the former involve an overview of the book, information about the author, assessment of the book's strengths and weaknesses, and a conclusion. Secondary moves basically include comments on the narrative style; explicit comparison of the book with previous works, with similar writers or with film adaptations; connection between the author's biography and the story, etc.

Regarding the most relevant linguistic features, special emphasis was put on evaluative language and modal features which contribute to mitigating possible unfavourable comments. In this respect, students, who were initially reluctant to 'the critical task', were encouraged to express their opinions and reactions to the books, instead of solely providing description. Regular tutorials were carried out to guide students during the writing process.

### **Results**

The communicative moves most frequently used by students involved description of the plot and discussion of the main topics (move 1). As for move 3, which can be considered the core of the BR since it provides assessment of specific or general aspects of the book, most of the texts offered focused

evaluation, although there was significant variation as to the number of evaluative acts. The main evaluative criteria employed involved the author's style and the book's interest or appeal. Providing information about the author (move 2) was quite frequent as well, although many reviews failed to establish any relevant connection between the author's background and the story.

Merging of description and evaluation was very common, and most of the texts ended with a formal conclusion which generally included recommendation. Surprisingly, some texts provided evaluation only in this section, along with final remarks which reiterate points already made in the review. Undoubtedly, individual writing skills and proficiency in the English language played a key role in the final piece. Secondary, more creative moves were used by proficient writers, while conventional rhetorical sections were faithfully followed by less confident students.

## Conclusions

Despite specific shortcomings in the final drafts such as unnecessarily lengthy descriptions of the book's plot/characters or reluctance to provide negative evaluation, genre-based instruction on BR writing helped to raise students' awareness of both communicative purpose and target audience, and ultimately to produce more effective and persuasive texts.

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## The Decomposition of Idioms during Sentence Production

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### Introduction

This paper is a contribution to the long-running debate about how idiomatic expressions are stored, accessed and produced. 120 Russian speech errors (slips of the tongue) involving idiomatic expressions were analysed to study the possible reasons for the decomposition of idioms during sentence production.

A traditional view of idioms is that they are stored and processed holistically like long words (Swinney and Cutler 1979), although recent research indicates that idioms may be decomposed during comprehension (Titone & Connine 1999; Tabossi, Fanari, & Wolf 2005).

The few existing studies of idiom production (Cutting & Bock 1997; Sprenger, Levelt, & Kempen 2006) are consistent with the comprehension results, suggesting that idiomatic expressions are decomposable. However, the experimental procedures that they use are based on visual or auditory presentation tasks, so the results are likely to be comprehension contaminated. Moreover, if the way in which a given idiom is accessed is sensitive to contextual variables, these procedures will not reveal this. In any case, such experimental procedures cannot be used to study the reasons **why** idioms can decompose during natural language production because they are specifically designed to elicit idioms decomposition errors in an artificial way.

Speech errors seem to yield more objective evidence of how idioms are processed in spontaneous speech. Three types of speech errors resulting in the decomposition of idioms were singled out in the Russian speech error corpus: idiom blends, context-free substitutions of idiom components, and contextual substitutions of idiom components.

### Idiom blends

The blending idioms were found to have similar meanings and similar syntactic structures, as in example 1, where both idioms with similar meanings are formed by a concatenation of two

adjectives with the conjunction 'and':

- (1) Devuška...okazalas' **cela i nezdorova**  
 Girl appeared **safe and unwell**  
 (**cela i nevredima** + živa i **zdorova**)  
**safe and unharmed** alive and **well**

*The girl appeared to be safe and sound*

In this example, the first adjective, the conjunction and the negative prefix of the second adjective from the first idiom, 'safe and unharmed', are spliced to the second adjective from the second idiom, 'alive and well', yielding a phrase meaning 'safe and unwell'.

Examples of idiom blends reveal that idioms with similar meanings and similar syntactic structures are likely to compete during sentence production (cf. Cutler & Bock 1997). In terms of the spreading activation theory of lexical retrieval (Dell 1986), the competition may result in a blending error if both the target idiom and the intruder phrase receive an equal proportion of activation from their corresponding concept.

### Context-free substitutions of idiom components

Context-free substitutions of idiom components indicate that an idiom can decompose when its literal rather than metaphorical meaning is activated, as in example 2:

- (2) Ne nado bylo **lezt' v butylku**  
 No need was to get into **bottle**  
 → Ne nado bylo **lezt' v bočku**  
 No need was to get into **barrel**

*You shouldn't have flown off the handle*

The literal translation of the idiom *lezt' v butylku* 'to fly off the handle' is 'to get into a bottle'; in the above example, 'barrel' is substituted for the target 'bottle', perhaps because a barrel is perceived as being more likely to hold a person.

The concept TO BE ANGRY FOR NO REASON AT ALL spreads activation to the corresponding lexical items, lemmas, in the speaker's mental lexicon. One of the ways to express the concept is the idiom, 'fly off the handle'. The idiom as a whole is represented separately at a level between the concept level and the lemma level – following Sprenger, Levelt, & Kempen (2006), this representation might be called the superlemma. The idiom's representation is also connected to the separate lemma nodes of its components – *get into* and *bottle*. At the same time, there are separate

lexical concepts: GET INTO SOMETHING, BOTTLE, BARREL etc., which activate their corresponding lemmas. The lexical nodes of the idiom components *get into* and *bottle* are connected to each other as the two parts of an idiomatic expression, but they also spread activation to other lemmas such as *barrel*. If the links between *get into* and *bottle* are not strong enough in the speaker's lexicon, another lemma (*barrel*, which might have stronger connections with *get into*) may interfere, causing the lexical retrieval process to derail.

### Contextual substitutions of idiom components

Finally, the meaning of a word from the current utterance can interfere in the production of an idiom, resulting in the selection of a wrong idiom component, as in example 3:

- (3) Čestno *govorja*, *položa ruku na serdce*  
 Honestly speaking putting hand on **heart**  
 → Čestno *govorja*, *položa ruku na jazyk*  
 Honestly speaking putting hand on **tongue**

*Honestly, quite frankly...*

The first part of the sentence, *čestno govorja* 'honestly' is itself a formulaic phrase (although not an idiom); the second part is idiomatic ('to put one's hand on one's heart' means 'to be perfectly honest with somebody'). The adverbial participle *govorja* 'speaking' activates the noun *jazyk* 'tongue', which is substituted for the target idiom component, *serdce* 'heart'.

### Conclusions

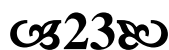
To sum up, it appears that idiom decomposition may be due to the idiom's competition with another synonymous expression, to the activation of its literal rather than metaphorical meaning and to the semantic interference of another word from the same utterance.

Idiom decomposition errors can be captured using spreading activation models of lexical processing (Dell 1986). Since the lexical nodes of the idiom components are linked not only to each other but also to other nodes in the lexicon, the chance of an idiom being decomposed during sentence production depends on the relative strength of the intra-idiom links, i.e. on the strength of the idiom's semantic representation in a given speaker's lexicon. If an intruder lexeme receives a higher proportion of activation than the target idiom component (either because the literal meaning of the idiom becomes active or due to the semantic interference effect), lexical retrieval can derail and

select a wrong word.

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## Code-Switching in Japanese Language Classrooms

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Research on language classroom code-switching tends to describe teachers' and learners' first language and target language use and/or make connections between code-switching and student learning (see Polio & Duff, 1994; Macaro, 2001; Kraemer, 2006). However, we still know very little about whether and how native and non-native speaker teachers differ in their code-switching practice. In fact, past research (Polio & Duff, 1994) has emphasized that perhaps such comparisons should be avoided since non-native speaking language teachers cannot be expected to use a significant amount of target language. Additionally, despite our understanding of the impact of cultural background on beliefs about teaching and learning (see Cortazzi & Jin, 1996), it is unclear how teachers' culture of learning impacts code-switching.

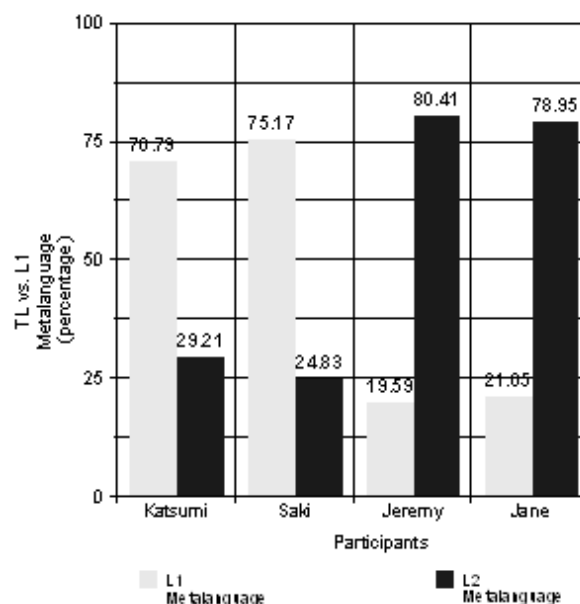
This project (see Hobbs, Matsuo & Payne, submitted) used comprehensive field notes of classroom teaching and audio-recorded interviews to document how four Japanese teachers in the UK, two of British and two of Japanese origin, differed in their use of metalanguage delivered in the target language vs. the students' first language. Our participant group was kept as homogenous as possible, i.e. age (25-30), teacher education (PGCE in the UK) and amount of teaching experience (1-3 years). We defined metalanguage as 'teacher talk which is not related to the language being presented' (Wajnryb, 1992: 43). Initially, our research questions were much broader, intending to investigate how native and non-native speaking Japanese teachers differed in their interpretations of communicative language pedagogy. But after our initial classroom observations, we noticed an interesting difference in code-switching between these two types of teachers and so focused our project accordingly.

Our field notes involved systematic and comprehensive description of all classroom events and, in particular, noted the content of teacher language, whether it was delivered in the students' first or target language, involving, in many cases, an exact transcription of what was said, although this was not always possible. Data analysis of these notes involved examining the data iteratively for

emerging categories of metalanguage, resulting in a total of 13 categories of metalanguage, seen in Table 1 below.

- opening (signalling the start of a lesson)
- warm-up (i.e., formulaic questions and answers, usually in the TL, unrelated to a lesson's content)
- instructions (i.e., directing students to complete an activity)
- explanation (elaborating on a point made, i.e. about grammar)
- checking comprehension (making sure students understand)
- translation (from L1 to TL or vice versa)
- timekeeping (managing the time for each activity)
- praise
- elicitation (asking students for answers)
- answering students' questions
- correction (pointing out student error)
- giving objectives (providing aims of the lesson)
- closing (signalling close of the lesson)

**Table 1: Categories of metalanguage**



**Figure 1: TL vs. L1 metalanguage use**

The data points clearly show a difference in code-switching practice between native and non-native speaking teachers of Japanese. In fact, the total percentage of TL metalanguage use of the two native speaker teachers (Saki and Katsumi) was almost completely diametrically opposed to the two non-native speakers' (Jeremy and Jane) (see Figure 1).

Interview data point to the reasons for this difference, revealing that the native speaker

teachers believed that timekeeping and classroom management issues interfere and make target language use 'impossible' but also ultimately 'unnecessary', an opinion shared by other native speaker language teachers in similar studies (see Polio and Duff 1994: 322). Our native speaking participants also noted several times that, based on their experience of learning English in Japan, they believed that content should be delivered in the target language but that metalanguage, if delivered in the TL, would only result in confusion and time-wasting. As one participant put it, '...doing that [giving instructions in Japanese] three or four times in Japanese, I can't waste my time to do that, so it doesn't work'. The British participants, on the other hand, voice strong opinions about the importance of target language input in both content and 'classroom language'.

Data analysis also revealed some interesting similarities about metalanguage function among the two groups (native and non-native speaking teachers). For example, the two native speakers uttered instructions and praise more frequently in the target language than other forms of metalanguage, contradictory to past research (see Kraemer, 2006). They also tended to use the target language more frequently for explanations than for other types, which confirms other findings (see Polio & Duff, 1994). The non-native speakers also had shared patterns of metalanguage use, uttering elicitations in the target language far more frequently than any other type of metalanguage, instructions being the only other peak in their usage. These findings contradict Kraemer's (2006) findings regarding activity explanations, which she found occurred more frequently in the students' first language.

In summary, our results indicate that language teachers' code-switching practices can and often do differ substantially depending on the teacher's culture of learning. This study expands on current understanding of the code-switching practices of native and non-native speaking language teachers. Implications include the importance of including opportunity for critical examination of personal beliefs about language learning and teaching in teacher education courses.

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## Take the Lead: manipulating ambiguity in advertisements for alternative sexual partners

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Advertising for heterosexual and same-sex partners and is now a cultural commonplace (Jordan and Weedon, 1995; Coupland, 1996; Thorne and Coupland, 1998) and dating advertisements routinely appear in UK newspapers and magazines. These advertisements are a “highly constrained and formulaic genre, oriented to the packaging and projection of identities” (Marley, 2007: 56). Typically, advertisers seek a target/desired other for a prescribed relational goal such as a sexual relationship, friendship or companionship. Conventionally, too, advertisers typically choose to present themselves and the target/desired other using a range of optional attributes including physical appearance, age, ethnicity, personality traits and interests (Jagger, 2005). Recently (c. 2007), in addition to the heterosexual and homosexual sections that are typical on pages of dating advertisements, one UK national newspaper (*The Independent*) offers a supplementary section entitled ‘alternative’. This section appears to offer an alternative range of advertisers the opportunity to seek alternative relational partners for alternative relational goals.

### Identifying ‘alternative’: advertisers, targets and goals

Analysis of a corpus of 206 alternative advertisements (taken from *The Independent*, February 2007 - September 2008) suggests that the identities of advertisers and targets seem to be a major contributing factor to the construction of being ‘alternative’. Whilst 57% of advertisers are male and 13% are female, 30% of advertisers self-identify as couples. The innovation that couples are advertisers seems to be an important indication of alternative desire or displaying an alignment with alterity. The identity of desired others supports this claim further. Whilst females and males are targets in around two thirds of the texts (61%), 23% of texts feature couples as the target. The remaining targets (16%) are combinations of couples or females (9%), female, males or couples (4%) and

males or couples and males or females or couples (3%). It seems that alternative relations can be contrasted with normative or conventional (hetero- or homosexual) binary couplings.

Beyond this rudimentary yet complex configuration of desiring advertiser and desired target<sup>10</sup>, the advertisements routinely conform to the generic formula (X seeks Y for Z) and also appear to display the detailed packaging of identity and description of relational goals. The texts below certainly provide a detailed delineation of attributes and specification of goals that make these condensed texts “hard to misinterpret” (Shalom, 1997: 188).

**TAKE CONTROL**  
Sexy, adventurous F, 38, seeks exciting, bisexual black guy, who can dominate & control her transvestite wimp, to become her lover. Woking.  
Box 353032

Text 1

**BOUND TO PLEASE**  
Kinky cross-dresser, 38, slim build, likes tie-&-tease games, WLTU understanding M, F or couple with similar interests. Guildford.  
Box 525792 ☒ IP 525792

Text 2

However, this degree of detail is rare in the corpus (<10%). In fact, the data far more frequently deploy vagueness and ambiguity in the description of advertisers, targets and/or goals.

Generality of self and other description aside, vagueness dominates in the data with respect to the articulation of goals. The table below reveals that 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequent lexical item is *fun* (only nine items are attributes of advertisers or targets). *Fun* appears as the goal in 64% of the advertisements. It is sometimes elaborated (Text 3) but predominately is realised minimally as *fun*, *fun times* or *adult fun*.

	Words	Frequency
1	m	179
2	for	177
3	fun	131
4	seeks	124
5	couple	116

Table 1

<sup>10</sup> This paper cannot discuss the advertiser/target relationship more specifically but suffice to say such

analysis only adds to the complex potential configurations and articulations of alternative desire.

**UP FOR IT?**

White M, 46, medium build, seeks F or couple for fun, friendship & good times. London. Box 740889

**Text 3**

The vagueness works to suggest that articulations of alternative desire seems to orient towards an explicit commitment to pleasure in contrast to the presumably potential seriousness or relational obligations associated with normative 'non-alternative' arrangements.

A related form of vagueness is deployed in a more complex fashion when considering captions (that is text capitalised and in bold at the head of the advertisement). This seems to work as a framing device to aid the interpretation and negotiation of preferred meanings relating to the characteristics of advertisers, targets and goals.

**Framing the alternative: ambiguity, literal and non-literal meanings**

Captions are a recent addition to the generic structure of personal advertisements. In this corpus they are deployed in four ways: i) intertextual reference ii) number innovation iii) direct address and iv) ambiguity/polysemy.

Captions can foreground intertextual references drawing predominately, but not exclusively, on the Arts (film, literature, music and advertising slogans): *IT'S A SIN; JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH; LET'S GET IT ON; AFTERNOON DELIGHT; START THE NEW YEAR WITH A BANG AND A WHIMPER; TRY SOMETHING NEW; NAUGHTY BUT NICE; THREE'S THE MAGIC NUMBER; LUST 4 LIFE*. In line with much research into the persuasive effects of intertextuality these captions rely on implicitness and the readers' ability to recognise and appreciate the associations (Ostman, 2005) and their presence adds to the highly interactive nature and writer/reader relationship required of these texts.

The two latter captions (*THREE'S THE MAGIC NUMBER; LUST 4 LIFE*) suggest that these caption options are not mutually exclusive. There are plainly indications of number play here but these can, to some extent, be distinguished from a second technique, number innovation: *2+1 = FUN; ENJOY YOUR THREEDOM; JUST FOUR FUN; FOUR PLAY; CROWD AND PROUD; THREE'S COMPANY; CAN'T MENAGE WITHOUT YOU; BI THE WAY*. Number innovation provides another explanatory device that demonstrates how alternative relations can be contrasted with

normative (hetero- or homosexual) binary couplings.

A third feature of the caption allows the advertiser to address the potential target directly. *GOT WHAT IT TAKES?; WHAT CAN WE GET UP TO?; DO YOU HAVE A FANTASY?; LET'S HAVE SOME FUN; FANCY SOME FUN?; HAVANT (sic) YOU ALWAYS FANCIED A THREESOME?* . This practice again highlights the highly interactive nature of the texts and invites the reader to reflect actively on a perhaps under-considered aspect of his/her/their erotic desires.

A final caption form involves manipulating ambiguity in ready made (typically collocated phrases), fixed or semi-fixed expressions (Moon, 1998) and idioms: *SHOW YOU THE ROPES; AN EXTRA PAIR OF HANDS; FEET FIRST; EVEN NUMBERS; A GAME OF DOUBLES; UP FOR IT; TAKE THE LEAD; TAKE CONTROL; TAKE CHARGE; BOUND TO PLEASE; SURRENDER CONTROL*.

The co-textual components of the advertisements invite the reader to interpret this form of caption in a couple of ways: i) by recruiting erotic connotations, choosing from meanings from related semantic networks that align the caption with particular sexual orientations and predilections or ii) reading it literally; that is to reinvest an idiomatic or fixed expression with a literal interpretation.

The following texts demonstrate the complex inferential work a reader is invited to engage in.

**FEET FIRST**

Good-looking, slim M, 47, 6', bi-curious & unassertive, seeks slim, handsome, educated, assertive, stocking-clad bisexual M for interesting relationship. North West/Deeside. Box 502171

**Text 4**

**TAKE THE LEAD**

Slim, smart, well-groomed businessman, 52, easy-going, a little shy, WLTm assertive, stylish lady to take the lead. Kent. Box 701304  
✉ IP 701304

**Text 5**

**SHOW YOU THE ROPES**

Tall, genteel M, 47, seeks repressed, demure, sweet, attractive lady to unlock passion & show her the ropes in 1-2-1 liaison. Middx. Box 588537  
✉ IP 588537

**Text 6**

Text 4's caption harbours ambiguity that becomes anchored by co-textual associations. Whilst a reader may infer that *FEET FIRST* may prompt some aspect of courage or spontaneity as a desirable quality the phrase *stocking clad* confirms that particular clothing and particular parts of the body are a more significant attribute; fetishised footwear should predominate as the minimal qualifying criteria for the self-selecting target. Text 5's caption *TAKE THE LEAD* could suggest some sporting activity and that either the advertiser or target could be in a competitive state or a winning position. However, it seems to become anchored by association with the target's desirable attribute, *assertive* rather than the co-present *stylish*. This move to literalness is encouraged as the reader is invited to infer that a literal lead or leash may be a necessary or accompanying piece of equipment in the ensuing activities.

This potential for captions to encourage the move from non-literalness to literalness can be seen in Text 6. The idiomatic expression *SHOW YOU THE ROPES* originated in naval parlance where novices were literally shown how to use ropes in the rigging and securing of ships. However, its deployment in this advertisement specifically and the alternative section in general invites the reader to deduce that the *repressed* target will literally be *shown ropes* in much the same way as the caption *BOUND TO PLEASE* (Text 2) literally involves the pleasure of *tie and tease games*. It seems, in this data, "figurative meaning can be ignored if the literal meaning of an utterance makes sense in context" (Gibbs, 1999: 150).

## Concluding Comments

This necessarily brief discussion of the configuration of advertisers, targets and goals and the potent role of vagueness and ambiguity suggests a highly complex relationship between articulations of normative and alternative erotic practices. What seems more straightforward is that the linguistic playfulness at work in the caption serves to reinforce the goal of *fun* and demonstrates that creativity present in everyday talk (Maybin and Swann, 2007) is richly deployed in these mundane, albeit, erotic texts.

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## Converting Learners' Thinking into Quantitative Data

Junko Hondo, Chieko Kawauchi & Junichi Saito

Observing learners' cognitive processes while they work with target languages and construct knowledge in SLA has been a challenge for scholars and practitioners in applied linguistics. One approach to collecting such data currently in wide use is the post-hoc stimulated recall. However concerns have been raised that data collected in a post-hoc fashion could be distorted due to the constraints of memory. Another approach employing surveys and interviews has produced a number of successful qualitative studies. However due to the potentially anecdotal nature of the data, this approach also raises a few concerns for empirically based studies. Jourdenais (2001) for example addressed a variety of problematic phenomena in interview responses including subjects providing data "to please the researcher", reporting what they believe would be of "interest to the researcher" or reporting what they think they should do as "a good learner" (p. 356).

Addressing these concerns, the study presents an approach to collecting qualitative data in real-time that avoids memory constraints. This qualitative data captured in written form was then later converted into quantified data allowing a convergence of qualitative and quantitative data collection approaches.

Japanese students (N: 107) at two national public universities in Japan participated in EFL task-based sessions. Two epistemic meanings of the English modal 'must' were selected as the main target structure. Among the two epistemic meanings of 'must', one was in the form of modal perfect (e.g. You *must have been* to Prague recently) and the other was followed by the simple form of verb and infinitive (e.g. You *must be* happy). An interactional, closed, oral and reading material based task was created incorporating these target forms. Participants in dyads conducted the task by reading, conversing, identifying, selecting forms between two alternative choices and recording their rationales for their selection in written form during one class session in 90 minutes.

A total of 1,394 selected forms as well as the reasoning for the selections were collected during the session. The 12 selected target forms as well as the reflections were tabulated into an Excel file.

Then the accuracy of the selected forms was coded as correct or incorrect. The reflections were coded into five categories: 1) meaning oriented, 2) meta-linguistic terminology use, 3) modal verb implication, 4) implicit knowledge implication and 5) other. Examples of each code are:

- 1) Rationale for selecting 'the milk bottle *must have been* delivered' over '*must be*': Because the milk bottle was actually wet. It takes a bit of time for a bottle to actually get 'wet' with mist. So, it had to be delivered some time ago.
- 2) Rationale for selecting the word 'Someone *must have put*...' instead of '*put*' (sic): 'Someone' is the third person singular. So, I did not think 'have' is needed here in this sentence.
- 3) Rationale for selecting the word 'the lord ... *must keep*' instead of '*must have kept*' (sic): There is no indication that only knights kept the fortress. Other people might have protected the castle (and there is no evidence to use *must have kept* indicating the supposition based on evidence).
- 4) This is smooth on my tongue. The echo of the sentence is just right.

These categories of rationales are then analyzed for associations between selected forms and reasonings by calculating and examining the correlations.

The results indicate that over 90% of reflections based on meaning oriented reasonings were associated with correct selections of target forms. On the other hand, grammar oriented reasonings based on the rules outside of the task material were often linked with incorrect selections of words. The reasonings for the selections of the form of verb reflecting on the function of modal appear to imply the incidental learning of one structure while paying attention to another form. Overall, 95.5% of the contextualized reasonings were combined with the correct selection of words. And merely 18.4% of the time, context-free reasonings were combined with a correct selection of answers. And the result of a Pearson chi-square indicated that if the reflection is context-bound, the word selection is likely correct, at a high probability.

To conclude, this approach to collecting qualitative data allowed the researcher to observe learners thoughts in real-time. And by quantifying this data subsequently, the outcome further confirms a proposition with a long tradition in the field of language learning (St. Augustine, 389 quoted in Kelly, 1969; Brumfit, 1979, 1984; Johnson, 1979; Larsen-Freeman, 2004; VanPatten, Williams and Rott, 2004 among others). It is through making connections between form and meaning that

learners become successful in understanding language.

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## Do Post-Reading Activities Improve the Retention of Vocabulary?

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It has been claimed in literature that vocabulary taught through reading would give the learner more opportunities to process language use at a deeper level and to develop semantic networks and other kinds of associative links that will enhance learning (Krashen, 1989; Judd, 1978; Ooi & Kim-Seoh, 1996).

It has been observed by the researcher that L2 learners concentrate on words more than they concentrate on understanding the whole passage when they read in English. Most of the students, especially low-ability students, want to learn the meanings of all unknown words to understand the passage and when they encounter lots of new words in a passage they blank out. This is especially the case when they read authentic reading passages. Students feel anxious when they are exposed to authentic reading passages. They claim that there are too many unknown words. Thus, the aim of this study is to find out if there are any significant differences between two groups of students who are exposed to same narrow reading passages but followed different post-reading activities. The study wanted to test out the following hypotheses:

1. There are no statistically significant differences between the scores of the students in experimental and control group in the vocabulary test which was applied after reading the passages.
2. There are statistically significant differences between the scores of the students in experimental and control group in the vocabulary test which was applied after reading the passages.

44 intermediate-level students who were placed by the Michigan Placement Test in the intensive language learning programme of the School of Foreign Languages participated in the study. Of these 44 students, 22 students (10 female, 12 male) were in control group and 22 students (9 female, 13 male)

were in experimental group. Their ages ranged between 17 and 22. The researcher was the teacher of the two groups. Three thematically related authentic reading passages taken from a book called "Scoop! The Communication Activities with British and American Newspapers" by Barry Baddock (1991) were read by the students. The students in experimental group read three passages and carried out three types of vocabulary exercises designed to attract their attention to word-meaning, form-meaning-function relationships and derived word forms which were chosen among the tasks Paribahkt and Wesche (2000) used in their study. The students in control group, on the other hand, read the passages and answered the comprehension questions only.

One week after reading these passages, a test was applied. Testing material was a vocabulary test in the form of cloze test (every fifth word was omitted from the passage. The omitted words included not only the new vocabulary they learned in the previous reading passages but also articles, prepositions, nouns, verbs, adjectives they were familiar with). There were 60 items to be filled in the test and the students were given one usual class hour to fill the test. The answers to the vocabulary test were collected and checked by the researcher. The correct answers of the test were counted for each group, their means and standard deviations were calculated. In order to compare the scores of the students in experimental and control groups, t-test design was applied.

In spite of the fact that the scores of the students in experimental group seemed higher, it was necessary to carry out a statistical test to see if the difference between the scores of experimental and control group was statistically significant.

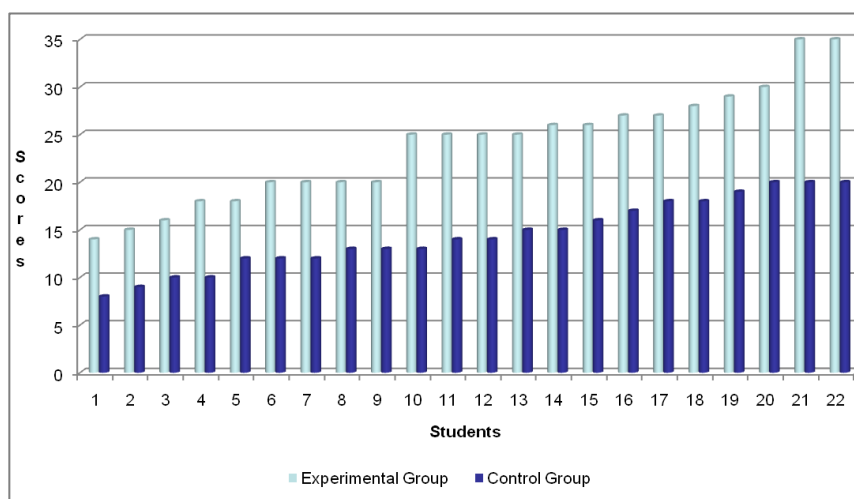


Figure 1: Scores of the students in experimental and control groups in vocabulary test

Group	n	x	SD
Experimental	22	23.81	5.36
Control	22	14.45	3.67
df = 21			
p = 0.05			
t = 11.74			

**Table 1: Means, standard deviations and t-test results of the two groups**

As seen in Table 2, calculated t-value was found to be higher than t-critical value ( $11.74 > 2.080$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis of the study which claimed that there was no significant difference between the scores of the students in experimental and control groups was rejected and other hypothesis was accepted. It can be said that the scores of the students in the two groups were different and this difference was statistically significant at .05 significance level.

The results of the study suggested that the students in the experimental group seemed to benefit from vocabulary exercises as post-reading activities, since the students in experimental group might have used their knowledge of semantic and syntactic relationship of target words as their scores were higher than the scores of control group. They had studied how to use morphological, grammatical and syntactic knowledge of the words a week before the test. Using their background knowledge of form, meaning and other syntactic properties, they put correct part of speech of the words into the blanks. In other words, they put nouns into the blanks which require nouns, verbs into the blanks which require verbs, etc. Students in control group, on the other hand, tried to complete the blanks with the word types which were not suitable, such as filling in the blanks with nouns where articles were required, using verbs instead of nouns.

It can be said that narrow reading has some advantages such as providing background knowledge for future passages, easing the lexical burden on readers and giving the chance to practise reading more quickly and fluently (Krashen, 1981). As Schmitt & Carter (2000) state learners need to meet words in a wide variety of contexts in order to gain an appreciation of the true range of a word's usage; it would be impossible to gain mastery over all of these from the information available in a single context. According to Paribakht and Wesche (1999) repeated and varied occurrences of given words in a text make them more salient for readers. It can be concluded that the more learners encountered the words in context, the more they retained and acquired them. Thus, post-reading

activities seem to improve the retention of new words.

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## Taking Time to Take Measure: linguistic ethnography in youth language and identity research

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This paper explores the social and methodological advantages of employing linguistic ethnography to investigate how a group of young people, Australian born and newly arrived migrants, living in a small metropolitan centre in Tasmania in southern Australia use language to construct identities in interaction. The study, currently underway, follows 22 young women taking part in a 12-month recreational activities programme offered to assist young people from refugee backgrounds to settle in the local community. Activities take place between one and three times a month and participants, aged between 14 and 21, comprise 11 young women from African backgrounds arriving as humanitarian entrants, and 11 young women from the local Tasmanian community.

A social constructionist standpoint is taken in the study which incorporates an understanding of meanings and identities as negotiated and discursively constructed within various social contexts and changing across time (Norton, 1995, 2000; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Bamberg, Schiffrin & De Fina, 2006). The study builds on previous work in the areas of identity and teen language research including Eckert (1989) and Bucholtz's (1999) seminal studies amongst 'monolingual' youth in urban school settings in the US, as well as studies focusing on bi- and multilingual practices amongst youth from dominant ethnic minorities, including those by Rampton (1995), Zentella, (1997), Heller (1999) and Jørgensen (2003, 2005) in North American and European contexts and Schmidt (1985), Langlois (2006), and Rieschild (2007) in Australia.

Ethnography has been a distinctive feature of many of the youth language studies mentioned and the current study is framed as a Linguistic Ethnography (LE), an approach that has emerged in recent years drawing on many previous traditions in linguistic anthropology, applied linguistics and sociology (Creese, 2008). Data collection and analysis may variously include (participant) observation, interviews, micro-

analysis of speech data along with discourse analysis of documents and other materials relevant to the study context. LE brings together in a flexible but cohesive fashion these and other interpretive resources applied by previous researchers, but additionally seeks to define a strong theoretical base for ethnography, emulating, as Blommaert (2006) reminds us, the anthropological humanist, functionalist perspective of language as a social resource that harks back to Gumperz and Hymes. The centrality of context and emphasis on situated language use (Rampton et al., 2004) means Linguistic Ethnography goes beyond field work methods and description to offer real critical potential which as Rampton (2007) points out may also offer the opportunity for practical interventions.

Grounded in this linguistic ethnographic perspective, the working research questions guiding the study are:

1. What identities are constructed *for* and *by* young humanitarian entrant migrants and host community members and how –
  - in public discourse such as media texts, political commentary and other public documents?
  - in informal interpersonal encounters?
2. In what ways can an investigation of youth language use in interaction contribute to understandings of how identities and senses of group belonging or exclusion are constructed?
3. What implications might such understandings have for the way in which humanitarian entrant migrant settlement occurs, particularly in relation to:
  - young migrants as opposed to adults, defining youth as aged 13 – 24?
  - migrant settlement in regional and smaller population centres?

In the course of the study, interactions occurring between young people will be examined in the context of prominent macro discourses about how best the increasing linguistic, cultural and religious diversity within the national population might be reconciled with a national identity. Similar to the French context (Doran, 2002), it is argued that the often passionate public debate played out primarily in the Australian media contests or reinforces a prevailing 'dogma of homogeneity' (Blommaert & Verschuren, 1998), in which intergroup differences are seen as problematic and in which African migrants have been explicitly positioned by some powerful sectors of society as failing to conform to dominant cultural norms.

Data collection at the time of writing includes a collection of media articles for discourse analysis, six months of participant observation in the youth programme (where the researcher is an adult volunteer), a small number of conversational recordings and an initial interview. Preliminary observational findings show that the majority of the 'well-travelled' girls, a self-chosen term by the African background youth, have participated more consistently in programme activities, achieving increased interaction and active network building with each other and to some extent creating what might be termed an 'African-Australian' space. This suggests the emergence of a group identity in which the 'local' Tasmanian born girls are more often, though not always, bystanders or onlookers. Ongoing research with programme participants will explore the range of factors contributing to this development including the role of language in relevant identity constructions.

Perhaps not surprising in a recreational youth programme is that teasing, joking, storytelling and verbal 'play' (see also Lytra, 2008) form a prominent part of the conversational data collected to date. As Maybin (2006) drawing on Bakhtin highlights, young people invoke the 'voices', expressions and gestures of others, in this case, as they endeavour to construct themselves as contemporary female teenagers in Australia in ways that align with local social norms and which at the same time, for the migrant girls, appear to sit in varying degrees of tension with expressions of African background identities. Mobile phone technology is a key signifier of a contemporary Western teen identity and preliminary data shows that it provides multiple platforms for interaction, not only in the making and receiving of texts and calls, but also in taking photos, and perhaps more importantly as a medium for exchanging photos, music and even credit. Interactions with and without phone technology present will need to be examined in further detail as the study progresses.

Living in a small city, the extent to which officially recognized community languages are part of the teens' identity constructions is limited by the very small numbers of same language background friends within the girls' immediate social networks and multilingualism is further mitigated by the pressure exerted by some African background girls to use only English in group interactions during programme activities. This attitude may in part reflect a very heightened awareness expressed by some of the migrant participants of a prevalent monolingual ideology in the host society, in which they acknowledge the material and symbolic value

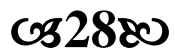
attached to the educated standard variety of English. Correspondingly, some young migrant women express a strong desire to position themselves as accomplished users of English to achieve social, educational and professional aspirations and recognition as legitimate members of the host society. Given the expression of such attitudes, it is interesting then that the possibility presented by the youth programme for more frequent and sustained interactions and friendships between 'local' Tasmanian young women, who might be seen to represent the dominant cultural norm, and the 'well-travelled' girls does not appear to be eventuating. This suggests some divergence in attitudes and practices and ongoing analysis of interview and speech data will attempt to explore the identity issues and wider social pressures that may be influencing the observed practices.

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**Who is speaking to me from this bottle?**  
**Measuring subjectivity in food packaging texts**

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***POSTER PRESENTATION***

***See over***



Dr. Christina Janik

## Who is speaking to me from this bottle? Measuring Subjectivity in Food Packaging Texts

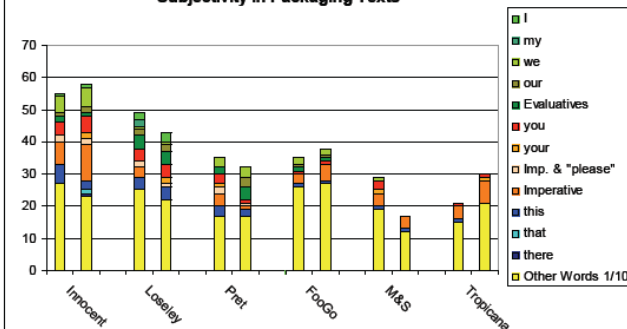
### Background and Aim

As part of a certain 'branding' strategy, language on food packaging more and more often seems to be used to "engage with audiences" (Simmons 2006a). In particular, this can be observed on labels of 'Innocent' Fruit Smoothies (Janik/Böttger 2007), where the usual details are given, but by means of highly addressee oriented, humorous language (e.g. "Shake it up, baby" instead of "Shake well before serving"). Similar strategies can be found on labels of other food products. It is the aim of this presentation to analyse from a linguistic point of view, what causes the engaging effect of some packaging texts as opposed to others. A pilot study will be presented that is based on a sample corpus of English packaging texts of food products that are primarily bought "to-go". Applying Smith's concept of 'subjectivity', an attempt will be made to isolate and quantify relevant linguistic means.

### The Concept of Subjectivity

'Subjectivity' is here understood as covering expressions that imply a "responsible source" (Smith 2003: 156f.); in the canonical communication situation (face-to-face) this is normally the speaker; in written texts, especially in literary narrative, this can however also be another participant in the text situation that is not identical with the speaker/author and whose identity has to be inferred from the context. Expressions of subjectivity ("EoS" in the following) are, among others: communication verbs, direction and location phrases, deictic adverbials, evaluative adverbs, evidential adverbials, adjectives, possessive pronouns, experienter predicates (Smith 2003: 176). Not all of them occur on the packaging texts in question. The "responsible source" in the majority of cases seems to be an idealized brand 'We'; only 'Loseley' introduces a fictional 'I'.

Subjectivity in Packaging Texts



### (Preliminary) Corpus and Method

- Corpus: 12 food products (drinks, cakes, sandwiches) from 6 different brands, originally all bought "to go" for consumption and not analysis.
- Brands: 'Innocent' Smoothies (1); 'Loseley' Ice Cream (2); 'Prêt a Manger' Cakes (3); 'FooGo' Sandwiches (4); 'M&S Eat Well' Fruit Juice (5); 'Tropicana' Fruit Juice (6); two different kinds each.
- All text printed on the packaging considered, except numbers.
- Occurrences of EoS counted on background of total number of words on respective packaging.
- Expressions considered: Deictics (personal pronouns 1st and 2nd person; deictic *this*; *that*; *there*); reader address in form of imperatives (with and without *please*), evaluative expressions (sentence adverbs, e.g. *fortunately*; adjectives, e.g. *ghastly*).
- Presentation of results (s. chart):
  - GREEN = implying speaker/other responsible source (evaluatives, 1st person pronouns);
  - RED = reader addresses (2nd person pronouns, imperatives);
  - BLUE = Local Deictics;
  - YELLOW = Any other counted word. For technical reasons, the absolute number of "other words" was divided by ten, all other results are given in absolute numbers.

### Results and Outlook

- Only type of EoS occurring on all products are imperatives; can be seen as standard expressions guiding the consumer on packaging texts (e.g. *see cap*; *shake well*).
- Great differences exist in use of personal deictics (especially 1st person), evaluative expressions and politeness marker *please*.
- 'Innocent', the brand described as highly successful (Simmons 2006b), and 'Loseley', show greatest variety in use of types as well as highest percentage of tokens of EoS per total number of words (around 10% each); cf. 'M&S Eat Well' and 'Tropicana' show lowest number in both respects (tokens of EoS account for around 4%).
- 'Loseley' is the only brand using 1st person sg., referring to a supposedly historic person introduced in the text.
- Phenomena are not restricted to ("to-go") food products; respective brands might have common target group: consumers actually reading packaging texts, looking for certain qualities and values, e.g. eco-friendliness, fair-trade, health.
- To be investigated in the future: correlation of occurrences of EoS and narrative passages and further EoS (e.g. expressive utterances (*sorry*; *thank you*; *good luck*); questions; exclamations; reported speech; found in 'Innocent' and 'Prêt a Manger' texts).
- Hypothesis to be followed up: There is a development for text on packaging away from fulfilling purely informative functions to greater expressiveness.

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## The Use of Sentence Adverbials in the Written Discourse of L2 Students of English: results of an analysis

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This paper is intended to provide an insight into the nature of connecting sentences in the written discourse of non-native speakers of English. It offers an analysis of findings in the use of sentence adverbials in the written discourse of advanced L2 students of English. The aim of the study is to present the frequency of different types of sentence adverbials found, and to work towards a consideration of the functionality of their distribution patterns.

### Database

This study was carried out on a corpus of 51 essays written by undergraduate students of English language and literature at the University of Split, Croatia upon the accomplishment of their initial teaching practice training. In their essays the students described their observation component of their teaching practice and commented on the data they collected by completing a set of observation sheets.

### Methodology

A classification of the semantic functions of sentence adverbials in the sample was made on the basis of previously established lists, in grammar classifications, of the functions of sentence-initial adverbials (Leech and Svartvik, 1975, Crystal, 2004). Seven types of semantic functions were distinguished. They are illustrated by these examples from our corpus:

#### 1. Adding: reinforcing

“**Also**, each word is given together with its pronunciation so they are familiar with all these symbols from the very beginning.” (essay 32)

#### 2. Adding: listing

“**Finally**, the teacher used the rest of the lecture-time, that is to say, ten or fifteen minutes to provide students with some extra knowledge on time in the English language.” (essay 15)

#### 3. Summarizing and generalising

“**To conclude**, I would only like to say that I consider this teaching practice to be very valuable for my further development because it helped me to understand better many things concerning teaching seen from the perspective of the teacher.” (essay 51)

#### 4. Explaining and illustrating

“**For example**, in the first grade the teacher was mostly concentrated on explanation through singing, colourful pictures and games which I found very useful and effective”. (essay 32)

#### 5. Expressing a result

“**Therefore**, the learners had to guess the meaning of the new words while listening to the text”. (essay 25)

#### 6. Expressing an inference

“**Otherwise**, learning would not be effective.” (essay 18)

#### 7. Expressing contrast

“**Nevertheless**, most of them obediently, by following their teacher's instructions, started to make the same pictures in their own textbooks and by their own hands.” (essay 21)

### Results and discussion

A great variability may be noticed in the frequency of different adverbial types used to perform a particular function (Table 1). Almost one-fourth of adverbial types perform the function of reinforcing. The most frequent adverbial in this group is the adverb *also*. Second in frequency are the types of adverbials that perform the function of listing and enumerating. *Then* is the most frequent among these linking words. Almost equal numbers of different adverbials are used for expressing contrast and summarizing. Contrast is most often expressed by the adverb *however*, while the phrase *all in all* is the most frequent adverbial that the students use to summarize a state of affairs. The different adverbials used to express a result are fifth in frequency in the sample. Most often a result is expressed by the adverb *consequently*. The function of restating and illustrating is performed by a few different adverbials, *for example* being the most frequent among them. The least common types of sentence adverbials in the sample are those used to express an inference.

Semantic function	Types of sentence adverbials in the sample (%)	Sentence adverbials in the sample
Adding: reinforcing	28 (23%)	Similarly(3), in fact (1), anyway(2), moreover(3), also (55), however (1!*), furthermore(13), and (12), in this way (10), generally (2), above all( 2), in the same way (1), alongside with it (1), in general (2), in addition to this (2), after all (2), among others (1), primarily (1), on that way (1!), once again (3), other than that (2), but not only that (1), on top of this (1), even so (1), specifically (1), as well as that (1), what is more (2), additionally (3)
Adding: listing	23 (19%)	Later on (4), afterwards (5), then (18), firstly (4), secondly (5), at the end (1), after that (3), first (11), in the end (3), later (3), and (2), what is more (1), after (3), finally (6), after this (1), first of all (1), and last (1), second (1), other than that (1), after that (1), primarily (1), secondarily (1), thirdly (1)
Summarizing and generalising	20 (16%)	All in all (9), to sum up (8), finally (11), in conclusion (6), anyway (4), to conclude (2), however (1!), still (1!), so (!), overall (1), in the end (1!), in general (1), to conclude with (1), so (6), my conclusion is (1), afterall (1), therefore (3), as a conclusion (1), generally (2)
Explaining and illustrating	13 (11%)	Actually (1), for example (21), as a matter of fact (1), in this way (1), namely (4), therefore (1), in other words (2), for instance (3), in a way (1), mostly (1!), in that case (1), so (1!), in fact (1)
Expressing a result	16 (13%)	For this reason (1), for that reason (1), thus (6), consequently (8), therefore (15), because of that (1), that is the reason why (1), hence (1), otherwise (2), as a consequence (2), so (5), that is why (5), accordingly (1), as a result (1), it is for this reason (1), this way (1)

Semantic function	Types of sentence adverbials in the sample (%)	Sentence adverbials in the sample
Expressing an inference	4 (3%)	So (2), according to that (1), that is why (1), in other words (1)
Expressing contrast	18 (15%)	However (83), but (72), on the other hand (30), yet (3), nevertheless (18), still (10), anyway (1), again (1), in spite of this/that (2), rather (2), therefore (1!), unlike this (1), on the contrary (5), despite this (1), otherwise (2), alternately (1), but still (1), even then (1)
Total	122 (100%)	

\*An exclamation mark indicates the incorrect use of a sentence adverbial

**Table 1: Functional distribution and frequency of adverbial types in the sample**

Semantic function of adverbials	Occurrence (%)
Adding: reinforcing	130 (22%)
Adding: listing	78 (13%)
Summarizing and generalising	62 (10%)
Explaining or illustrating	39 (7%)
Expressing a result	52 (8%)
Expressing an inference	5 (1%)
Expressing contrast	237 (39%)
Total	603 (100%)

**Table 2: Distribution of the semantic functions of adverbials in the sample**

Significant variability in the use of adverbials with respect to the semantic function that they perform may be noticed (Table 2). Expressing contrast is the most frequent semantic function of sentence adverbials in the students' essays while expressing inference is the least frequent. The complex of reasons for differences in the frequency distribution of the various semantic functions of adverbials might be looked for in the type of text in which they are used (a descriptive essay) and in the writing style of Croatian L2 students'. It should be added that close inspection of this corpus of essays reveals a great variability amongst students' written use of sentence adverbials.

### In place of a conclusion

The findings of this study indicate great variation in sentence adverbial use in the written discourse of non-native speakers at this capability level. Further research in this area should investigate variations in the levels of formality and the sources



and causes of incorrect use of sentence adverbials. With regard to these issues, research might also consider the influence of mother tongue language production, that is to say, L1 writing style, upon the use of sentence adverbials.

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## **“I Know the Word Meaning but in Chinese”: the validity and implications of bilingual vocabulary tests**

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How to accurately assess second language learners' vocabulary knowledge has been studied throughout decades. Recently, one of the most important advances in the field has been to include the first language in second language vocabulary assessments. Nation pointed out that:

The greatest value of the first language in vocabulary testing is that it allows learners to respond to vocabulary items in a way that does not draw on second language knowledge which is not directly relevant to what is being tested... Although there is no research yet demonstrating this, it is highly likely that a multiple-choice or matching test would be much easier for learners to do, and more valid, if the definitions were in the first rather than second language. (Nation, 2001, p.351)

This paper reports on a study that investigates second language (L2) learners' vocabulary learning by using their first language (L1) in testing procedures to examine their L2 vocabulary growth. It intends to answer three research questions. The first, is it effective to enhance students' vocabulary acquisition by providing them with both L1 and L2 (definitional) input during reading? Second, are there any variations in their vocabulary conceptual knowledge in L1 and L2? Third, what are the differences between monolingual and bilingual vocabulary tests when measuring L2 students' vocabulary knowledge? These questions were addressed by an experimental study that compared their vocabulary learning outcomes through reading in two different conditions. The study analyzed the rationale underlying the inquiries within several theoretical frameworks. These include Cummins' linguistic interdependence theory that indicates L2 learners' conceptual knowledge in L1 can be transferred to L2 with certain conditions (Cummins, 1979), and Krashen's input hypothesis which points out that L2 learners can effectively acquire vocabulary through extensive reading that are supported by

comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982, 1985, 1989).

A public high school within the largest Canadian school board, located in a working class and new immigrant neighbourhood was chosen to conduct the study. Twenty Chinese high school students who learned English as a second language (ESL) participated in the study. The majority of these students were from Mainland China, and they were fluent in Chinese. They were all able to speak Mandarin and one or two kinds of Chinese dialects, and they were able to read Chinese at levels between Grades 5-10.

In this study, the students were divided into two groups by their English proficiency level (beginner and intermediate) to experience two different reading conditions with (using the e-Lective system) and without (in natural settings) technology-enhanced scaffolding. In natural settings, students had access to electronic bilingual handheld dictionaries and hardcopy dictionaries. They could also ask for help from the researcher and their peers. In the e-Lective system, the students could read English texts using online monolingual and bilingual dictionaries which are able to instantly provide students with definitions for a large volume of words. A pre-test, immediate post-test and delayed post-test were administered to assess students' vocabulary learning in the different reading conditions. The vocabulary test format was adopted from Nation and Schmitt's Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation, 1990; Schmitt, Schmitt, & Clapham, 2001). All of the tests were administered to students both in bilingual (target words in English and definitions in Chinese) and monolingual (both target words and definitions in English) versions (see table 1).

Repeated-measures ANOVAs were applied to analyze vocabulary test scores. The findings indicate that there are significant variations in the students' vocabulary knowledge between English and Chinese across learning conditions and proficiency groups. The monolingual Vocabulary Levels Tests showed that the beginner group learned more words in the natural setting, while the intermediate group learned more words in e-Lective. However, when students' understanding of the target words in Chinese was taken into account, bilingual Vocabulary Levels Tests showed the most significant growth in vocabulary learning using e-Lective across both proficiency groups and reading conditions, especially for the student group with lower proficiency. The differences in the students' knowledge of target words in English and Chinese were particularly

highlighted when students with lower ESL proficiency read in e-Lective. These findings are consistent with the researcher's observation: When difficult academic English words were involved, the Chinese ESL students with limited English proficiency in the present study often indicated that "I know the meaning but in Chinese".

<i>Monolingual Vocabulary Levels Tests</i>		
1. bridge		
2. crossing	_____	image
3. double	_____	without delay
4. immediately	_____	twice as much
5. piece		
6. reflection		
<i>Bilingual Vocabulary Levels Tests</i>		
1. bridge		
2. crossing	_____	映像, 倒影
3. double	_____	立刻
4. immediately	_____	成双倍
5. piece		
6. reflection		

**Table 1: Samples of monolingual and bilingual Vocabulary Levels Tests**

The study is one of the first studies to confirm the significance of using second language learners' L1 in testing procedures to examine their L2 vocabulary acquisition. It raises a number of issues concerning the accuracy of vocabulary assessment, as monolingual and bilingual vocabulary tests displayed different levels of sensitivity to the students' vocabulary growth and this, in turn, raises the question of how the quality of students' vocabulary knowledge varies between languages. The use of bilingual vocabulary tests may provide more insight into the transfer patterns of vocabulary conceptual knowledge from L1 to L2, and thus helps to evaluate future interventions involving L1 scaffolding to assist L2 vocabulary acquisition. Feasible recommendations were made to improve current ESL programs, i.e., explicitly promoting the use of L1 in the students' learning of English with refined techniques.

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## Assessing Lexical Awareness: EFL learners and English word-formation

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Lexical awareness and knowledge of e.g. word-formation help in expanding both receptive and productive vocabulary. English word-formation and general L2 vocabulary knowledge have been widely studied, but word-formation skills and SLA is still a grey area, possibly because there are no established tools to assess word-formation. Our paper evaluates three methods of assessing word-formation and describes the word-formation skills of EFL learners at different levels of proficiency.

The data were collected as part of the CEFLING project that examines how L2 proficiency develops across Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) levels. The participants (N=87) were 12-13-year-olds Finnish students, who had studied English for four years. They completed a three-part test<sup>11</sup> on derivation. In addition, as part of the CEFLING project, the students completed four writing tasks ranging from an informal e-mail to a narrative. The writing tasks were assessed against the CEFR levels by four raters.

In the test, we concentrated on derivation due to its productivity. Also, although word-formation skills are not explicitly addressed at school, the students could be expected to be familiar with derivation implicitly. English has over sixty affixes (Jackson and Zé Amvela 2000, 74) and choosing the ones that would be familiar to the respondents was difficult. Also, single words in the test had to be frequent enough. The items in the three tests were chosen on different grounds. In Part 1, the wordlist in *Waystage* (van Ek & Trim 1990) was chosen as a source since it elaborates level A2 of the CEFR for English. In Part 2, non-words developed by Paul Meara for the Dialang test were used, and in Part 3, a list of prefixes (Ballard 2001, 52) was used as a basis, and easy enough words including these prefixes were chosen.

<sup>11</sup> 1) Sentences in English with a Finnish translation of the target word (productive gap-filling): *I am \_\_\_\_\_ (varma) that he will get the job in London.*  
2) Sentences with non-words with explanations in Finnish (gap-filling): *She could **bourble** animals very well because she was a good \_\_\_\_\_ **bourble**\_\_\_\_\_.* (*henkilö, joka tekee lihavoidun sanan kuvaamaa*

Next, we evaluate the three tests and discuss how the test results relate to proficiency levels in English.

The productive gap-fill (Part 1) was the easiest of the three tests: the average score was 70%. This is partly explained by the fact that it included items that tapped base forms (n = 9). The other two test types were significantly more difficult: the list-choice based test (Part 3) had a mean score of only 36% and the non-word test (Part 2) only 32%.

Conventional test analyses showed that the tests are at least satisfactory in distinguishing different learners. The predicted Alpha reliability for a 40-item version of the tests was over .90. Average item-total correlations were between .5 and .6 indicating fairly good internal consistency.

Table 1 shows the average scores of learners at different CEFR levels in writing. The productive gap-fill test (Part 1) was doable even by learners at level A1, especially as concerns items tapping the base forms. However, the word-formation skill itself was not too developed, as indicated by lower scores in the production of derivative forms of the words. As a whole, only students at A2 and above could achieve high scores in this test.

	A1 (n=27)	A2 (n=42)	B1 (n=15)	B2 (n=2)
Productive gap-fill test	46	75	87	100
- items tapping the base form of word (9)	57	78	84	100
- items tapping the inflected form of word (10)	37	73	90	100
Non-words based test	13	28	38	81
List-based test	15	32	47	71

**Table 1: Average scores (percentage correct) in the three word-formation tests at different CEFR levels**

The list-based prefix test turned out to be too difficult for A1 and A2 level learners, and even learners at B1 struggled with it. The reason for the perhaps unexpected difficulty appears to be that many of the words students had to create by

*toimintaa/työtä*) (a person who does the action described by the bolded word)

3) A list of prefixes from which the participants were to choose suitable ones to fill in the gaps in sentences: *He did not follow the instructions. He had \_\_\_\_\_ understood them.*

matching prefixes and word-stems were abstract. The less advanced learners may not have known the derivative form of the word or even the stem.

The non-word test probably taps work-formation skills as 'uncontaminated' by general vocabulary knowledge as possible. It appears that learners have to be above B1 before they can be said to have an extensive command of derivative skills. However, even at levels A1 and A2, the learners could get some of the items correct; the first item was designed to be very easy, as it was analogous to the example given in Finnish. Previous research (Cameron 2002; Nyyssönen 2008) suggests that non-words can be problematic for beginners, in particular. Part of the difficulty may also be explained by the general unfamiliarity of non-word based tests. It should be noted that the derivational system of English is not entirely systematic, and even native speakers disagree on which affixes are suitable (Schmitt and Zimmermann, 2002).

The results suggest that the test types studied have promise in testing word-formation skills. It also appears that command of English word-formation develops only to a very limited extent in the first two CEFR levels, at least when learners have not been taught word-formation very much and learners' L1 is unrelated to English. The ability to form new words is limited to some basic types and the role of a few prototypical examples is probably very important at A1 and A2. Word-formation appears to enter learners' repertoire of language skills appears at level B1. The learners' command is probably a combination of a widening general vocabulary, including numerous new derivative forms, and more developed lexical awareness and 'sense' of being able to apply word-formation rules to new instances of language use.

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## Conversation Analysis for Language Teachers: refining descriptions to facilitate teacher-student talk

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One measure of applied linguistics is in the power of its descriptive accounts to heighten awareness and deepen understanding of how participants organize social interaction through spoken language. A case in point is the ever-growing use of Conversation Analysis (CA) as an analytical tool to uncover details that might otherwise be overlooked or taken for granted. While its focus on the study of how ordinary conversation is sequentially organized has remained constant over the years, application has expanded. The body of work in CA now includes institutional talk, second language conversations, CA for SLA, and recently CA for language teachers.

This study takes into account the above applications of CA for their relevance in how teacher-student talk is a co-managed social interaction. A more specific measure of the value of linking CA with teaching comes from the recognition that an integral part of the daily work which language teachers are engaged in involves being conversationalists. Particularly in EFL contexts where opportunities to use the target language are somewhat limited, teacher-student talk may represent the typical means by which students engage in extended talk.

When interest moves beyond the general terminology used to describe teacher discourse (e.g., error correction, back channels, recast) to more refined descriptions based on their interactional potential, the following three features noted in CA-based studies and in the data collected by this teacher-analyst appear promising in widening, yet deepening our understanding of what occurs in teacher-student talk.

- (1) Repair
- (2) Response tokens
- (3) Formulation

For example by viewing talk as co-managed, 'error correction' as a gloss for what teachers do can be broken down into a range of options according to who initiates and completes the repair. Schegloff, Sacks, and Jefferson (1977) identify four basic

paired-actions: self-initiated/other-repaired; other-initiated/self-repaired; self-initiated/self-repaired; other-initiated/other-repaired. Other observations also have implications for how teachers talk to students. 'Back channels' in a pedagogic sense refer to feedback cues given by the teacher while the student is speaking. In regards to ordinary conversation, Heritage (1984) argues that 'oh' marks the receipt of new information while Gardner (1998) distinguishes response tokens such as 'yeah' and 'mm' according to how they confirm, acknowledge, or continue prior turns. Finally, while teachers 'recast' to provide students with examples of correct language, 'formulation' which also selectively rephrases what has been said can lead to the co-construction of meaning. Heritage (1985) points out how broadcast interviewers refer back to earlier statements through prompts and inferential probes. Hutchby (2005) shows how counsellors employ formulation as a sign of active listening to encourage clients to talk about what concerns them.

In line with the findings of CA-based studies like the ones mentioned above, data from an ongoing collection of 'free topic' dyadic talk between this teacher-analyst and students (Nakamura, 2006) reveals the same type of organizational concepts that help interviewers and counsellors can also help teachers elicit more talk from students. Below is an example of how the teacher (I) uses his turn to set up subsequent turns for the student (M).

- 23 M: Yeah. (3.5) And I get many stress. Hh.  
→ 24 I: Oh:h. So you are the (.) only one writing (.) this book?  
25 M: No. I am the chief.  
26 I: Uh  
27 M: Five or six students help me.

**Excerpt 1: Masako no. 5, school annual editor (Nakamura, 2006)**

The teacher chooses to display an understanding (line 24) of what is being inferred rather than correct the grammar. Continuing to guide the talk, his token response (line 26) gives M a chance to explain. There are some instances like the example below where simply minimizing what the teacher says appears to maximize chances for the student to give expression to her own idea.

- 32 M: He talked about gene, DNA, and genome.  
→ 33 I: Ah.  
34 M: Gene made DNA up primary object and it has heredity information.  
→ 35 I: Mm.

**Excerpt 2: Masako no. 6, DNA (Nakamura, 2006)**

The minimal responses are taken as turns in their own right. In this manner, the orderly taking of turns remains intact. More importantly, the focus of the talk remains on the student's telling.

Refining descriptions of these organizational concepts suggests application of CA-based studies can help invigorate teachers' efforts to skilfully design next turns for students to be not only successful learners of targeted language, but also active co-participants and second language users. Such a change of perspective and social practice expands the communicative potential for teacher-student talk beyond the traditional boundaries in EFL contexts. When we think of talk as social interaction, teachers become freer to interact not only as experts, but also as facilitators. The organization of repair and the timely use of response tokens together with formulated displays of understanding are interactional resources available to extend talk. One true measure of applied linguistics comes from the fresh understanding it provides into how such discourse practice occurs and how we co-manage its achievement now and in the future.

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## A Multidimensional Analysis of Student Writing across Levels and Disciplines

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The British Academic Written English (BAWE) corpus, created as part of an investigation of student writing in British higher education<sup>12</sup>, contains 2,761 student assignments, produced and assessed for university degree coursework and fairly evenly distributed across 35 disciplines and four levels of study. About half the assignments in the corpus were graded at a level equivalent to 'distinction' (70% or above), and half at a level equivalent to 'merit' (between 60% and 69%). The majority (1,953) were written by L1 speakers of English. As some assignments contained multiple pieces of coursework, the total number of separate texts in the corpus is 2,897. A fuller account of the corpus design is provided in Nesi (2008) and Alsop and Nesi (forthcoming).

Our ESRC-funded project included an examination of departmental documentation, interviews with tutors and students and genre analysis, resulting in the categorisation of texts into 13 broad genre families (see, for example, Gardner 2008). A further investigatory strand involved multidimensional analysis of the corpus, with the support of Douglas Biber and his team at Northern Arizona University. Biber considers linguistic co-occurrence to be central to the study of register, and assumes that if a group of linguistic features co-occur with high frequency they must share an underlying communicative function. His approach has evolved from early studies such as that of Chafe (1982) which posited sets of linguistic features likely to co-occur in specified groups of texts. Biber's method is more complex than this, however, in that it counts the frequency of specified linguistic features and their relative distribution in a corpus of texts, and draws on these findings to ascertain the extent to which groups of texts are similar or different from each other.

In preparation for the analysis, the BAWE corpus was tagged for 67 linguistic features, grouped into 16 grammatical/functional categories:

1. Tense and aspect markers
2. Place and time adverbials
3. Pronouns and pro-verbs
4. Questions
5. Nominal forms
6. Passives
7. Stative forms
8. Subordination features
9. Prepositional phrases, adjectives and adverbs
10. Lexical specificity
11. Lexical classes
12. Modals
13. Specialized verb classes
14. Reduced forms and dispreferred structures
15. Coordination
16. Negation

Patterns of co-occurrence of these features were then mapped across disciplinary groups, levels of study, and genres in the BAWE corpus, using factor analysis to identify co-occurrence patterns (called 'dimensions').

This part of the multidimensional analysis was purely quantitative, but the linking of dimensions to functions is open to interpretation. The BAWE corpus was analysed both in terms of the dimensions originally identified by Biber (1988), and in terms of new dimensions of variation specific to the corpus. The findings presented in this paper, however, only relate to the following 1988 dimensions, already associated with communicative functions in a number of prior studies (for example Biber 1988, Conrad & Biber 2001):

- Dimension 1: *Involved v. Informational*, with 1st and 2nd person pronouns and Wh questions as positive features.
- Dimension 2: *Narrative v. Non-narrative*, with past tense verbs, 3rd person pronouns, public verbs such as "said", present participial clauses and perfect aspect verbs as positive features.
- Dimension 3: *Explicit v. Situation-dependent*, with Wh relative clauses, phrasal coordination and nominalizations as positive features.
- Dimension 4: *Persuasive*, with modals, suasive verbs and conditional subordination as positive features.
- Dimension 5: *Abstract v. Non-abstract*, with passives, conjuncts, and passive adverbial and postnominal clauses as positive features.

<sup>12</sup> Under the directorship of Hilary Nesi and Sheena Gardner (formerly of the Centre for Applied Linguistics [previously called CELTE], Warwick), Paul Thompson (Department of Applied Linguistics, Reading) and Paul

Wickens (Westminster Institute of Education, Oxford Brookes), with funding from the ESRC (RES-000-23-0800).

Table One shows dimension scores across levels. Levels 1, 2 and 3 represent the first, second and final years of undergraduate study, and Level 4 represents taught Masters programmes.

	Involved <sup>1</sup>	Narrative <sup>2</sup>	Explicit <sup>3</sup>	Persuasive <sup>4</sup>	Abstract <sup>5</sup>
<b>Level 1</b>	-12.8	-2.7	5.1	-1.4	5.9
<b>Level 2</b>	-13.9	-2.8	5.6	-1.5	6.2
<b>Level 3</b>	-14.8	-3.0	5.7	-1.4	6.4
<b>Level 4</b>	-17.3	-3.2	6.4	-2.0	5.4

**Table 1: Scores across dimensions and levels of study**

Scores for Dimensions 1 and 2 were uniformly negative. Dimension 1 differentiates between oral (verbal) and written (nominal) styles. In Biber's 1988 analysis the most "involved" component of his corpus, conversation, scored +35, while general academic (published) prose scored -15. BAWE writing had similarly high negative scores with progressively fewer involved features at each level, indicating less focus on the author and greater focus on the object of study. On Dimension 2, romance fiction scored 7 in Biber's 1988 analysis, and general academic writing scored between -2 and -3. BAWE writing had similar scores, at each level placing a greater emphasis on the building of arguments rather than narrating.

On Dimension 3 BAWE writing had high positive scores, at each level becoming less situation-dependent and more "elaborated", with fewer references to the real world outside the text. Scores for Dimension 5 also rise across Levels 1 to 3, but fall slightly at Level 4. This might be because some of the more professional genres produced at Masters level require greater emphasis on the agent. In Biber's 1988 analysis general academic writing scored between 4 and 5 for Dimension 3, and between 5 and 6 for Dimension 5.

The greatest difference between BAWE writing and general academic writing as analysed by Biber (1988) is on Dimension 4. Biber's general academic writing texts were unmarked for this dimension (i.e. they had a score of 0); the negative BAWE scores indicate that students present information in a more factual manner, with fewer overt attempts at persuasion, perhaps because they have less need to convince their readers of the centrality of their topics or of the validity and significance of their academic activities.

Unsurprisingly, scores for Dimension 4 varied according to genre, as shown in Table Two. Case studies, empathy writing and narratives had the highest scores on this dimension, whilst reports and literature surveys were the least persuasive.

	Involved <sup>1</sup>	Narrative <sup>2</sup>	Explicit <sup>3</sup>	Persuasive <sup>4</sup>	Abstract <sup>5</sup>
<b>Essay</b>	-14.3	-2.5	6.2	-1.8	5.9
<b>Methodology Recount</b>	-15.8	-3.7	4.5	-2.5	7.3
<b>Critique</b>	-14.8	-3.1	6.0	-1.6	6.4
<b>Explanation</b>	-15.4	-3.6	5.0	-2.3	5.8
<b>Case Study</b>	-16.4	-2.9	5.8	-0.5	4.5
<b>Exercise</b>	-12.1	-3.9	4.6	-1.3	5.7
<b>Design Specs</b>	-13.1	-4.0	4.1	0.7	6.8
<b>Proposal</b>	-16.4	-3.8	6.3	1.3	4.8
<b>Narrative Recount</b>	-4.8	-1.1	3.8	-0.7	4.0
<b>Research Report</b>	-16.2	-3.1	5.5	-2.4	7.2
<b>Problem Question</b>	-12.0	-2.8	5.2	1.6	6.4
<b>Literature Survey</b>	-17.9	-2.6	6.3	-3.4	5.0
<b>Empathy Writing</b>	-11.5	-2.7	4.5	0.8	4.5

**Table 2: Scores across dimensions and genre families**

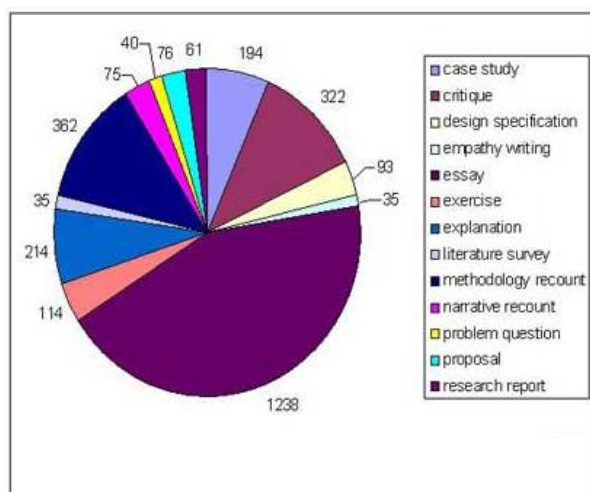
The Narrative Recount was also found to be an outlier on the other dimensions, being the most involved, narrative-like and situation-dependent of the genres, and the least abstract. Narrative Recount was one of the least common genres in the corpus (75 examples, with roughly equal distribution across the four disciplinary groupings). Included in this genre family are biographies, short stories, reflective recounts and simple recounts of chronologically-ordered events. A contrasting genre family would be the critique, for example, which places less emphasis on the author, the agent and the outside world, and more emphasis on argument.

Table Three shows dimension scores across disciplinary groups. Different colour shades within each dimension indicate statistically significant differences ( $p = <0001$ ). Arts and Humanities writing is the most narrative-like and the least persuasive, Social Sciences writing is the most elaborated, Life Sciences writing is the most nominal and "object" as opposed to "author" centred, and Physical Sciences writing the most abstract and least narrative-like.

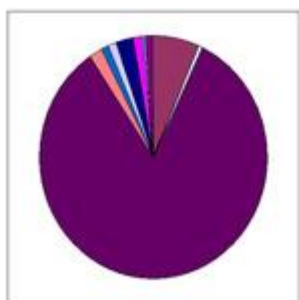
	Involved <sup>1</sup>	Narrative <sup>2</sup>	Explicit <sup>3</sup>	Persuasive <sup>4</sup>	Abstract <sup>5</sup>
<b>Arts and Humanities</b>	-13.4	-2.1	5.7	-2.3	5.5
<b>Social Sciences</b>	-15.3	-3.0	6.5	-1.3	6.2
<b>Life Sciences</b>	-15.6	-3.0	5.7	-1.5	5.7
<b>Physical Sciences</b>	-13.4	-3.7	4.4	-1.2	6.5

**Table 3: Scores across dimensions and disciplinary groups**

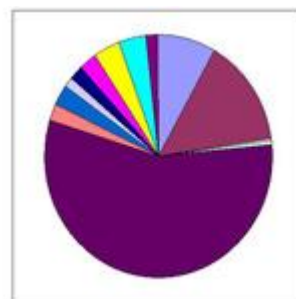
Figure One shows the distribution of genre families in the corpus, most of which are represented across all the disciplinary groupings. Figures Two and Three, however, show that the overwhelming majority of Arts and Humanities texts and slightly more than half the Social Sciences texts belong in the ‘essay’ genre family, while Figures Four and Five show that texts from the Life Sciences and particularly the Physical Sciences are more evenly spread across a wider range of genres.



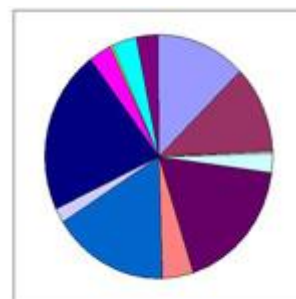
**Figure 1: Distribution of genre families**



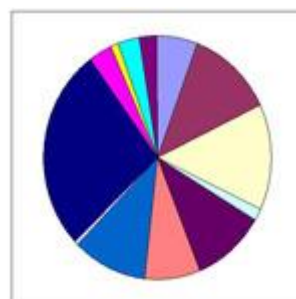
**Figure 2: Arts and Humanities**



**Figure 3: Social Sciences**



**Figure 4: Life Sciences**



**Figure 5: Physical Sciences**

Science students may produce less writing in the course of their studies, but it would appear that they need to write in a greater variety of registers, and therefore draw on a wider range of linguistic devices to achieve appropriate communicative effects.

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# Rhetorical Structure in EFL Students' Online Discussion Postings<sup>13</sup>

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## Introduction

This paper examines the rhetorical structure of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' online discussion postings. The participants are 26 English students in a Thai university whose level of language skills ranges between intermediate and higher intermediate. In this study, an online discussion activity was employed as part of a writing course, aiming to provide students an alternative medium to communicate in the target language. Throughout, each online discussion is organised by four or five students sharing opinions in groups on the topics assigned by the teacher. The corpus consists of five online discussions with 281 postings, having a total of 52,969 words contributed by teacher and students.

## The Findings

Overall, online discussion postings are commonly organised by students with three broad moves, namely: opening bonding, responding and closing bonding. The two bonding moves function to foreground solidarity with the reader (cf. Stenglin, 2004) through, for example, a salutation or banter in an opening bonding move and a call or signature in a closing bonding move while responding moves negotiate mainly the content of the task assigned by the teacher. In this study, almost all of students' postings contain at least the responding move discussing the content of the topic while the two bonding moves sometimes do not exist. Therefore, opening bonding and closing bonding moves are optional generic stages of online discussion postings and the responding move is obligatory. This paper examines in particular the rhetorical structure of the responding move in one student's posting to illustrate how different genres are used by learners (see full analysis in table 1).

## Generic Structure in Responding Move

In this study, most of the online discussions are organised in response to the tasks assigned by the

teacher, so responding moves require a great deal of content discussion, resulting in texts of different types of genre. The discussion of some of the most common types is made in 3.1- 3.3 below.

## Self Introduction

A self introduction is a common genre found in discussion one when the task assigns students to begin their early session with a brief introduction about themselves. Table 1 clearly shows that after a salutation, Jitra identifies herself by introducing her names and nicknames. In a biodata, her information in terms of place of birth, age and study is given. After that, further affective details are discussed regarding her accommodation. This stage can also be found in other students' introduction where diverse experiential content is discussed, but what is consistent across is first person affect (e.g. 'impress', 'afraid' – see Martin and White, 2005). This stage is therefore labelled 'feelings' in this paper. The right term is still searched for to identify this particular stage. Moreover, it is important to mention here that a genre of a self introduction proposed may be community-specific. That is, it is not claimed that this genre is universal on online discussions everywhere (though it might be), but it has developed in response to the demand of this task with this group of students. To tell if it is more widespread, further research is needed.

## Exposition

Another type of genre frequently utilised in students' responding move is an exposition (Butt *et al.*, 2000). The example can be seen in Jitra's posting presented in table 1, which demonstrates that when discussing her opinions about the movie, she begins with the introduction of a topic, followed by a statement of her position. Then, her argument is made to support her position with example, and finally, reinforcement is made to reaffirm her position. Even though the generic structure of a 'classic' exposition can not be realised here, but this part of Jitra's posting mirrors the structure of an exposition in that (1) the social purpose of the discussion is 'to persuade the reader that something is the case' (Hammond et al, 1992; Gerot and Wignell, 1994), (2) a clear argument is made in this part of her posting, (3) the text is structurally organised according to the demand of the task which requires students to discuss the topic assigned by making arguments with strong support

<sup>13</sup> This paper was given at the 2007 BAAL conference in Edinburgh.

and (4) key schematic stages of an exposition can be identified (see table 1).

In this study, an exposition is a dominating type of genre which occurs in all five discussions in part because students are supposed to discuss their opinion in light of the topic assigned, and try to convince others to agree with their points by making arguments with strong and convincing support. Meanwhile, a self introduction frequently appears in discussion one where the task assigns students to begin with a self description. These genres are utilised independently in some of students' postings however they sometimes are combined with other genres to constitute the whole online discussion posting. This complicated structure is discussed in 3.3 below.

### ***Complicated Generic Structure in Responding Move***

In some discussions, students' postings instantiate more than one genre. The example of Jitra's posting in table 1 shows that the two genres of self introduction and exposition are combined to constitute the whole posting. That is to say, the task in discussion one requires students to begin with a short introduction about themselves before discussing the movie. To comply with the task, Jitra begins with a self introduction, and later on organises her opinion as an exposition when the movie is discussed. Furthermore, the same posting has a more intricate structure in that the structure of an anecdote is embedded within the exposition when a support for her argument is made, having the schematic stages of 'abstract', 'orientation', 'crisis' and 'reaction' (Gerot and Wignell, 1994-see table 1). Most importantly, the linguistic features at the final stage of her exposition also share similar characteristics with those of closing bonding move when joking and laughing are made before ending her contribution. Despite problems in spelling and phonology (grade = glade), she has demonstrated a sophisticated control of the target language and manipulated the generic potential effectively to fulfil the expectations of someone reading an exposition and an online discussion.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper, I initially proposed that online discussion postings are mainly organised by students with three broad moves: opening bonding, responding and closing bonding. Then, I have examined in particular the common genres emerged within the responding move and demonstrated that there is variation in the

manifestation of different genres partly due to different demands of the task assigned by the teacher. On the basis of a detailed study of Jitra's online discussion posting in the study on which this short paper is based, I have found that the task plays an important role on variation in generic structure of students' postings. This issue is very important for the teacher to be aware of when designing tasks for students to practice the language. Moreover, the findings of this study show that a range of 'elemental' genres can be used and combined in different ways within the responding move. This reflects the special characteristics and that the 'online discussion postings' do not instantiate a genre, but a macro genre, in which the structural stability operates at a 'higher level' (Martin, 1994). This 'unique' pattern should be taken into account by the language teacher when examining students' online texts. That is, while the two bonding moves are mainly organised to maintain social purposes, feedback and assessment should be made in particular on responding moves, when the purpose is on practicing students' writing skills in more traditional educational genres.

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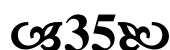
Macro Moves	Genre	Schematic stages	Embedded genre	Embedded stages	Text
Opening Bonding	Salutation				Hello everyone,
Responding	Self-introduction	Self identification			My name is Jittra, you can call me Gik
		Bio data			I was born in P... and now I am 20 years olds. I decided to study here because I would like to improve my poor English skills.
		Feelings			Now I stay at A...'s dormitory and it is place where I impress most in my life because I have never stayed at dormitory and at my dorm there is many things that I can gossip other all day. Especially,A... she always makes us quite afraid to talk with her, however she is one of my good and bad experiences to live in dormitory.
	Exposition	Position			From the movie, February. I impress this love story between Irada and Jiradet but I don't believe in destiny because I think every thing in the world happen with out destiny.
					It happens in real situation and continues in real situation too.
		Argument	Anecdote	Abstract	Like this example, my friend she lives in Bangkok and she believes in destiny, she thinks everything happen from destiny.
				Orientation	One day she had a chance to meet a guy and then they felt in love and thought it was destiny
				Crisis	but when the time pass their relationship broke down and everything stop. She sad and cried.
				Reaction	Is it destiny? Why don't we call it bad dream?
		Reinforcement			But In truth it was only one of many situations that we have to meet.
					It's not destiny, nothing can control our live but everything happen because we want it to happen we make it to happen.
Closing Bonding	Argument				And the last one is if there was destiny, why destiny did not get me "A" glade in Japanese and Basic Translation subjects.55555 <sup>14</sup>

**Table 1: Generic structure of Jitra's posting in discussion one, representing combining and embedding relationship of different genres**

<sup>14</sup> '55555' signifies laughter in Thai.







## Communication Strategies in English as a Lingua Franca

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### Introduction

This paper sets out to examine some features of communication in conversations where English is used as a Lingua Franca (ELF). As such, it seeks to follow and complement work carried out by Firth (1996), Meierkord (2000), House (2006) and Lesznyák (2004) on Lingua Franca processes, particularly by extending Lesznyák's pioneering study comparing ELF use with non-ELF.

The expression 'English as a Lingua Franca' here refers to English used by speakers of any variety of English in an international setting, including so-called 'native speakers' when these are not in a significant majority. The acceptability of including native speakers in ELF research has been noted by Seidlhofer (2004:211), House (2006:89) and Meierkord (2005), representing a move from earlier stances where ELF stood for English used among non-native speakers only. The desirability of including them has been emphasised in previous papers of mine (Roberts 2009 and forthcoming)

### Methodology

In order to examine particularities of ELF conversations it was decided to compare these with comparable conversations where English was not being used as a lingua franca but as a national, community or alternative language. Ten groups of either four or five speakers were constituted, making sure that speakers did not share another language and that, therefore, English would be the unique lingua franca. Each group was then asked to have a structured conversation on a given theme. The structured approach was adopted, rather than allowing a completely free hand, for the purposes of obtaining comparable data across all the conversations.

Group constituents were then asked to return for a further recording, this time in ten groups of co-nationals. Conversations were to follow the same structure as before, again, for reasons of comparability. Some groups thus reconstituted, were of 'native speakers' while others were using English among themselves as a community

language, 'local' lingua franca or as an alternative to another shared language.

The resulting recorded conversations were transcribed and subjected to detailed analysis in order to find what differences there were, if any, between ELF conversations and non-ELF ones, where the participants were largely the same.

In the first instance, the lexico-grammatical constructions in each conversation were analysed but with little to report: speakers made only negligible changes to their grammar and vocabulary when switching from an ELF conversation to a conversation with their co-nationals.

It was decided, therefore, to apply a deeper analysis and, using tools from Interactional Sociolinguistics and Communication Accommodation Theory, the co-operative nature of both sorts of conversation was investigated.

### Results

In line with Meierkord's (2000) findings, the ELF conversations were found to contain more evidence of co-operativeness than the non-ELF ones. Interestingly, the ways in which co-operativeness was expressed were different in the ELF conversations compared to the conversations among co-nationals.

This paper focuses on three participants in particular, a German, a Chinese and an American. The three people took part in an ELF conversation (with a further two participants) and then in separate conversations with their co-nationals.

A prominent feature of the German speaker's turns in the ELF conversation was the use of laughter as a sign of co-operativeness and convergence (Meierkord 2002:120, Firth 1996:254, Lesznyak 2004:236), in particular when the speaker might have been aware of possible friction. Laughter was practically absent in the conversation among German co-nationals.

The Chinese speaker made substantial use of downtoners in the ELF conversation, seemingly in order to compensate for turns where it might be perceived that he is adopting a position of power (Prodromou 2005) or to mark a social bond (Jucker *et al.* 2003:1766). Downtoners were completely absent from the conversation among Chinese co-nationals.

The American participant in the ELF conversation used an inductive discourse strategy to introduce

his main point. Inductive discourse strategies are considered important to establish face before going on with the topic (Scollon and Scollon 1995, Ch5) and are normally not associated with 'Western' cultures. The American speakers used the converse, deductive discourse strategy in their community conversation.

As these three cases show, while speakers do not seem to modify significantly their grammar and vocabulary when communicating in ELF, they do appear to make considerable changes to their conversational style.

## Conclusion

Given that the complete data set is small (about 50,000 words in all) there may be little as yet to conclude. But if a larger corpus threw up similar results, then it would be fruitful to enquire further and to investigate, for example, the extent to which ELF conversation features are behaviours learned from 'native-speakerdom' or through teaching processes, or part of an ELF process of sharing and pooling.

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## Grounding Frame Elements Identification in Corpus Collocational Patterns

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In this paper, representative corpora are referred to as fundamental tools to explore the relations between corpus data and frame elements. Emphasis is put on the analysis of collocational patterns which can be extracted through automatic procedures – positional and frequency-based – and the application of probabilistic criteria, considering statistical association as closely linked to co-occurrence frequency.

It is argued that concordances and collocations provide a factual basis in the description of the frames evoked and shared by a linguistic community. They are therefore examined not only as a phenomenon important in its own right but also as empirical evidence of background conceptual knowledge and for the contribution they can give to the disambiguation and identification of lexical units opening new views to the configuration of culturally shared conventions and cognitive schemata.

To explore the parallels that can be identified in the collocation description and in frame elements reference is made to Firthian approach, and to Minsky's and Fillmore's studies.

Conventionality, repetitiveness and shared experience are focused as common characterizing aspects.

Repetitiveness in word co-selection and co-occurrence are here seen as evidence of what is typical and routine in language use and in the experience both of the individuals and of their linguistic community.

In particular Minsky is referred to for his description of the notion of frames as associated to stereotyped situations. According to Minsky, the "top levels of a frame are fixed and represent things that are always true about the supposed situation". At the lower levels the structure of frames may be well represented in terms of terminals, fillers and default values. Default values are described as loosely attached to their terminals which can be replaced by new items that "fit better" the new

situation. From a linguistic viewpoint, default values are analysed as given elements which may be presupposed, while fillers are seen as text elements being explicitly introduced by the speaker. They may be different on the basis of different experiences lived by people – both as individuals and as social groups. The presence of default values seems to support the presence of persisting elements in language use which are evoked in commonsense, real-world frames.

Parallels can be easily found with Fillmore's frame semantics. According to Fillmore the epistemic links that connect a term with a set of beliefs are structured by a general knowledge frame that serves as a set of default assumptions for the term understanding. Frame core elements are seen as normal, "persisting" part of a frame. They coexist with optional, non-persisting elements. Frames are described as frameworks of concepts or terms which are linked together as a system and give structure or coherence on aspects of human experience. They constitute the underlying, implicit, conceptual structures invoked by individuals to shape and interpret their experiences and are clues to defining the role concepts evoked by linguistic forms to which they are conventionally associated.

To illustrate the views so far expressed, I will consider, by way of example, some collocates in CORIS/CODIS – a 120-million word synchronic reference corpus of written Italian, containing texts dated, with some approximation, from the 1980s and 1990s to the present time, with a somewhat longer time scale as far fiction is concerned.

The disambiguation process brought about by contextual and distribution analysis is fairly clear in the following graph where an automatic procedure recursively generates and compares collocation sets using the log-likelihood measure, and visualizes the results in a 3D-graph structure where stronger relation between collocates are grouped together.

"Calcio" as a chemical element (calcium) is differentiated from "calcio" (kick) evoking the Impact Frame – to hit forcefully something or someone, and particularly to hit a ball with a foot – calcio di inizio (kick off) as well as is distinguished from a game and competitive activity such as football – a game played by two teams of 11 players using a round ball – where we find "partita di, campionato di, squadra di" in N-2 and N-1 positions. Interestingly, the graph shows homogeneity when the collocates are interconnected and it shows separation when

collocates “have little in common.” Polysemy is made visible. The polysemy of the word is disambiguated by the representation of its collocates.

Their constellation contributes to distinguish the different meanings and to pair a word with just one of its meanings.

Collocates result to pave the way to capture lexical units and the frames they evoke. The different meaning contexts are visualized and can be recognized. In Fillmore’s terms, lexical units are distinguished and identified.

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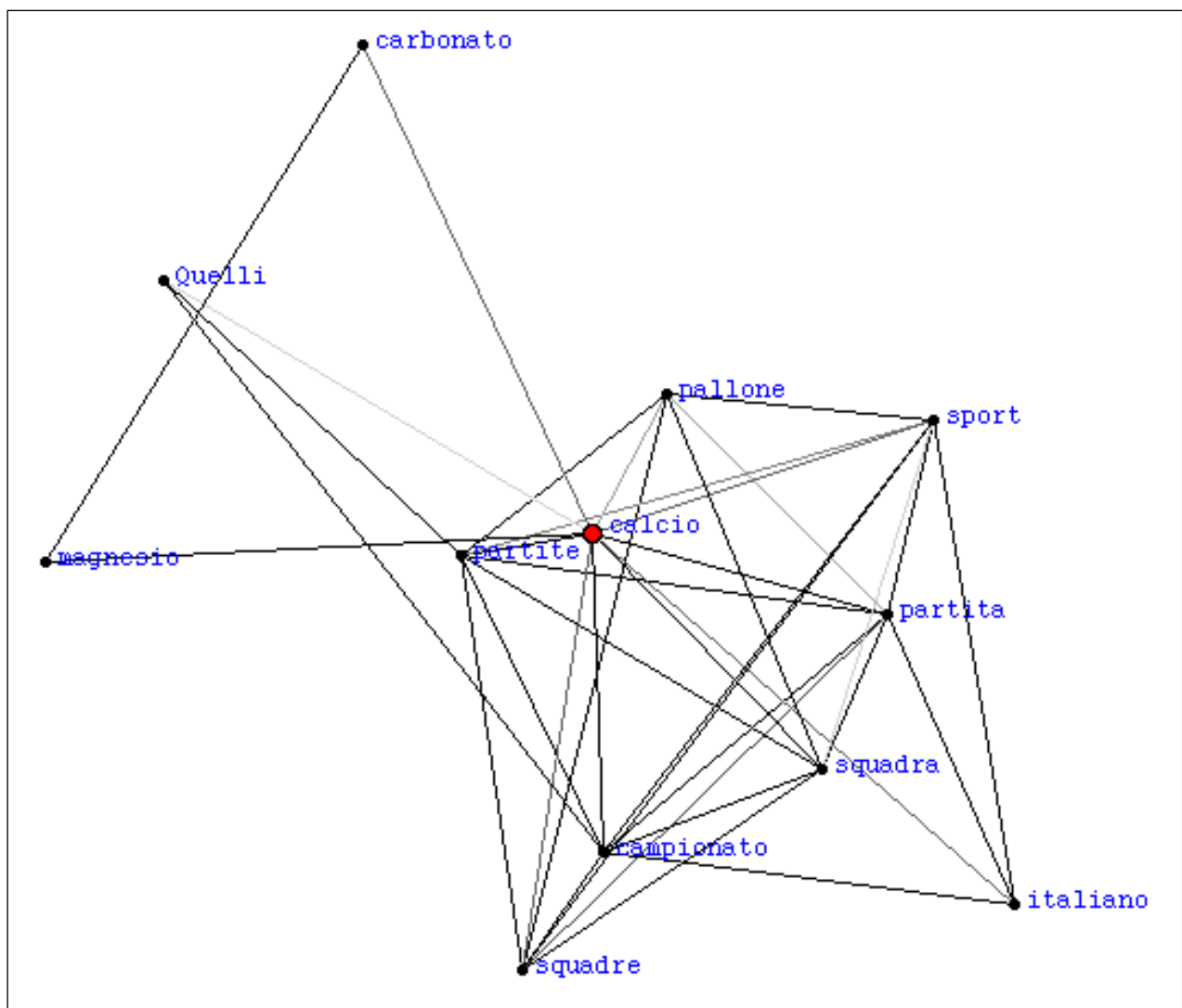


Figure 1: Contextual and distribution analysis



## Measuring Aptitude - Polish adaptation of *Modern Language Aptitude Test* by Carroll and Sapon

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In quantitative research, it is important to accurately and consistently characterize independent variables. In second language acquisition (SLA) research foreign language aptitude has been one of the most frequently investigated individual difference (ID) variables and, as extensive research has shown, it is responsible for a considerable portion of the variance in foreign language (FL) learning achievement. This research wouldn't be possible without valid and reliable measures of language aptitude. Two widely known tools created to gauge language aptitude exist for English: The Modern Language Aptitude Test - MLAT (Carroll and Sapon 1959) and Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery - PLAB (Pimsleur 1966). Since the time of their publication attempts have been made to produce similar measures of FL aptitude for other languages (Japanese, Swedish, Hungarian). However, no such test has been created for Polish. The purpose of this study is to fill the need for a valid and reliable test of language aptitude for the L1 Polish population.

The main aim of the presentation is to describe the development, piloting and initial validation of a language aptitude test for Polish adult learners of foreign languages. In the first theoretical part of the presentation the key concepts involved in aptitude research are briefly presented, the characteristics of the construct are discussed and Carroll's model of FL aptitude, together with its operationalisation in the form of the MLAT, is described. This is followed by a brief description of the Polish context of quantitatively oriented ID research characterised by a significant under-representation of studies devoted to cognitive IDs as shown by the examination of the contents of professional journals published over the last twenty years, and conference programmes held over the same period of time. The statistics revealed that cognitive IDs in general, and language aptitude in particular, constitute only a fraction of research that is reported in the articles, and in the papers read at conferences. It is believed that the main reason for the faint interest of Polish applied linguists in this

aspect of learner IDs is the lack of reliable, valid, standardised and workable tests of FL aptitude.

There are two possible solutions to the problem of unavailability of appropriate tests of language aptitude. One is to create a new test of FL learning ability, and the other to adapt a test which already exists for other languages. Following Hornowska and Paluchowski (2004), and Hambleton (2006) several reasons in favour of test adaptation are discussed, among them economy, and safety connected with using an extensively trialled tool with established theoretical validity. Other reasons include lack of local experts in the mental dimension measured, and the desire to relate country-specific studies to research done internationally. It is because of those considerations that the MLAT was chosen as the best model to follow in the current adaptation project. Consequently, it was decided that the Polish FL aptitude measure should: a) represent all four components of Carroll's model of FL aptitude; b) retain as much as possible from the original test, and c) be 'doable' in a typical class period of 50 minutes. This meant creating a new task to operationalise inductive language learning ability; eliminating 'Number learning' as it duplicated constructs measured by other tasks, and shortening two tasks: 'Spelling clues' and 'Words in sentences'. All in all, five tasks (sub-tests) entered the Polish version of the battery. The tasks taken from the MLAT were adapted either by recreating the construct of the original task using the Polish material: 'Spelling clues' and 'Words in sentences', or by translating the task's content and retaining the form of the original as close as possible – 'Phonetic script' and 'Paired associates'. The 'Artificial language' task had to be newly written, as it was not included in the MLAT.

The experimental part of the adaptation project involved three stages. In the first stage, after a detailed analysis of the constructs of the tasks chosen for the adaptation, the pilot version was field tested on samples of the target population of young adults (October 2006). The second stage (January/February 2007) involved item analysis of all the tasks and the preparation of the final version of the test. The aim of the third stage (March till May 2007) was to establish the psychometric properties of the test, and to determine its validity by finding out about the tool's potential to predict the criterion. To this end the battery was administered to a sample of 250 subjects representing the target population of 18 to 20 year olds in various types of secondary schools in Poznań, a city in western Poland of ca. 700,000 inhabitants.

The main validation analysis involved comparing the participants' aptitude scores with various types of proficiency/achievement scores. Those were traditional 'paper and pencil' tests of vocabulary, grammar, reading and listening comprehension administered to the participants during the course of their L2 instruction at schools. No standardized measures of L2 proficiency were used. Standardized scores (z-scores) had been obtained for L2 measures before they were analyzed statistically. For the purpose of this study a general L2 proficiency 'index score' was obtained for each participant, that is to say, no specific language component variables were produced. This would have been difficult as no uniform L2 measure was used in all the groups of participants involved in the study.

The analysis of the battery showed two things. First, the lower values of  $r$  for the relationships among the sub-tests of the whole battery ( $r$ 's from 0.17 to 0.38) is to be interpreted as relative independence of the constructs tapped onto by those tasks. Similarly, higher values of  $r$  for the relationships between each task and the total battery score ( $r$ 's from 0.41 to 0.80) are indicative of the common contribution each task makes towards the general construct, of which it is a part. Secondly, the analysis of the battery's potential to predict FL learning outcomes showed that, the test explains ca. 10 per cent of variance in L2 measures in the sample studied ( $r=0.31$ ). This value is not low, given the fact that the participants in the current study represented a fairly pre-selected sample of the target population, which affected the range of scores as revealed in the L2 and aptitude measures, thus deflating the magnitude of the correlation coefficient. This factor will have to be taken into consideration in a validation study to follow this one.

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# Multimodal Computer Mediated Communication

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## Introduction

Using Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) learners and tutors at a distance can interact individually or as a group. These interactions can take place either simultaneously (Synchronous CMC), such as text-chat and videoconferencing, or subsequently (Asynchronous CMC), such as email, blog and forum. While some of these interactions would be realised in a single mode, such as email, voice-mail, forum posts, etc., others could be multi-modal, such as emails including pictures, videos and hyperlinks, Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) that allow text/audio/video communication, application sharing, voting and whiteboard or virtual worlds with text/audio communication and graphical representation of users (avatars) in a virtual space.

## CMC Research in Language Learning

Studies in CMC for language learning have focused on either Asynchronous CMC (ACMC) (e.g., Hauck, 2007; Ware and O'Dowd, 2008) or Synchronous CMC (SCMC). SCMC studies on written communication reported equal participation (Warschauer, 1996). It was also observed to be similar to speaking (Tudini, 2003; Sotillo, 2000) which led to an investigation of the effects of text-based SCMC on the development of foreign language speaking skills. Positive results were reported by Payne and Whitney (2002) and Satar and Özdener (2008). Many scholars to date have further examined written SCMC from a variety of perspectives for foreign language development (Kötter, 2003; O'Rourke, 2005; Pellettieri, 2000; Satar, 2007; Smith, 2003).

As the internet bandwidth increased and became widely accessible, synchronous voice-based communication also became feasible. However, research on synchronous voice CMC in relation to foreign language learning remained relatively limited (Hampel and Baber, 2003; Hauck and Hampel, 2005; Lamy, 2004; Özdener and Satar, 2008; Satar and Özdener, 2008). Research on video SCMC (Jauregi ve Banados, 2008; O'Dowd, 2000; Wang, 2004a, 2004b, 2007) and CMC in virtual worlds (Peterson, 2006) is even scarcer.

## Theories of Language Learning

Several Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories support the use of CMC for FL learning purposes, particularly psycholinguistic theories such as Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1983). Based on these theories a variety of analytical units have been utilised to evaluate the potential of SCMC, such as Negotiation for Meaning (Varonis and Gass, 1985) and Recasts and Self-corrections (Lai and Zhao, 2006).

Recently the socio-cultural theory for SLA has also gained momentum in studying CMC interaction (Darhower, 2007; Gánem Gutiérrez, 2006; Lamy, 2007). Socio-cultural theory assumes that cognitive development depends on the social context in which it takes place and is a result of meaningful interactions between the learner and the mentor (either the teacher or a more knowledgeable peers) (Lantolf and Appel, 1994). It underpins that language learning takes place “not *through* interaction but *in* interaction.” (Ellis, 2000, p. 209). It also takes the social, affective and general cognitive needs of the learner into consideration within a notion of ‘whole person’ where learning occurs via “engaging with and attributing meaning to the world, including self in it” (Boot and Hodgson, 1987, p.6).

## Social Presence

In terms of the underlying notions of socio-cultural theory of SLA, that (1) learning occurs through interaction, (2) interactional discourse outweighs transactional discourse and (3) a consideration of learners' social and affective needs, ‘social presence’ could be considered to have a substantial role in FL learning. The term social presence is defined as “the salience of the other” and “the consequent salience of their interpersonal interactions” in mediated communication (Short, Williams and Christie, 1976) and as ‘a sense of being together’ (Hwang and Park, 2007). It is argued that as the perception of social presence increases, interpersonal relationship among learners will also increase (Walter and Burgoon, 1992 in Bozkaya, 2008). Positive correlations between social presence and satisfaction in distance education are reported in Richardson and Swan (2003).

Batstone, Stickler, Duensing and Heins (2007) and Yamada and Akahori (2007) investigated the role of social presence in FL learning in the CMC context. The former used a social presence framework developed by Rourke, Anderson,



Garrison and Archer (2001) for analysis and in their conclusions emphasised the need for better analytical schemes of social presence in synchronous spoken conferences. Yamada and Akahori (2007), on the other hand, found that interlocutor's image was "most effective in promoting consciousness of presence" and voice was found to serve as reinforcement to image. Their participants also reported that when their partner's image was visible they felt more comfortable in communicating, because they "can see the partner's personality and non-verbal behaviors."

As pointed out by Hwang and Park (2007) the main challenge for studies investigating social presence is measurement. Various questionnaire items have been developed in order to measure perceived social presence, but not much has been done to develop a measurement schedule based on actual data. One such tool is the social presence template (Rourke *et al.*, 2001) developed for the analysis of interactions among learners in written asynchronous online communication.

## Discussion

As new modes of computer mediated communication become accessible, such as videoconferencing and virtual worlds, the need to extent research to include other modes of CMC for foreign language learning purposes also increases. Although there is quite a lot of research on the effects of SCMC, many of these are limited to written communication only and research on audio, video and virtual words seem to be insufficient. There is also inadequate amount of research that explores social presence, its potential for foreign language learning and the relationships between the two.

*This poster presentation aimed to outline a second year PhD study being carried out by the author at The Open University, UK, Faculty of Education and Language Studies under the supervision of Prof. James A. Coleman, Dr. Ursula Stickler and Dr. Barbara Heins. From a socio-cultural perspective to language learning, the research focuses on how social presence is established between dyads in online videoconferencing and how it can be analysed and measured. An analysis template is expected to be the outcome of this exploratory study which could then benefit research that explores social presence in other modes of online communication as well as the links between social presence and language learning.*

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## Testing Times for New Citizens: media discourses around citizenship tests in three countries

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### Introduction

Previous research on the discursive construction of the nation in media discourse has repeatedly shown that the media tends to construct an ideologically and culturally homogenous nation (van Dijk 1993, Blommaert & Verschueren 1998, Wodak et al. 1999, Blackledge 2002, Bishop & Jaworski 2003, Ricento 2003, Bennett 2007). Although the specifics of such constructions may vary *within* a nation, they nonetheless tend to be visions of homogeneity. This paper investigates the question of variability *between* nations, with a particular focus on the discursive construction of the nation in relation to immigration. It aims to detect the elements of nation and citizenship discourses and their representational practices and discourse strategies, by investigating nations with very different histories of immigration – the US, the UK and Germany. The data for this project derive from ten American, ten British and ten German newspaper articles on new citizenship tests in each country, published the day after such a test or a new version thereof was announced. They date from 1/11/2005 in the UK, 1/12/2006 in the US, and 15/3/2006 for the Bundesland of Hessa in Germany.

### Results

It is argued that in the newspapers of all three countries in this data set, homogenous nations are constructed in relation to a common past (history), present and future (government, state, democracy), a common culture and *one* common language. While there are certainly many similarities in the media discourses of these three countries, they differ in their evaluative comments and on the inclusion of immigrants. Discourses in the American newspapers focus on the new test and are much more assimilationist than the British and German discourses, while the British and German newspaper articles centre on a discussion of Britishness and Germanness rather than the test itself. This is illustrated by investigating four discourse features: media frames, test goals, lexical evaluation of tests and immigrants, and internal evaluation of tests and immigrants. These

discourse features contribute to four discourse strategies: (1) separation, (2) typification, (3) pejoration, and (4) legitimization of homogenization, which will be discussed below.

### Frames

Following Scheufele's (1999:65) definition of frames as a "central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events", it is argued that the American, British and German newspapers use different frames. The dominant frames are paraphrased below and illustrated with headlines that best exemplify the central organizing idea of the newspaper article. Results show that the American articles are framed with a focus on the citizenship test, the British articles focus on Britishness and immigrants, while the German articles centre on a discussion of Germanness and the test procedures.

US - dominant frame: Improved exam tests deeper knowledge

*New citizens will need deeper knowledge (New York Times)*

*New test for citizenship is more 'why' than 'what' (Chicago Tribune)*

UK - dominant frame: Immigrants face a (criticized and unfair) test to become 'British'

*Test foreigners face to become British. Exam criticized for leaving out history but including regional accents. (The Telegraph)*

*Are you British enough to handle a spilt pint? Foreigners face citizenship test (The Herald)*

Germany - dominant frame: Naturalization preceded by criticised test to become German

*100 questions – it is so hard to become German. What did Casper David Friedrich paint?*

*Who discovered the Cholera bacillus? New citizens will have to know – a minister thinks*

*(Hamburger Abendblatt)*

*Knowledge test and oath. The Hessian government introduces naturalization plans (Frankfurter Allgemeine)*

*100 questions about Germanness (Die Tageszeitung)*

Thus, national identity is presented as stable and homogeneous in the US, but seems to be a matter of debate in Germany and the UK.

### Lexical and internal evaluation

Analysis of lexical and internal evaluation sheds more light on these dynamics and reveals four major strategies in the formulation of the nation:

(1) separation, realized in the rhetoric of ‘us’ the nation versus ‘them’ the immigrants, whereby immigrants undergo ‘othering; (2) typification, the use of stereotypes that represent the nation as homogeneous, stable and timeless; (3) pejoration, the representation of immigrants as negative and disadvantaged; and finally (4) legitimization of homogenization, i.e. discourse legitimizing the existence of a homogeneous nation (e.g. by pointing out the necessity of a citizenship test), as noted above in the discussion of frames.

With respect to internal evaluation, this study restricts itself to what Labov (1972) calls “comparators” – devices that evaluate events by placing them against the background of other events that might have happened but did not. I differentiate between counterfactual evaluators (something could have been the case, but was not: such as, history was not included in the test), future evaluators (reporting on future events and developments that will be the case in the future but are not at the moment: such as, history will be included in 2010), and modal evaluators (making possible speculation about events that could, might or should come to be: such as, history should have been included).

The American newspaper articles evaluate the test very positively, presenting it with positive or neutral words like *new*, *current*, *revised*, *better*, *fair*. There is much less negative evaluation than in the British press, with only two American articles using negative words (like *unusual* or *not fair*) – and even then these refer to individual questions rather than the test as a whole. While the British and German newspaper articles mainly use neutral words to describe the test, such as *new* and *computer-based*, half of them also use words that seem negative in this context like *difficult*, *hard*, *rigorous* and *controversial*. There is also much more counterfactual internal evaluation in the British and German newspaper articles than in the American newspapers (a total of five occurrences in the American papers, 20 in the British, and 12 in the German).

Looking at the most frequently occurring test goals mentioned in the newspapers and keeping in mind what was already said about test evaluation, we can see that in the US, the nation is constructed in relation to a common past (history), present and future (government, state, democracy), a common culture and *one* common language. American articles also articulate the common understanding that newcomers have to be ‘assimilated’ or ‘americanized’. These goals are taken for granted, indicating that it is assumed that the nation is

homogenous. Unlike the British and German newspapers, none of these articles acknowledge that most Americans would probably fail the test. As in the discussion of lexical and internal evaluation above, the test’s validity is not questioned, but legitimized.

Comparing American, British and German presentation of the test goals, we can see that the construct of nation is presented within similar parameters of past, present, future, culture and *one* language. However, they do differ in one aspect: the British and Germans never use the term *assimilation*, preferring *integration*. As indicated above, the British and German press frequently question the tests’ validity, pointing out that many natives would be unable to answer certain questions, listing topics that are not included but should have been, or highlighting the random and quiz-show nature of many of the questions. This, combined with the results discussed for evaluation, indicates that the test is portrayed as not only failing to grasp Britishness or Germanness, but also as a questionable and illegitimate screening method. However, while homogeneity may not be legitimized through the test, it is assumed in the construction of the test goals. As noted in relation to frames, the British and German newspapers focus on a discussion of Britishness or Germanness and the inability of a test to fully capture this concept. Thus, while Britishness and Germanness are partially deconstructed, this deconstruction is based on typification – an idea of a homogeneous, timeless and traditional nation that has no need for additional legitimization through a test.

While the three countries differ in their evaluation of the test, they share a similar attitude to immigrants. This generally negative – albeit often subtly so – evaluation is indexical of strategies of separation and pejoration. In the US, the word field *immigrant* often appears with negative words or quantifiers, such as *less-educated*, *600 000*, *numerous*, *millions of*, *seven million legal and illegal*, etc. The quantifiers in particular link immigrants with an image of masses of people, separating them from the individual reader and simultaneously creating negative prosody for the word field of *immigrant*. Separation and pejoration are working hand in hand here. Internal evaluation participates in this trend too, occurring a total of 31 times in the ten American articles.

Both the test and immigrants are evaluated negatively in the British and German newspaper articles. In the UK, the word field *immigrant* appears with references to *poor English* or quantifiers such as *thousands of*, *110,000*, etc. The

same is true for the German newspaper articles. Internal evaluation of immigrants is also negative in the British and German articles (with a total of 35 occurrences in the British papers and 15 in the German press), especially with regard to what immigrants should do. Another interesting feature of the German articles is that immigrants are often rendered invisible, hence the much lower frequency of evaluation than in the American and British articles. Immigrants are hidden behind a bureaucratic process or abstract nouns such as *naturalization* (*Einbürgerung*). Although the articles from all three countries were roughly the same length, the German newspapers only make 55 direct references to immigrants, compared with 142 direct references in the American articles and 123 in the British press (see Table 1). While the British use of pronouns for the word field of *immigrant* (another means of avoiding a direct term) suggests a similar tendency in the UK, it is much less extreme than in the German articles. Newspapers in both countries also use the term *foreigner* (*Ausländer*), which evokes negative feelings in both nations. Thus, the terms used for immigrants also provide more evidence of a strategy of separation, as many of them clearly represent immigrants as not part of the ingroup.

US	UK	Germany
(Citizenship) applicants (46)	They/those (34)	They/those (16)
Immigrants (44)	People (24)	People willing to get naturalized (11)
They/those (15)	Candidates (16)	(Citizenship) applicants (11)
People (10)	(Citizenship) applicants (12)	Foreigners (10)
Future citizens (7)	Migrants (12)	Migrants (2)
Legal immigrants (3)	New citizens (9)	People (2)
Other (17)	Foreigners (8)	Candidates (2)
	Immigrants (8)	Immigrants (1)

**Table 1: Terms for immigrants shown according to frequency of occurrence**

Thus, these newspapers construct a distinct place for immigrants in their respective societies. The American articles suggest that being an immigrant is not desirable: immigrants are ‘applicants’ who come to the US and are expected to join what is already there. These articles articulate very clear expectations of what is needed to overcome separation and pejoration: assimilation. The British and German articles also convey the message that being an immigrant is not desirable through their negative evaluation of the word field of *immigrants*. Yet, while the American articles paint a welcoming (albeit assimilationist) picture by

using words such as *immigrants* and *citizenship applicants*, the British and German press are ambivalent about the status of immigrants. The most frequently used terms either leave open any future commitment (pronouns, *people*, *migrants*) or clearly present immigrants as outside the national ingroup (again using othering pronouns and the term *foreigner*). It is not made clear how they are expected to overcome the clearly formulated separation between citizens and immigrants.

### Identity and citizenship tests

This article shows that the media in America, Britain and Germany construct homogenous nations through typification along the parameters of past, present, future, culture and *one* language. This is done directly in the US and indirectly in Germany and the UK, which seemingly deconstruct the idea of Britishness or Germanness and criticize the test, while retaining the assumption that a true homogeneous core national identity exists. This is clearly demonstrated by the analysis of the test goals and frames.

While the strategy of pejoration is present in all the newspaper articles concerned, with immigrants usually represented as negative or disadvantaged, the three countries vary in their evaluation of both tests and immigrants and the inclusion of immigrants. These differences are indicative of variations in their strategies of separation and the legitimization of homogenization. While American discourses are clearly assimilationist and inviting to immigrants, British and German discourses encompass the two conflicting concepts of integration and separation, indicating the transitional nature of immigration in these two countries. There are also national differences in strategies of legitimizing homogenisation: analysis of test evaluations revealed that the test – and by extension the existence of the nation – is fully legitimized in the US, while Germany and Britain criticize the test but do so in a way that legitimizes the existence of the nation on the basis of tradition.

What are the reasons for these differences between the US on the one hand, and the UK and Germany on the other? The American discourses do not favour the multiculturalism one might expect in an immigrant-based country. Personal histories (we’ve assimilated, you do it too) and historical developments like racial segregation, nationalist language norms and the idea of the melting pot seem to have engendered an assimilationist ideology that is reflected in the country’s media discourses. It seems much easier for the US to

impose assimilationist discourses as history, immigration, tradition, stability and assimilation are all intertwined, and a large proportion of the population acquired their nationality through residence or birth just a few generations ago.

Differences in discourse may also be due to different attitudes towards citizenship in Britain and Germany, where the belief that national identity is acquired through birth, place and lineage is still very strong. The discourse of homogeneity seems to be rooted in ethnicity and history in Germany and the UK, and is much more ideological in the US. The longstanding German and British principle of excluding 'foreigners' is not only ineffective, given the de facto multicultural nature of both countries, but also needs to be replaced. Public discourses in both of these countries seem to shy away from the principle of assimilation embraced by the US, but their tentative use of the discourse of integration suggests uncertainty about what it actually entails and what is to become of immigrants.

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## From ESLO 1 to ESLO 2: measuring the sociolinguistic variations within two corpora of spoken French

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### Introduction

The use of oral corpus data has nowadays become essential for the study and measure of variations from a pragmatic, morpho-syntactic or even social point of view.

This paper will present both the analysis undertaken on the ESLO 1 oral corpus and the constitution of a second corpus called ESLO 2 in order to describe how the French language spoken in Orléans has changed between 1968 and 2008.

### Presentation of the data under analysis

#### What is ESLO 1?

The Enquête Sociolinguistique à Orléans (Socio-Linguistic Survey in Orléans: ESLO 1) was carried out from 1968 to 1971 by a group of British scholars, French lecturers and sociolinguists from the University of Essex in Colchester (Blanc et al., 1971; Ross, 1974, 1979).

The data gathered add in total to 300 hours of speech and constitute an important oral corpus estimated to 4.5 million words; with 157 face-to-face interviews along with other recordings. Hence the interest of this oral corpus not only lies within its size and variety, but also within its sociological dimension.

#### Origins and aims of the corpus

Lonergan *et al.* (1974:1) state in the catalogue of recordings that the origins of ESLO date back to 1966, at the time of the “audio-visual revolution” of modern language teaching in Great Britain. The introduction of new techniques, and most of all, the growing importance given to non-literary speech revealed an acute need of authentic samples of spontaneous spoken French.

### Our project: a reference corpus

#### A lack of large corpora of spoken French

It is necessary to remark that as far as spoken French is concerned, *even if important work is being carried out*, and even if French oral corpora already do exist, few oral corpora are free to access and at the linguist’s disposal. Moreover, the methods and techniques used to exploit written data are not always very suitable to spoken data. And even if now new technologies are available to record spontaneous speech, digitize the sound and transcribe the files, we still have to note that a large corpus of spoken French in which the variations of the French language would be easily searchable, retrieved and analysed and which would be available to the scientific community as a whole does not exist... yet.

#### The Variling project

This project, called VARILING<sup>15</sup> (Analysis of the linguistic variations within corpora) and undertaken by the LLL team (Laboratoire Ligérien de Linguistique) aims at filling this gap and our objective is to create, analyse and distribute the ESLOs corpora.

The LLL team has started to exploit and analyse the sound archive from the 1970s (digitalization, tagging, exploitation, diffusion) but is also constituting a second survey, ESLO 2, within a variationist diachronic perspective in order to compare spoken French forty years on.

This new corpus called ESLO 2 will take up the main characteristics found in ESLO 1 but will adapt them to the current situation in order to constitute a corpus which may be comparable in terms of data gathering and archiving (Baude, 2006). The objective was set to 400 hours or so of sound documents, that is about 6 million words.

Put together ESLO 1 and 2 will form a collection of 700 hours of recording and more than 10 million words.

These two distinct ESLO corpora, which will eventually constitute a reference and prototypical corpus for spoken French, will make it possible to carry out observations of *diachronic variations* forty years on (from ESLO 1 to 2); as well as the

<sup>15</sup> Traitement des variations linguistiques dans les corpus  
/ Processing of the linguistic variations within corpora.

analysis of some *synchronic variations* within ESLO 1 – while ESLO 2 is still under construction.

### **Results – Synchronic variations within ESLO 1 / ESLOmelette**

I will report a study in which I examined the pronominal variations within interviews extracted from a sub-part of the ESLO 1 oral corpus. This sub-corpus is called “EslOmelette”. It is composed of 96 exchanges ‘question-answer’, which object is the description of the recipe for the omelette.

I analysed the variety of answers given to the following question « How do you make an omelette ? ». Such a study describing the variations which ensue from the variety of question forms employed by the interviewers reveals the importance the wording of the question has on the data collected during the interview, i.e. the response.

The variable effect of the form of the question posed will need to be taken into account by the interviewers undertaking the interviews in the new ESLO project. Hence one of the aims of this paper is to show how the analysis of a sub-part of the 1968 ESLO Corpus highlights the challenges for a researcher collecting sociolinguistic material and is useful to improve the design of a questionnaire, the conduct of a sociolinguistic interview and thus the data-collection for a new oral corpus.

### ***Pragmatic level – Variations within the form of the question***

In order to analyse the pronominal variations within the answer to a ‘specific’ question, I started by observing, at the pragmatic level, the variations in the way this unexpected question was asked: does the interviewer feel that he/she has to add a preamble to the question or not ? And as a result, what type of pronominal form is used?

### ***Morpho-syntactic level – Variations (of the pronominal form used) within the answers***

Then, at the morpho-syntactic level, I described how this pronominal variation within the question influenced the choice of the pronoun used in the answer.

### ***Analysis of the answers and classification***

Throughout the analysis and the observation of the variations within the responses, I noticed that a general trend prevailed:

Questions using the form *ON* (– *chez vous*) mainly trigger an answer containing a ‘type’-recipe (listing the several tasks undertaken in order to make an omelette) in which we find the pronoun *ON*. Whereas questions using the personal pronoun *vous* trigger an answer containing an ‘occurrence’-recipe (recounting a personal experience or explaining a particular way of making an omelette: how the interviewee does make the omelette) using the pronominal form *JE*.

### **Preliminary findings: diachronic variations forty years on (from ESLO 1 to 2)**

Finally, I will present some preliminary results obtained in a comparative study of ten interviewees from the original survey who were tracked down, met again and presented with a questionnaire similar to the one they had answered in 1968.

### **Conclusion**

I hope that this descriptive and exploratory study of a small sample of a big corpus of spoken French has shown that however modest in size a corpus may be, the linguist can always make interesting discoveries.

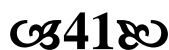
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## The Role of Mediation in L2 Vocabulary Learning

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Sociocultural research in SLA has largely focused on communicative aspects of learning, searching for a positive relationship between learning and scaffolding. Within such line of research, often social interaction has been considered an integral part of learning, at the expenses of other central elements of collaboration.

The theoretical foundation of such research focus sees the ZPD essentially as an indication of learners' general proficiency level, experts as the main factor driving development, and scaffolding as a tool to get to pre-established learning goals. The problem with such view is that it contradicts the sociocultural fundamental intuition that *learning leads development* and that, therefore, the learning goal of interactions cannot be set in advance but will vary depending on the specific learning situation, the way interaction unfold, as well as learners' upper learning limit. Attempts to answer to the problem of the validity and centrality of scaffolding include the limitation of the construct to 'peer scaffolding', the development of alternative metaphors such as 'collaborative dialogue', and the change of direction towards cultural tools (CTs) as alternative central features of collaborative interaction.

The present paper focuses on an ethnographic study following the lexical development of two advanced adult learners of English L2 over one year. In particular, we examined mediation in L2 vocabulary learning, reconsidering the role of scaffolding in the light of CTs' function in learning. We explored the CTs used in L2 vocabulary learning and teaching and their relationship to scaffolding and learning.

A case study methodology was used for a minimum control over the setting and for an in-depth exploration of the relationships among various aspects of the research issue, including the relationship between time and development. The combined use of testing, classroom observation, and interviewing allowed a multiple view of the research problem and compensated for the methods' intrinsic limitations. Descriptive statistics, microgenesis and content analysis were the main analytic instruments.

As for the findings of the study, three overall vocabulary learning strategies of L1 translation, L2 definition and use of the *Original Linguistic Context* (OLC), i.e. the linguistic context in which new words are first encountered, were observed to respectively use the CTs of *translation*, *explanation* and *inference*. An *explicit* and a *scaffolding* structure of talk and preferred relationships between CTs and such structures were also identified. Explanation was found to be the primary CT going with the explicit talk structure, while inferring was mainly found with scaffolding.

In terms of the cognitive content of the interactions of the study, the first two strategies relied mainly on the provision of solutions and their memorisation, while the use of the OLC had reconstruction of meaning through circumstantial evidence as its salient trait. The assistance provided by translations and explanations focussed on, and was limited to, producing knowledge of the specific new vocabulary that they treated. Such CTs necessitated the presence of an outside fixed source of information (expert or dictionary), and could not be used by learners alone. Conversely, the assistance provided by inference focussed on both the new words it dealt with and the method for reconstructing their meanings. Inference was potentially applicable to any new word that was encountered, with or without the presence of an expert, because the source of information partially coincided with the source of the problem.

In terms of talk structures, scaffolding was found to be indirectly linked to the learning as a sign that the CT of inference was being used. In other words, vocabulary learning occurred not because of the talk structure of scaffolding in itself but as a result of the implementation of inference, or as a result of the work of guessing that was done using all the circumstantial evidence on the new vocabulary, including the OLC, its manipulation and the extra information gradually arising during collaborative talk.

As for the cognitive quality of the observed CTs, translations and explanations are immediate, non-abstract CTs, relying on recognition, best suited at the beginning phases of L2 vocabulary development and in difficult learning situations where abstract thinking is cognitively costly. Conversely, inference is a slow, highly abstract CT typical of conceptual thinking. It relies on prediction and logical sequencing, and is best suited in advanced phases of L2 vocabulary development and in learning situations where

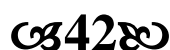
conceptual thinking can operate. CTs are always available on demand as parts of a strategic system ranging from object- to self-regulation.

Findings support the view that CTs are the content of collaboration, while scaffolding is one of the possible talk structures in which collaboration is organised, and in particular, it is the talk structure that, for its gradual, contingent and dialogic qualities, is best suited for the direct application of the CT of inference.

The shift in the view that CTs are central features of collaborative talk fits with the sociocultural insight that learning leads development in that they are applied depending on the learning situation, the way interaction unfolds as well as learners' level of proficiency. In particular, inference, as opposed to scaffolding, has the capacity for reconciling the split between transmissive and creative models of education, in that it keeps the reaching of solutions, which are fixed from the point of view of the linguistic code (the ultimate goal of the learning), as a work of discovery on learners' part.

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## Language Appropriation and Online Textual Identity

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### Introduction: Online textual identity and language learning

Identity – who and what you are and are becoming – is a crucial concern for new arrivals in a country. Global society in the post-colonial age is characterised by international movements of people, many of whom come to English-dominant countries with a need to learn English. Life in a new language and a new culture will inevitably also entail new ways of constructing identity in discourse. For example, while they are on courses of study, migrant learners of English might encounter electronic communication. This paper is part of a British Academy-funded project entitled *Identity Online*, which investigates an aspect of identity of multilingual learners who are migrants to the UK: online textual identity<sup>16</sup>. An online textual identity is created when someone engages in electronic literacy practices using ICTs such as email, text chat, web sites and blogs, and mobile phone messaging. Communication using new literacy technologies has profound implications for the notion of authorship and the construction of identity: by its nature, electronic communication offers the opportunity to develop and emphasise different aspects of identity with new sorts of writing, and in new, multilingual and globally-spread social spaces. Thus online textual identity is of a different order from other aspects of identity. And in language learning, choices students and teachers make about language use – even move-by-move choices – are inseparable from issues of identity in relation to the positioning that ensues when these choices are made. One aspect of written interaction on the online space of an English language class blog is discussed here: the way one student appropriates the linguistic resources which are to hand, and how this language appropriation in interaction on the class blog indexes aspects of her identity.

### The study: Shahedah and the class blog

The class observed for this study is an intermediate class of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at a College of Further Education in an industrial town in England. Lessons were observed and audio-recorded once a month over a seven-month period. The data set for the class comprises field notes and recordings from lesson observations, interviews and informal conversations with the teacher, postings on the class blog, and interviews with students, including an individual interview with one student, Shahedah, transcribed and translated from Gujarati. Shahedah had been a teacher in India before coming to the UK, and discussion of the importance of her background and childhood as an ‘educated’ person was prominent in interviews with her. The relevant research question for this aspect of the *Identity Online* study is: How do the linguistic and discourse features of one individual learner’s electronically-mediated discourse index aspects of her identity?

### Language appropriation and learner identity

One token aspect of the analysis is summarised here: how Shahedah’s appropriation of surrounding linguistic resources indexes particular aspects of her identity as a learner. In her blog posts, Shahedah has a tendency to appropriate the language of other students’ posts in the threads she engages with. In this example, Shabaz and Shahedah comment in turn on a picture posted by another student on the blog:

- (1) Shahbaz said...  
when i saw this picture i am too superised and i realy like it. i am thankfull to you to got this picture for us.  
1:30 PM
- (2) shahedah said...  
When I saw this picture I am exited and I printed this picture.I was bring it in my home and gave my husbend.He saw it and superised.  
2:34 PM

Cohesion between Shahedah’s post and Shahbaz’s previous post is very tight. Shahedah repeats the phrase ‘*When I saw this picture I am*’; she also repeats the word, together with its original spelling,

<sup>16</sup> *Identity Online: ESOL learners’ textual identities in and out of class*. Project funded by the British Academy, grant number LRG-45480. More

information on this project can be found at [www.personal.leeds.ac.uk/~edujsi/research\\_projects.htm](http://www.personal.leeds.ac.uk/~edujsi/research_projects.htm)

'superised'. Language appropriation (Kulick and Stroud 1993) seems to be the strategy Shahedah employs here. She has borrowed or *appropriated* elements of Shahbaz's post by using elements of the earlier message as a model. Moreover, she reinstates the capital letters, as if she is correcting this form, as a teacher might. This gives an insight into Shahedah's identity as a learner, particularly if the concept of positioning (Davies and Harré 1990) is invoked. This individual electronic literacy event, and others like it, relates closely to her ongoing identity construction, which is shaped in part by her socio-history. Both the appropriation of other students' text and its subsequent 'correction' by Shahedah position her reflexively in certain ways. Language appropriation is used by Shahedah as an intelligent language learning strategy of someone new to blogging, and moreover, someone fearful of making mistakes 'in public'. And the second strategy of correcting the mistakes of the appropriated post indexes Shahedah's identity as a (former) teacher herself. Moreover, she now positions herself as a 'good learner' with a well-developed idea of correctness.

## Conclusion

In the migration process, contends Block (2007: 5), 'one's identity and sense of self are put on the line, not least because most factors that are familiar to the individual ... have disappeared and been replaced by new ones'. It would seem, however, that for Shahedah certain things are not lost, despite her interaction being in a new language, and being textually and electronically mediated. The pressures of the migration experience, in Shahedah's case, do not result in the emergence of entirely brand new subject positions. She is still very capable of 'doing being a good student' – in her adult ESOL class as a migrant learner of English just as she did as a child and a young adult in India, albeit with reduced linguistic resources. In her electronic writing, she employs a strategy of language appropriation, yet rather than using the loose conventions of her peers' computer-mediated discourse, she favours a more formal and academically-oriented set of conventions.

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## Modernist Entry Tickets for Post-Modern Sociolinguistic Realities: the testing of immigrants for admission to the Netherlands

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### A new form of diversity

The blending of 'new' and 'old' migration brought to western Europe by the aftermath of the political events that have taken place in 1991 has given way to a post-modern form of diversity, one for which the term 'super-diversity' has been coined (Vertovec 2006). This form of diversity raises critical questions about the rationale and future of nation-states, about the dynamics of their fast moving urban spaces as well as about the embedded but yet omnipresent supremacy of the majority's perspective within those institutions that regulate the entrance of migrants (Stead-Sellers 2003). Opposed to the state support given to the free movement of goods and information, the movement of people has pushed politicians across Europe to enforce modernist measures that regulate people's access to the nation-state territory and preserve the national order. Such measures often imply knowledge of mainstream cultural norms and values as well as learning of the (official) national language (see Extra, Spotti & Van Avermaet 2009 *forthcoming*; Leung & Lewkowicz 2006; Mar-Molinero, Stevenson & Hogan-Brun 2009 *forthcoming*; Milani 2007). In the current gamut of modernist responses to super-diversity, the Netherlands is no exception. Rather, it has tackled this new immigration wave by setting up an admission test that assesses immigrants' knowledge of mainstream cultural norms and values as well as of Dutch language in the immigrant's country of origin. It is against this background that the present paper sets out to investigate the structure, content and rationale of the admission test that immigrants who wish to enter the Netherlands have to pass. In so doing, the paper takes the perspective of the nation-state's testing machinery and tries to unravel both the (explicit and implicit) ideologies contained in the test and their workings toward the maintenance of the national order. The article concludes with a reflection on the implications that the ascertaining citizenship on the basis of testing hold for applied linguistics. On the one hand, applied linguistics is

made paying lip service to modernist governmental measures. On the other hand, those complex post-modern realities that characterise the mobile life paths and sociolinguistic biographies of immigrants call for a sociolinguistics of globalisation (Blommaert, 2003; Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck 2005; Jaspers 2005; Spotti 2008) to be applied in the making and evaluation of these tests.

### Gaining an entry ticket to the Netherlands

The regulations of the admission test are spelled out in the *Wet Inburgering in het Buitenland* (2006) where it is stated that the admission test is meant to prepare people abroad, who do not fall under the refugee or asylum seeker category, for their coming settlement in the Netherlands. In other words, it is the first step that should allow the migrant to move his identity ascription from 'foreign' guest toward that of 'civically integrated' temporary resident. The admission test is available at 140 Dutch embassies / consulates and it is fully computerised. The first part examines the applicant's knowledge of Dutch society. It consists of a series of photos based on a video film about the Netherlands accompanied by 30 questions. The video film entitled *Coming to the Netherlands*, is available in 14 different (official) languages as a preparation tool and it deals with Dutch everyday way of living, Dutch politics, work, education, health care and history. Preparation for this first part is possible by buying and studying a photo album and an audio CD. The photo album contains 100 photos, the audio CD 100 questions. All questions are in Dutch and all answers have to be given in Dutch. During the test, taken in a phone booth at the local Dutch embassy in the examinee's country of origin, 30 questions taken from the photo album have to be answered through a headset. The second part consists of five sections that deal with 1) repeating sentences, 2) answering short questions, 3) indicating opposites and 4 & 5) repeating two short stories. Each section includes four exercises. All 20 exercises are taken on the phone and the answers are assessed by a speech recognition programme, also with respect to the quality of the candidate's pronunciation in Dutch. Out of the 1580 applicants who have taken this test since its first implementation in January 2006, approximately 90% of them have succeeded at their first attempt. Most of the applicants fell in the age category 25-36 years old and were Turkish (21%), Moroccan (19%) or Chinese (10%) nationals. No exact information was made available on their socio-economic backgrounds.

## Modernist measures for post-modern sociolinguistic realities

Admission on the basis of a computerised phone test has far-reaching consequences for those who aspire to enter the Netherlands. From the very beginning of their migration trajectory, the admission test confronts the potential immigrant with economic, travelling, technological and literacy challenges. The first part of the test is a computer mediated language test disguised as a test dealing with knowledge of Dutch society. It is evident therefore that Dutch language and the mastering of basic ICT skills are immediate, vital prerequisites for the applicant to take and pass the test and although these skills may seem minimal, we should not forget that the applicants in question may well be people who might have differential access to literacy skills, ICT skills and who may encounter travelling constraints due to their economic situation. The admission test makes an implicit yet drastic selection from the very beginning. While the test opens the door to the deterritorialised manager who wishes to come to the Netherlands for a high fly career or to the foreign PhD student who embarks on an academic post, it also closes a door for the masses of applicants who do possess neither the money nor the necessary skills, or both, to prepare and tackle the test. The admission test therefore covertly constructs a hierarchisation of the immigrant population that may be made eligible to enter the Netherlands and it supports a representation of immigration as a positive, willed and affordable move. This hierarchic stratification is not a matter of letting new people in. Rather, it is a matter of hindering some from coming in through an ideology of language testing that supports a *doxa* (Bourdieu 1991) of elitist immigration.

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## Ongoing Communication in International Projects: applying linguistics to these realities

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### Introduction

David Crystal (2003) argues that applied linguists are increasingly being faced with 'practical' questions that challenge the boundaries of current linguistic concepts and frameworks:

"Should one not need to know applied linguistics before one can develop a mature and sophisticated linguistics? Should there not at least be a discussion of cases where applied linguistic questions make linguists refine or rethink just what it is they possess?" (Crystal, 2003: 9-10)

With this challenge, Crystal (2003) raises the important question of whether the field of linguistics needs to reconsider its focus and first think of the applications of linguistic theory to the 'real world', before engaging in the creation of theoretical models. Drawing on the experiences of members of HEFCE's eChina-UK Programme (<http://www.echinauk.org>), this paper focuses on communication in international projects which extend beyond single communicative events. It explores the extent to which applied linguistics can offer insights into such ongoing communication.

### Background

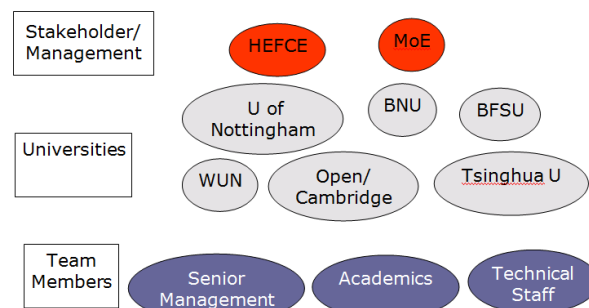
The eChina-UK Programme was established in 2002 and originally comprised a number of teacher training projects in which British and Chinese teams worked collaboratively to develop and pilot e-learning materials. Three follow-on projects were funded in Phase 2, which started in October 2005, and these included research that reflected on issues of pedagogy as well as the creation of further teaching and learning materials.

### Communication Challenges

The project members experienced numerous challenges in their communication. There were two key factors that underlay this and made it particularly problematic both for the participants and for us as analysts.

Firstly, each project was structured in such a way that it involved multiple parties, including stakeholders from both participating nations, senior management from a range of British and Chinese universities, and project members in each university from different departments/sections, including academic and technical. These are represented in Figure 1. All of these parties had to collaborate and share information for the projects to succeed, and it was by no means easy to establish the most effective networks for optimising this.

Secondly, the communication and negotiation of information was rarely confined to any single speech event, but typically spanned a range of modes (email, face-to-face, video conference, telephone etc.) and durations (from a few weeks to two years or more). This posed obvious problems to us as analysts, because the discourse relied heavily on, and kept referring to, interactions that had taken place in previous meetings and communicative exchanges. So, in order to do justice to the data and to capture accurately the communicative challenges of a particular interaction, we as analysts had to look beyond the single speech event.



**Figure 1: The multiple categories of communicative participants of the eChina-UK projects**

### Analysis of Data

Here we briefly analyse one meeting between British and Chinese project members to illustrate these challenges. The purpose of this particular meeting was to discuss and agree on the overarching research of the programme. The participants had great difficulty understanding each other's viewpoints, and agreeing on a way forward. The discussion lasted over two days, and put simply, the debate was around the following:

- The Chinese members explained that the Chinese Ministry of Education wanted the research to focus on four aspects (choice of technical platform, intellectual property rights, educational management, and administration) and that they were expecting the British to do the same;

- The UK members reported that no one had previously mentioned this to them and that they were concerned about the lack of communication;
- The UK members also argued that these four aspects were integral to each of the projects (e.g. each project needed to know which technical platform their e-learning materials would be delivered on so that their development would suit the functionality and scope of the platform) and could not be designated as overarching research to which answers would be given in two or three year's time, after the projects had completed.

A major problem for the participants in reaching a common understanding was the fact that the initial discussion of these issues had taken place at a joint steering committee meeting which only one participant of the current meeting had attended and of which British and Chinese participants of the current meeting had different interpretations (based on differing briefings and paperwork they had received).

### Analytic Challenges

Investigation of this discourse thus posed us with the challenge of how to analyse ongoing communication in a project spanning several years. We needed to take all of the following aspects into account:

- Current speech event
- The meeting speech event (typically multiple days)
- Previously held meetings relevant to the current speech event
- Prior communication exchanges between the UK and China on the specific issue under discussion
- Communicational context established over the entire duration of the project (several years)
- The lack of communication that was sometimes experienced.

In much linguistic research, analysts frequently focus almost exclusively on the current speech event without considering the wider communicative context, yet such an approach was unsuitable for the eChina-UK data. We needed to capture the full communication context established throughout the duration of the project because it had an enormous impact on how messages were presented or understood. Yet we found it very difficult to do this.

### Questions for Applied Linguistics

In our efforts to analyse ongoing communication over multiple speech events we were left with the following three genuine questions:

- What unit of analysis can we use for handling ongoing communication over multiple communicative events?
- What analytic framework can give sufficient attention to the 'whether' of communication (i.e. whether it takes place or not)?
- What analytic framework can give sufficient attention to the multiple participants of a project (e.g. how communication networks can be optimised; understanding the impact of stakeholders)?

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## The Problem of Position: Researching identity in English teachers at Japanese universities

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In recent years, identity has come to be seen as a key element in understanding language teaching and learning. Rather than a fixed and essential attribute of the individual, identity is now defined by applied linguists as ‘strategic and positional’, in other words, a *positioning* by oneself, or of oneself by others, that is contingent and dynamic. However, this definition poses a number of challenges to research, in particular, to the relationship and interaction between the researcher and her subjects, and to identification and interpretation of the positions that the subject adopts during the research process.

A compelling heuristic for researching identity positioning is provided by Positioning Theory (Harre & van Langenhove, 1999), which holds that any act of positioning is occasioned by the positions that have been adopted in the past and the configuration of positions in the present context. The focus is thus on *changes* of position and the moral and/or political consequences that such shifts entail. What this approach ignores, however, is any account of the often multiple and complex meanings that are inherent in each new position (Omoniyi, 2007). The question that was addressed in this presentation was: how can we identify and account for the meanings that are inherent in the positions taken by respondents in research interviews?

The problem was highlighted by contrasting extracts from interviews with two teachers, one Japanese and one British, both of them employed by Japanese universities. The interviews were conducted in 2001-2 as part of a doctoral study on the cultural and professional identity of university teachers in Japan.

The first extract shows Harumi (H) taking a position in answering a question by the researcher (A) about the factors she considers important for a career in academia in Japan.

H: ... It's not like working in a company where you can change if you don't like it, you can go to another place to work, you can't really

do that. So you really have to like what you are doing and be able to um (.) bear the difficulties until you get a good place to work in. Really, you don't know when you'll get a full-time job, so you have to, I don't know, if you had a family to support it would be very difficult.

Although Harumi is defining an academic career in opposition to a career in a company, her point is missed by the researcher, who instead latches onto the mention of “family”:

A: Yeah, is that something that makes it particularly difficult for women (.) to have a career in academia?

This misunderstanding by the interviewer of Harumi's position (academia vs company), and establishment of a different position (gender issues) evidently confuses Harumi, and it takes her a few seconds to respond:

H: Um (3) I don't know. Um (2) I didn't really feel that because I was a woman I, it was more difficult than for men. Maybe it's easier for a woman actually (2) ...

In fact, later in the interview, Harumi builds a picture of a career in which women are a minority and explains how she did not initially consider a career in academia because she had no female role models. So why did she contradict the interviewer by saying that a career in academia “was easier for a woman”? One possibility is that her rejection of the interviewer's position was part of a strategy to shift the interview back to her initial position, namely that an academic career is defined in opposition to a career in a company.

In qualitative research, the interview is commonly viewed as “co-constructed” (Kvale, 1996; Richards, 2003). This extract, however, suggests that the interviewee is more intent on asserting her own position. The interviewer, whose role in the interview is to try and understand the interviewee, can never be sure that her construal of the position is as it was intended. A solution to this problem might be simply to ensure that the researcher/interviewer has a more thorough knowledge of the social world and thus recognises the kind of emic perspective that is likely to be adopted by insiders.

However, even insider knowledge may not be sufficient to account for the positions that are adopted by the interviewee. The next extract shows Dave (D) recounting an event through which he

establishes his own (normal) identity in opposition to the bizarre appearance and behaviour of a colleague:

D: Well, the last time I saw him he had rather more of a beard and hair, which is important because @@ and he was wearing a big coat and gloves. And he came, I was talking to the office staff downstairs (.) I was kneeling on the floor probably in a posture of begging because I was 200,000 yen over my budget @@ It's a bizarre story because he came in and shouted at me, Have you got a book allowance?

Later in the narrative, Dave makes the opposition more explicit:

D: He's supposed to be like me, an English teacher. I have, you saw that list of writing students, between 40 and 50 students in my class. He has two. Because he has this image that he's in an Oxford college giving tutorials to people about things that he's interested in.

Dave presents his colleague as abnormal and reprehensible. However, it could be argued that, in fact, the colleague, and not Dave, may be more representative of academics teaching English in Japanese universities in seeing himself as an academic first, and language teacher a distant second. More pertinently, the identity positions in Dave's narrative - his self-deprecating meekness and the colleague's blustering rudeness - are deliberately exaggerated. This may be explained better by an examination of interactional or even psychological aspects of the exchange than by insight into a particular social world.

In conclusion, an understanding of identity as position thus entails not only an in-depth knowledge of the social context, but also a closer attention to the motivation for and effects of any shifts in position.

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## Taking a Quantitative Measure of Oral Proficiency in EFL

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The present paper is based on data from an ongoing research project aiming to investigate possible effects of Exposure to Extramural Input (EEI) on oral proficiency in English as a foreign language (EFL). Extramural input is defined as linguistic input that students come in contact with outside the classroom.

The study includes speech data (~ 45 hrs) collected in Sweden from four classes of 9<sup>th</sup> grade EFL students (N=80) on five occasions during one school year. Speech was elicited using five interactional speaking tests, and students were assigned to random dyads each time. For each of the five tests, the students were assessed qualitatively by three raters. The raters used instructions and grading materials based on Hasselgren (1996a; 1996b) and a total of 1,140 assessments were collected. In addition to the speech and rater assessment material, the study includes questionnaire data of students' EEI of English. A small-scale pilot study indicated a positive correlation between students' amount of EEI and the mean grade awarded for two aspects of oral proficiency, namely fluency and vocabulary. For the purpose of method triangulation, additional quantitative analyses of fluency and vocabulary are currently being performed alongside an extended investigation similar to the pilot study. The degree of fluency is measured as mean intra-utterance pause length beyond one second (cf. Foster & Skehan, 1996; Jefferson, 1989). Vocabulary is measured as the total number of polysyllabic types. Polysyllabic words belong to infrequent/peripheral vocabulary (Minkova & Stockwell, 2006) and, thus, a frequency perspective is adopted.

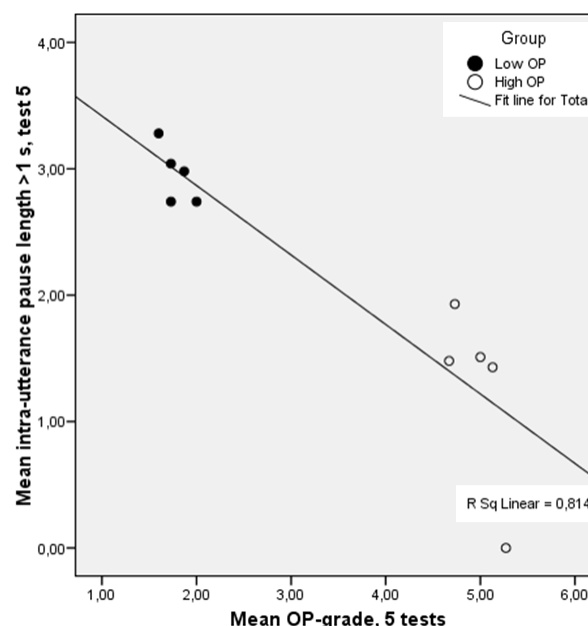
The present paper primarily aims to present the results of the quantitative analysis of fluency and preliminary findings regarding potential effects of EEI on students' oral proficiency. I will also comment briefly on student progression over time.

Based on the mean oral proficiency grade (OP-grade) on all five tests, where 1 is the lowest grade and 6 the highest, a selection of ten students was made. Five of them have the five lowest OP-grades of the study ('Low OP-group') and the other five have the highest ('High OP-group'). In the low OP-

group there are three boys and two girls. Four of the group members are from class 2 and one from class 1. In the high OP-group all are girls; three from class 3 and one each from classes 1 and 4. Since transcription and fluency measures are very time-consuming, I decided to limit my fluency analysis to speech produced in one test only (test 5). As is shown in Table 1, there are great differences between the number of pauses made and words used when the two groups are compared.

Low OP-group		High OP-group	
Pauses	Words	Pauses	Words
38	329	0	503
20	180	6	702
24	210	8	665
25	303	9	852
8	172	6	928

**Table 1: Number of pauses and words for the students with the five lowest and highest mean OP-grades**



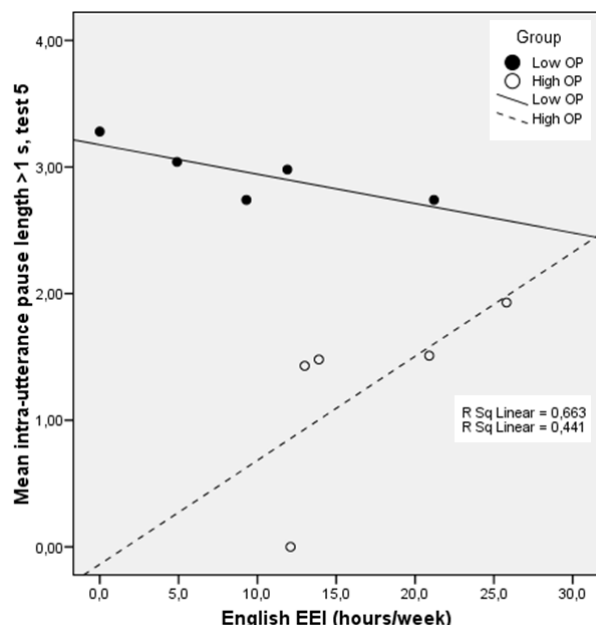
**Figure 1: Mean OP-grade (5 tests) versus mean pause length beyond one second (Test 5)**

A scattergram of the OP-grade versus mean intra-utterance pause length further illustrates the difference between the two groups (see Fig. 1). The difference in pause length between the two groups is statistically significant ( $t=4.886, p=.001$ ) and the negative correlation between pause length and OP-grade is strong ( $r=-.902$ ). That is, the longer the pause, the worse the grade is, and vice versa. The results for fluency confirm previous studies (see e.g. Iwashita, Brown, McNamara, & O'Hagan, 2008).

The total amount of exposure to extramural input in English for the students in the low and high OP-group respectively is shown in Table 2.

English EEI (hours/week)	
Low OP-group	High OP-group
0.0	5.2
4.9	13.0
10.8	20.9
11.9	25.8
21.2	13.9

**Table 2: English EEI for the low and high OP-group respectively.**



**Figure 2: English EEI versus mean intra-utterance pause length beyond one second, with fit lines for groups 'Low OP' and 'High OP.'**

When a comparison is made between the pause lengths of the low and high OP-groups and their English EEI, an interesting pattern appears (see Fig. 2). The low OP-group has a negative correlation between pause length and exposure. That is, with increased exposure, this group seems to have improved fluency because the mean pause length becomes shorter. The correlation is fairly strong ( $r=.814$ ). In contrast, the high OP-group appears to have longer pauses with more exposure, which means that the fluency for these students in fact becomes worse. There is a positive correlation between pause length and English EEI for the high OP-group, but the correlation is slightly weaker ( $r=.664$ ) than the correlation found for the low OP-group. These findings are both bewildering and interesting. Since the number of students is so small in each group, no generalizations of the correlations found between fluency and exposure can be made. Nevertheless, the findings here suggest that exposure to extramural input in a foreign language might very well matter also in analyses of language at a micro level. Moreover, the positive impact that English EEI seems to have had on fluency in the low OP-group neatly rhymes

with other results I have found on the potential effects of English EEI on oral proficiency among less proficient learners (see Sundqvist, forthcoming).

Finally, did the four classes progress over time? Of the five speaking tests used in the study, it is possible to compare the results on tests 1, 3, and 5. These three tests were very similar, whereas tests 2 and 4 differed both from each other and from the other three tests and, therefore, must be excluded in a comparison of results over time. The time interval from test 1 to test 5 was eight to nine months. During this time, all four classes improved their oral proficiency. Moreover, paired samples *t*-tests confirm that the improvement over time is significant for all four classes (significant at the .01-level for three of the classes and significant at the .05-level for one class). Thus, the answer to the question is 'yes'. Students improved their oral proficiency over time.

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## French Vocabulary in *encore tricolore*: do pupils have a chance?

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The focus of this paper is the vocabulary used in a British textbook for French as a foreign language. French has a long tradition of being widely taught as a second language in British schools, and books used for the purpose can therefore easily be tested and improved over the years. However, the idea that native speakers of English are bad at foreign languages seems to become true for many British school leavers, who are barely able to communicate in the foreign language they learnt at school. A number of reasons have been suggested for this, e.g. a decline in foreign language knowledge over time, or the fact that English-speaking learners are at a disadvantage when compared to learners of English as foreign language due to the status of English as the uncontested world language. This would at least help to account for the increasing gap in British and Continental school leavers' competence in foreign languages. Looking for possible reasons for this competence differential and the relatively poor foreign language skills of British school leavers, Milton (2006) mentions the vocabulary in British textbooks as a potential contributor to the problem and shows that British learners have unexpectedly low levels of vocabulary. At the time of their GCSE exams, British learners were shown to have on average fewer than 1000 words (cf. Milton & Meara 1998). In order to shed some light on this, the vocabulary of volumes 1 to 4 of *encore tricolore* was examined and compared to the words listed in the *français fondamental* (FF), a list of French words widely accepted to represent basic common French vocabulary.

Nation (2001) gives the figure of 2000 words as the absolute minimum of words every learner should know, no matter what the ultimate aim of language learning is. In order to be able to function autonomously in the foreign language, and to continue to improve, learners would need to know about 3000 word families, which amounts to about 5000 words (in English). A vocabulary of this size gives about 95% coverage of authentic written texts, just enough to allow comprehension of a text as a whole and thus enabling incidental vocabulary learning. There is no reason to believe that French would require significantly smaller vocabularies to master basic communicative situations.

Unfortunately, the Common European framework of Reference for Languages gives no figures for vocabulary size at each level. In the field of French as a foreign language, the most commonly used list is that of the FF, which lists over 3500 words.

One of the more robust finding of research on vocabulary learning is the importance of repetition. Individual words need up to 20 repetitions before they are mastered (Nation 2001). For English-speaking learners of French, the main learning burden is probably not the meaning, but the exact form and morphological variation. Due to the high proportion of cognates, we can expect that it is relatively easy to build up good receptive knowledge of French, but that it takes comparatively more effort to bring the productive knowledge up to a similar level. For productive language use more complex types of repetition which include expansion or reformulation is most beneficial for progress (Rydland & Aukrust 2005). Grouping words into thematic and semantic clusters is often used in teaching material. Of these, thematic clusters seem to be more conducive to learning (Tinkham 1997).

To construct a corpus, the lesson content of volume 4 of *encore tricolore* was scanned, tagged, and all images and English texts removed. The resulting corpus consists of about 80,000 words. A number of words were then removed from the concordance, i.e. proper names, names of countries and their inhabitants, the words for the days of the week and the months, and number words. This resulted in a list containing 5716 words, or 3341 lemmas. In the next step, grammatical and high frequency words were removed, resulting in about 3300 lemmas. In addition, the glossaries of all four volumes of *encore tricolore* were compared in order to gauge the progression of learners' vocabulary size over the course. Regularly formed masculine and feminine versions were counted as one item. Table 1 shows the number of entries thus arrived at in each of the glossaries.

<i>Encore tricolore</i> volume	number of entries in glossary
volume 1	946
volume 2	1234
volume 3	1692
volume 4	2779

**Table 1: Glossary entries**

While there is relatively little new vocabulary in volumes 2 and 3, volume 4 has considerably more entries in its glossary. However, not all words appearing in previous volumes re-appear in all subsequent volumes. Only 541 glossary entries are

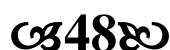
listed in all four volumes. Some 400 entries are not listed consistently again. Assuming that there are a good number of words learners will not need to look up any more once they have progressed to volume 2 and beyond, this is not a problem as such, but the relatively high proportion of the early vocabulary does seem striking.

Comparing the combined corpus and glossary entries to the *FF*, there are an unexpectedly high number of differences. Some words have been added. Expanding a word family by adding another word of a different grammatical class can be very useful in order to achieve enough repetitions. Similarly, a different member of a word family could be chosen because it fits the context better. If a thematic word group is rather small, materials developers might add a few items to provide more choice for exercises, or to give a better coverage of contemporary vocabulary. Many words are missing. It is easy to see why dated or specialized words from the *FF* list are dropped. The changes in *tricolore*, however, consistently go into the direction of making things easier for learners and avoiding items that are not completely regular. To give just one example, the *FF* list has entries for the second conjugation verb *ravir* and the corresponding adjective *ravissant*. In *tricolore*, only the adjective *ravi* is used. This is derived from the past participle and is a perfectly regular adjective. The frequent use of semantic sets when introducing and teaching vocabulary seems to further hinder, rather than to help, vocabulary acquisition. The learning curve that results from showing the learner more tokens of the same word may end up to be too flat to push the learner's cognitive state forward.

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## Sizing up the Argument: qualitative and quantitative dimensions

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Students writing at graduate or postgraduate level need to be able to sustain an argument over an extended text (Allison et al., 1998). The construction of a coherent argument in an academic text is evidence of critical thinking ability and depends upon a number of analytical and rhetorical skills. These include the abilities to analyse relationships between ideas (Swales & Feak, 2004; Swales & Lindemann, 2002), identify and organise global themes (James, 1993), synthesise information from a range of sources (Carson, 2001; Zhu, 2004), organise local propositions (Mann & Thompson, 1983, 1986) and express propositional and ideational relationships by the use of effective metadiscourse (Hyland, 2005).

Turner & Bitchener (2008) evaluated an approach to teaching the construction of argument in a short literature review, based on given extracts from the literature provided for 8 English as an additional language (EAL) students. Analysis of graduate students' texts in a pre-test revealed particular difficulties that apparently reflected inadequate analysis of the overall theme, key sub-themes and relationships between these, as well as a lack of understanding of the concept of argument. Significant features included the absence of a suitable introduction, problems with global organisation, illogical juxtaposition of ideas between and within sentences, and the absence of or inaccurate use of cohesive devices. Measurement of features of argument in pre-test, post-test, revised post-test and delayed post-test texts focused therefore on 5 main features: the introduction, global organisation, positioning of sentence-based propositions, juxtaposition of units of meaning within sentences, and cohesion.

### Text analysis and measurement

In deciding on an approach to text analysis, it was noted that separate propositional or metadiscourse meaning was in a number of cases included in forms other than independent clauses, as in the example below.

[Culture] is shared by all the members of a group [SUM 1] and transmitted from one generation to another [SUM 2] enabling them to learn things the right way [SUM 3].  
(Student 2)

In this case all three propositions derive from separate literature sources. Subsequent detailed analysis, therefore, included parsing texts according to "single units of meaning" (SUMs), rather than independent clauses (T-units).

For the text analysis descriptors were written for introductions and for global organisation. Introductions, for example were expected to *introduce or address the overall topic of the review*. These general descriptors were supplemented by more specific ones, which allowed for variations in students' approaches to global organisation, for each of the 3 tests. For example, for the pre-test an introduction was expected to *introduce different approaches to describing or defining culture (or equivalent)*. For the same pre-test the detailed descriptor for global organisation is included below.

The material reviewed can be logically organised in a number of ways. 4 out of 5 extracts given refer to culture as *learned*. One logical approach is to begin with this broadly agreed point and to discuss the relationship between *learned meanings* and *behaviour*. 2 of the extracts refer to culture as either *transmitted from one generation to another*, or as dependent on the environment & not on heredity. It would be logical to deal with this point before going on to the more detailed socio-political constructs that characterise culture, identified in the final extract. Students could also be expected to differentiate between the features that are learned and those that are created by particular cultures. Although acceptable to deal with these points in the reverse order, the specificity of the first extract in contrast to the more general issues would need to be highlighted.

Generic descriptors were written for other features. As an example, students' use of cohesive devices was analysed according to the following: *use of appropriate linking, and/or discourse or transition devices (linking words and phrases, repetition of key words or phrases, discourse or transition markers) to achieve cohesion between propositions and statements, and to make relationships between these explicit for the reader*.

An example of each feature, for each text, was also provided. These were either extracts from student texts or examples written by the main researcher.

In terms of measurement, analysis of each student's introductions and global organisation for each text

was recorded according to whether or not they met the qualitative descriptors. For local organisation and cohesion, measurement was in terms of frequency, expressed as a percentage. Thus, the logical sequence or development of sentence-based propositions for each text was measured in terms of the ratio of the number of logically-positioned sentences to the total number of sentences. The second area of local organisation – the juxtaposition of ideas within sentences – was measured in terms of the ratio of logically-positioned single units of meaning to the total number of these in the text. Finally, cohesion was expressed by the ratio of cohesive devices that expressed accurate or logical relationships to the total number of cohesive devices in the text.

## Conclusions

For the purposes of the study cited here, the approach to analysis and measurement of the 5 features identified worked very effectively. The analysis of organisation of ideas within sentences by means of the single unit of meaning (SUM) was also found to be significant and effective. The descriptors of features and examples were important for relative ease of analysis and for the inter-rater reliability check carried out by the second researcher on 25% of texts. Results measured in the form described allowed for the identification of marked improvement across the 3 tests in all areas measured, with some regression in two areas in the case of one student.

While appropriate for a detailed study, this approach is clearly too time-consuming for the purposes of marking and providing feedback on students' construction of argument in a short text. However, the relevant features can be translated into an accessible and workable form for use in writing assessment criteria. In the illustration below, key aspects have been expanded slightly to include references to advance organisers and conclusions, and written in the form of an 'A' grade band descriptor. The descriptor can be adapted for other grades, and also re-worked as a checklist for students.

There is an *introduction* to the topic and to the specific focus, with an indication of the structure of the text; the *overall organisation* is logical and illustrates evidence of effective analysis of relevant ideas or themes and logical ordering and synthesis of ideas; *sentence-based propositions* or ideas are logically sequenced as are ideas within sentences; use of *cohesive devices and language that expresses relationships between ideas* is effective; the *conclusion* reflects effective analysis of the key ideas.

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## Vagueness in Interaction: A cross-cultural examination of vagueness in Taiwanese and British courtroom discourse

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It is often assumed that legal language, especially that used by legal professionals, is more precise than language used in other contexts (see e.g. discussions in Solan, 1993). Yet vagueness is a natural part of language (cf. Channell, 1994), and some linguists and philosophers (e.g. Williamson, 1994) even consider vagueness to be an intrinsic feature prevailing in language itself. This paper investigates vagueness in the context of courtroom discourse, adopting a cross-cultural, corpus-based perspective.

Three main objectives are pursued in the paper: (i) to examine the concept of vagueness and establish the general categories of vagueness in interaction, (ii) to investigate the particularity of vagueness in courtroom discourse, and in relation to this, (iii) to empirically investigate use of vagueness in the discourse of the courtroom, comparing corpora of Taiwanese and British data in terms of the functions and distributions of instances of vagueness.

My interpretation of vagueness, like that of Janney (2002), treats it as a pragmatic, interactive concept. I consider vagueness from both the speaker's and the hearer's perspectives, and the interaction between the two. I call the vagueness from the speaker's perspective speaker-vagueness and the vagueness perceived by the hearer hearer-vagueness. I then operationalize these distinctions with respect to the exploitation (or manipulation) of vagueness in the corpora of British and Taiwanese criminal court proceedings.

The findings are presented and discussed with respect to the character of the two legal systems. The Taiwanese courtroom employs an inquisitorial system, while the British courtroom operates under an adversarial system. I present evidence that, in terms of speaker-vagueness, the patterns and functions are common to both the British and Taiwanese courtrooms. Such functions include self-protection; politeness; persuasion; marking speaker's subjective assumptions; and making effective use of language. On the other hand

differences occur in the types of speaker-vagueness indicators used at the propositional level. In the Taiwanese courtroom, indicators of quantitative imprecision (e.g. approximately) appear to be most commonly used, while in the British courtroom data, the most common type of indicator is that of uncertainty (e.g. *I think, probably*).

In terms of hearer-vagueness, I investigate the types of vagueness that attract clarification(s) from subsequent speakers. In the Taiwanese courtroom data, it is shown that hearer-vagueness is context-sensitive: the clarification of hearer-vagueness is a dynamic negotiation process in which speakers are sometimes interpreted by hearers as withholding information when they use imprecise language. In the British courtroom data, hearer-vagueness tends to be related to the courtroom roles played by the hearer in the discourse. Thus, when a judge reacts to what might be considered vague, it is merely for clarification, and when lawyers identify vagueness they seek not only to clarify but also to challenge the level of the precision of the information given in the utterance. I also explore several important sub-types of hearer-vagueness in the courtroom interactions. These include – in both the Taiwanese and British courtroom data – 'referential vagueness', 'denotative vagueness', 'coherence vagueness', 'pragmatic vagueness' and 'source vagueness'.

The concepts of speaker- and hearer-vagueness need to be brought together in order to examine the ways in which they interact in courtroom discourse. I show that there is a tendency for non-overlap of speaker- and hearer-vagueness in the two sets of data. That is, most cases of hearer-vagueness do not contain speaker-vagueness indicators, and most cases of speaker vagueness indicators do not cause problems in the interaction, nor do they require the hearer to seek clarification. Finally, based on two selected legal cases in the data, I explore the contextual factors that pertain to the formation and interpretation of vagueness in courtroom discourse. I argue that in the case of the Taiwanese court the interpretation of vagueness is closely related to the routinized yes/no question, asymmetrical power, dominance and control in court, and speakers' different goals. Vagueness in the British court case, however, appears to be determined more by speakers' conflicting goals and speakers' courtroom roles in the discourse.

In conclusion, I argue that vagueness is to do with the level of precision required of an utterance in context, and not whether certain vague expressions are used or not. The latter approach, that of limiting vagueness to certain expressions, has dominated

research on vagueness in linguistics in the last decade (notably since Channell, 1994). In this paper however, I demonstrate that vagueness can be treated as an interactive concept and considered from both the speaker's and the hearer's perspective. Vagueness in interaction is dynamic and often negotiated and resolved by speakers in the course of courtroom discourse.

Drawing on these findings, I present a practical suggestion for courtroom practice. I propose that the final decision-makers in trials (notably jury members) be allowed to pose questions in order to obtain clarifications of vagueness during trial proceedings. The outcome of a trial can have a major effect on the lives of the parties in dispute, and this change would arguably contribute to greater fairness in the legal process.

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## Use it or Lose it: retrieving lost language skills from the dusty corners of memory

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### Background

Students training to be languages teachers not only have to learn the craft of the profession but are under constant pressure to maintain their foreign language skills, especially as they put their language competence under the close scrutiny of their mentors and university tutors in the nerve-racking environment of the classroom. This study of PGCE modern foreign languages students and their attempts to reactivate lapsed language skills is nearing its final stages. It is aimed at students who, for professional or personal reasons, have allowed their language skills to decline and need to reactivate them to be able to teach effectively.

The study of language attrition (De Bot *et al* 2000, Hansen 2001, Meara 2004) has proved particularly fruitful in researching this field. In the initial stages of the investigation, an extended case study was undertaken to gather data on language loss and relearning. This was done by means of a focus group, a reflective electronic log undertaken by PGCE languages students and interviews with selected students, staff and tutors from other teacher training institution as well as questionnaires to mentors in partnership schools. These data have provided a basis for a guided learning programme currently taking place in the school of education. Students have been encouraged to reflect on the process of language attrition and to identify strategies that have allowed successful language regeneration.

### Results and Analysis

Initial findings from the case study phase of this investigation support the findings of Hansen (2001), that language skills and knowledge, once learned, are not necessarily lost but might become inaccessible with disuse and can be retrieved with the right cues. Finding these cues, however, is problematic and identifying ways to reactivate language is still unclear (De Bot & Stoessel 2000).

Students who took part in the focus group and kept an electronic log tended to be divided in their

approach to reactivating their lapsed language skills. Many returned to the grammar books of their school days while others chose to 'expose' themselves to the language, concentrating on reinforcing their receptive skills by reading and listening to the target language in an unstructured way. Interestingly, the choice of approach tended to depend on the age of the students, the older ones resorting to grammar exercises typical of the O Level examination teaching methods while the younger students of the GCSE generation concentrated on working on communicative language skills. Students seemed to return instinctively to the ways they had first learned languages, though when this was pointed out, they were keen to accept the validity of alternative methods. All recognised that a variety of approaches was likely to be the most effective and complete way to reactivate lapsed languages.

The personality of the student also played a significant part in their choice of reactivation method. Many students chose to attend evening classes or to spend time with native speaker students in order to reinforce their oral skills. Other students preferred to study alone, using a wide range of texts and recorded materials. For many the choice of method was dictated by their circumstances and the need to balance language studies with the demands of their teacher training programme. Many were unable to attend evening classes as they needed time to prepare lessons for their school experience. Some students found ways to combine leisure with language learning, such as listening to foreign language music, reading favourite books (such as Harry Potter) in the target language or simply following foreign language recipes to cook their dinner. All participants recognised that maintaining and improving their language skills was an essential part of their professional development.

### Guided Learning Programme

The action research phase of the investigation is the culmination of the study and students in the current cohort benefit from the experiences and reflections of the previous students. The intervention started with an audit of language skills at the beginning of the academic year followed by diagnostic testing of both grammatical and vocabulary knowledge. This has established a useful baseline against which the intervention can be measured.

Students then undertake to complete a language log on a weekly basis, recording not only the language activity but also their reflections on its usefulness

and effectiveness. No guidance is given in the first weeks about the nature of the tasks to be undertaken, though at later stages tutors may suggest different types of activities if a lack of balance becomes evident. Students also find a language partner and university sessions allow for a long lunch break so that the partners can spend time together and speak in the target language. The increasing number of foreign native students undertaking PGCE programmes in order to qualify as modern languages teachers provides a useful resource for British trainee teachers and the support offered to the latter can frequently be repaid by help in understanding the British educational system or proof reading assignments. These contact hours are mutually beneficial and an essential element of the guided learning programme. After a period of 10 weeks the programme is due to be evaluated by students and tutors and adjustments can be made where necessary.

To date, most students have been very supportive of the aims of the programme, recognising that language competence is essential for effective performance in the classroom, as well as making them more employable. Some students, inevitably, have found it difficult to balance the demands of their training with the need to maintain and improve their language skills and knowledge. However, as subject knowledge and understanding is one of the standards for Qualified Teacher Status, they recognise that this is an essential part of their professional development. The potential benefits of the programme go beyond the maintenance and improvement of students' language skills – the experience should give them a timely reminder of what it is to be a learner, a valuable lesson in empathy for these new teachers. Students have the opportunity not only to reactivate language skills but to reflect on the process of metalearning, a process that will allow them to develop into confident and competent teachers.

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## Cultural Categorisation: what can we learn from practice? An example from tandem learning

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The issue of cultural categorisation causes difficulties for teachers of intercultural communication as it can easily lead to stereotyping. Why, then, is such categorisation still so prevalent in intercultural communication literature? A consideration of intercultural communication within the field of Applied Linguistics will bring us at some point to a foreign language/mother tongue approach. This in turn can lead to cross-cultural studies of language and language use, leading to a categorisation which runs the risk of being labelled stereotyping.

Categorisation at its most fundamental level is, however, considered by many to be a necessary part of human activity (e.g. Tajfel, 1981, Givon, 1995).

For example, we are categorising when we label someone as French, and implicit in this categorisation are assumptions about what the person is not (e.g. not Spanish). It is a short step to an essentialist approach, and yet avoiding categorisation becomes impossible; in order to communicate meaning, a contextual upper limit must be drawn (Givon, 1995).

Taking the example of tandem learning, an activity which involves the exchange of conversation between native speakers of different languages for the purposes of learning each others' language, even in the description of the activity, we are categorising (and therefore essentialising at some point) attributes related to the terms *learners*, *native speakers*, *Spanish*, *English* etc.

There is some recognition of the need for both essentialism & constructionism within applied linguistics (e.g. Pavlenko & Lantolf 2000, Pavlenko & Blackledge 2003, Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005). A polarised approach may not therefore prove as useful as one which asks the question how and why cultural categorisation is taking place, or as Scollon and Scollon (2001:245) ask:

'Who has introduced culture as a relevant category, for what purposes and with what consequences?'

Evidence from 20 English-Spanish tandem conversations on the meaning of a given word revealed a variety of purposes for introducing cultural categories.

Instances in the conversations were identified where interlocutors made reference to country or language distinction, for example, through the use of terms such as 'in England', 'in Spain', or indeed the proximal and distal deictics *here* and *there*, (*aquí* and *allí*) when clearly used to refer to one or the other country.

It was found that learners make reference to their own or their partner's country/language for a variety of reasons, including:

- To understand/make understood perspectives on the conversation (own or partner's), including asking one's partner for their opinion/perspective
- To mark difference in the meanings of the word
- To mark similarity in perspectives on the meaning of the word
- To identify a need for help from one's partner e.g. help with vocabulary
- To identify with the 'other' culture/country/language (i.e. that normally associated with their partner)

One short example follows to illustrate how relativisation of a viewpoint can be then identified as a difference by the partner, but that the identification of such difference can then be used to validate both perspectives.

### *Example 1, Lily & Maica (Education)*

Lily (*education*) refers to England when her partner asks why she thinks what she does, and this is later reciprocated by Maica (T8). It is Maica's response (T8) which converts Lily's simple relativisation into a difference.

SE 3

1. L in media, and (.) **education** is always (.) I think (.) criticised do you not think?
2. M why?
3. L do you think that? Or not?
4. M why, do you say that
5. L well in England (.) I think that people always criticise **education**

6. M really?
7. L and in institutions yeah (.) um
8. M not in Spain

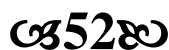
This distinction is country-related, that is, they notice differences in the way the word is portrayed in their respective countries' media. Through the identification of difference in how the word is seen in the relative countries, both perspectives are validated.

The variety of purposes for which cultural categorisation is employed in the conversations highlights the complexity of this activity in the tandem context. It also offers much scope for further research in intercultural communication research within applied linguistics.

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## L1 Influence on the Processing of L2 Collocations: a case of Japanese ESL speakers

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Collocation refers to multiword combinations that are grammatically/lexically fixed to a certain degree. It is widely recognized that natural or native-like use of L2 collocations is difficult to achieve even for advanced learners. Knowledge of each single lexical item does not necessarily result in the acquisition of lexical combinations (Wolter, 2006). Part of this difficulty might lie in the fact that some collocational patterns cannot be explained by simple explicit rules. For example, “blond” collocates with “hair” (blond hair), but it does not collocate with “paint” (\*blond paint) even if it sounds logical (Schmidt and Carter, 2004).

The arbitrariness of lexical patterning can be observed cross-linguistically as well. Different languages may use the same collocations for some expressions but may differ in how individual words are combined to form other expressions. For example, both English and Japanese have the identical collocation of “cold tea,” but what is referred to as “strong tea” in English is called “dark tea” in Japanese. Or sometimes, the L1 does not have a lexicalized collocation that expresses the same meaning as an L2 collocation. For instance, “slow learner” in English needs to be expressed with a relative clause in Japanese such as “a person who learns slow.” Thus, a distinction can be made between congruent and incongruent collocations in L2 acquisition. The former refers to a collocation that shares the same lexical items between the learner’s L1 and L2; the latter refers to a collocation whose lexical components are different between the learner’s L1 and L2. Collocation congruency (whether two languages share the same or have different word combinations to express the same concept) is to a large extent arbitrary. It is difficult to explain with rules why two languages share the same collocation in one case but they opt for different lexical combinations in another. Due to the lack of explanation, the acquisition of L2 collocations is likely to be a long process of incremental learning driven by input and influenced by the learner’s L1 (Ellis, 2006).

Studies of L2/bilingual mental lexicon demonstrated that L2 lexical items are processed via mediation of the L1 lexicon even at advanced levels of L2 proficiency (e.g., Kroll and Stewart, 1994; Jiang, 2004). By extension of this finding, we can postulate the dependency of L2 collocation processing on L1 lexical connections: Similarities between L1 and L2 collocations may facilitate, and discrepancies may hinder, the acquisition of L2 collocations. The present study examined L1 influence on the representation and processing of L2 collocations, in terms of the cross-linguistic collocation congruency, using an on-line Yes-No phrase acceptability judgment task.

Twenty-eight Japanese ESL speakers and 20 native speakers of English were tested with congruent and incongruent collocations matched with length and frequency. Items in both categories were real English collocations, which should be accepted (Yes-responses). Filler items were also included in order to elicit No-responses. The materials consisted of short collocations made of two or three relatively simple words (e.g., kill time, drink soup). The task was to read a stimulus presented on a computer screen, make a judgement about its acceptability, and respond by pressing either a Yes or No button on the keyboard as quickly and accurately as possible. Error rate (ER) and reaction time (RT) were analyzed by 2 x 2 mixed design ANOVA. Only correctly answered items were used for the RT analysis.

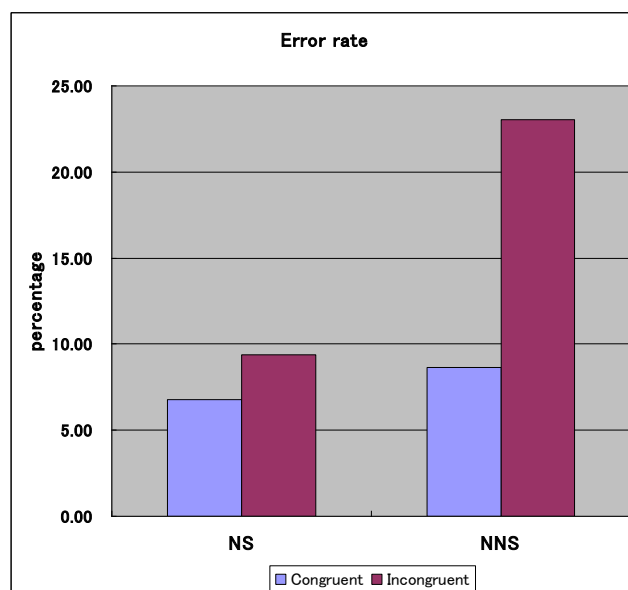
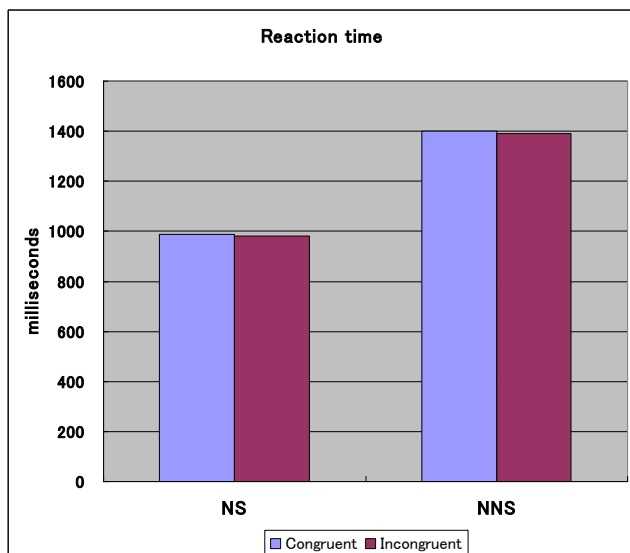


Figure 1: Error rates for Native Speakers and Non-Native Speakers



**Figure 2: Reaction times for Native Speakers and Non-Native Speakers**

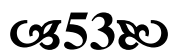
Results were illustrated in the two figures above. Native speakers (NS) did not show any significant difference between the two categories either in RT and ER. ESL speakers (NNS) made more errors with incongruent collocations than they did with congruent collocations, but their RT was not different between the two categories.

The ER result suggests that the L1 lexical network affects the knowledge representation of L2 collocations. On the other hand, the RT result suggests that once L2 specific collocations are stored in memory, they could be processed autonomously without word-by-word L1 mediation, which further implies that they could construct holistic units in L2 mental lexicon (e.g., Jiang and Nekrasova, 2007; Conklin and Schmitt, 2008).

This result, although it may sound plausible, does not meet the finding of single-word-processing studies, i.e., L2 lexical processing is dependent on L1 lexicon. Schmidt and Carter (2004) maintain that, although the acquisition of collocations may be incremental, short and salient collocations may be acquired as wholes (completely and holistically). The current items consisted of short and relatively simple collocations. This might partially explain the RT result. Therefore, the current finding can be summarized as follows: it takes longer for incongruent collocations to be accepted as legitimate in the L2 mental lexicon compared with congruent collocations, but once accepted, incongruent collocations (at least short ones) may construct holistic units and may be processed as wholes without going through word-by-word L1 mediation.

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# Are They Really Thinking Aloud? Comparison of think-aloud processes between a group-administered session in a language laboratory and an individually conducted session

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## Introduction

Think-aloud procedures have been extensively employed as a verbal-report method of producing concurrent verbalization to investigate learners' ongoing cognitive processes in SLA research. Since Leow and Morgan-Short (2004) first empirically addressed the issue of reactivity on L2 acquisition – the act of thinking-aloud potentially triggering changes in learners' cognitive processes while performing a task, subsequent studies (cf. Bowles and Leow, 2005; Such & Polio, 2007) have showed mixed results on the reactivity of think-alouds on L2 language performance. It was suggested that reactivity depends on the task and the nature of the assessment tool and the dependent variables. The procedure and instruction of verbally reporting activity often varies between studies. Some studies had participants think-aloud to LL (Language Laboratory) and other studies have conducted think-aloud session individually. Differences in cognitive demand induced by different ways of verbal reporting might bring inconsistency to the results of analyses such as the types of processes employed by learners when interacting with L2 tasks, what types of input induce most noticing, and so on. The type of task they engage in and the presence of other participants or researchers may also alter their reporting processes. The present study, therefore, compared the cognitive process of think-aloud protocols on L2 reading performance between a group-administered session in a language laboratory and an individually conducted session, in relation to task type factors.

## Method

One hundred Japanese EFL learners, varying in language proficiency, read an expository passage in one of the three task conditions (outlining, answering embedded questions and reading-only) and produced written recalls of the passages immediately after reading. A third of the participants ( $n = 32$ ) thought-aloud their cognitive

processes to the language laboratory while reading and completing the task (group think-aloud condition), another third of participants ( $n = 34$ ) thought-aloud to the IC recorder individually (individual think-aloud group), and the rest of the participants ( $n = 34$ ) read the passage and completed the task without thinking-aloud (non think-aloud condition).

The study specifically attempted to compare the three groups in terms of : 1) the amount of time on task; 2) comprehension in terms of the amount of information recalled; 3) the quality of the task performance (i.e. outlines and answers to embedded questions), and the study also attempted to 4) compare two think-aloud conditions (group think-aloud vs. individual think-aloud) in terms of processes they engage in during reading in three different while-reading tasks.

## Results and Discussion

In order to examine whether verbalization condition and task type interact with each other on reading time (seconds), a two-way ANOVA was conducted using two between-groups factors of verbalization condition (individual think-aloud, group think-aloud, and non-think-aloud) and task type (reading-only, outlining, and answering embedded questions). The results showed no significant interaction but a significant main effect of verbalization on time ( $p = .0001$ ) was shown. The result of *post hoc* multiple comparison suggests that thinking-aloud slows down the rate of reading and completing while-reading task, and thinking-aloud takes more time than thinking-aloud to LL in a group.

In order to examine whether verbalization condition and task type interact with each other on comprehension measured by performance on written recalls, a two-way ANOVA was conducted using two between-groups factors of verbalization condition (individual think-aloud, group think-aloud, and non-think-aloud) and task type (reading-only, outlining, and answering embedded questions). The results showed no interaction between two factors nor significant main effect of either verbalization condition or task type on recalls. The result suggests that differences in verbalization condition or while-reading task did not affect text comprehension.

In order to investigate whether verbalization condition and task type interact with each other on the quality of the written products from the while-reading task, performance on the two while-reading tasks produced in written forms (outlines

and answers to embedded questions) were evaluated by two raters (inter-rater reliability > .95), and a two-way ANOVA using two between-groups factors of verbalization condition (individual think-aloud, group think-aloud, and non-think-aloud) and task type (outlining, and answering embedded questions) was conducted. A significant interaction between two factors was shown and the result of *post hoc* multiple comparison showed significant differences between non-think-aloud condition and group think-aloud condition, and individual think-aloud condition and group think-aloud condition. These suggest that thinking-aloud to LL in a group negatively affects writing task performance while reading, while thinking-aloud individually does not inhibit task performance.

Finally, in order to compare two think-aloud conditions (group think-aloud vs. individual think-aloud) in terms of processes they engage in during reading and completing an assigned task, the relationship between think-aloud procedure, task type, and process type on the amount of verbal products was examined by conducting a repeated-measures ANOVA using two between-groups factors of think-aloud condition (group vs individual) and task type (control, embedded questions & outline), and one within-group factor of process type (lower level process, higher level process and meta comment). The result showed a significant interaction between think-aloud condition and process type. It is suggested those who thought-aloud reported more verbalization than those who thought-aloud to LL in a group. Further descriptive analysis suggests thinking-aloud individually encouraged the use of more variety of process, especially higher level processes than thinking-aloud to LL in group did.

## Conclusion

Thinking-aloud may affect L2 reading performance depending on the type of procedure and measurement for reading performance. However, thinking-aloud individually may provide more effective training and avoid inhibiting the performance of cognitively demanding tasks such as writing while reading. Therefore, careful consideration is required when making claims about or interpreting think-aloud based findings. Further study is needed such as in-depth study into processes and the effects of individual differences on think-aloud performance.

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