



Journal Club Activities

Apart from inviting distinguished guests to give us talks on research-related topics, the members of the Journal Club - our CULI instructors - also make contributions by sharing their ideas on the articles they have read to promote the research atmosphere at our workplace,. Here are the schedule and the summary of our activities during the second semester 2008.

Date	Time	Topic
Nov 14, 2008	12.00-14:00	Learning strategies
Dec12, 2008	12:00-14:00	Teaching speaking
Jan 9, 2009	12:00-13:00	IT
Feb6, 2009	12:00-14:00	Teaching writing
Feb13, 2009	12:00-13:00	Teaching vocabulary/grammar

November 14, 2008: Learning strategies

<p>Presenters: Ajarn Pimpan Syamananda, Dr. Tanyaporn Arya Research Article: Chen, Y. (2007). <i>Learning to Learn: the Impact of Strategy Training</i>. ELT Journal, 61 (1), 20-29.</p>		
---	--	--

The purpose of the study is to discover potential methods (criteria) of effective qualitative evaluation of strategy training. The rationale of conducting this study is that greater interest has been shown in quantitative data, as opposed to qualitative data, that measures learners' task improvement, also because few studies have attempted to investigate learners' long term behavior and learning processes. The study adopts a qualitative methodology to examine these factors in a listening comprehension strategies program. Findings revealed changes in participants' learning processes in four areas, namely FL exposure; information processing; strategy repertoire and strategy transfer; and changes in listening comprehension and attitudes towards FL learning. Specific findings were translated into a model of strategy training impact, which is a theoretical model that illustrates the relationship among the areas and categories of the changes in the participants' learning processes. This model carries three attributes: the core's learner-centeredness; balancing of evaluation criteria; and potential expansion of the model.

It is suggested that for future research, there should be the following: (1) refinement or modification of the proposed evaluation criteria (2) more empirical data to test the applicability of the model to different language skills, for example, reading, writing, and speaking (3) the development of standardized ways of measurement for each criterion.

In the discussion part of the session, Pimpan and Tanyaporn pointed out some limitations of the study which focused on only Taiwanese students in Taiwan. The study addressed "what to measure" rather than "how to (effectively) measure" the impact of strategy training and it did not address "what" constitutes a "behavior change" and how it can be measured. They further suggested that the model of strategy training impact found in this study may be used in future impact studies or studies on learning strategies. It may be replicable in the Thai EFL context to find out if new dimensions and categories can be added, although the tasks may not be replicable. Also, each dimension can be studied separately and in a more in-depth manner.

Presenter: Dr. Chatraporn Piamsai
Research Article: Hsiao, T.Y. & Oxford, R. L. (2002). *Comparing Theories of Language Learning Strategies: A Confirmatory Factor Analysis*. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86(3), 368-383.



This research study aimed to compare relevant measurement models of strategy classification that have been proposed in the second language teaching and learning field. The frameworks proposed by Rubin, Oxford and O'Malley, and Chamot were compared to see if their strategies classifications were appropriate. The participants included 517 students aged between 18-20 from 12 intact classes at a university in Taiwan. Their fields of study were primarily in technical areas. The procedures involved 2 stages: orientation and questionnaire distribution. The researcher proposed 15 models and tested if the frameworks were valid by using the Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

The results showed that learning strategies can and should be classified as suggested by the frameworks, and that learners' use of certain L2 strategies can be seen as related to the use of other L2 learning strategies. O'Malley and Chamot's classification of strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, and socioaffective was determined to be more consistent with learners' use of strategies than the "direct" and "indirect" classification, and affective strategies stood as distinct from social strategies and other categories of strategies. Moreover, the research states that O'Malley and Chamot's cognitive strategies should be categorized further into memory, cognitive, and compensation dimensions, and Oxford's classification of strategies into 6 broad dimensions was more consistent with the data. Finally, it was considered undesirable to claim that there existed a general higher-order factor accounting for correlations among the six first-order factors i.e. memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies.

Presenter: Ajarn Walaipun Puengpipattrakul
Research Article: Griffiths, C. (2007). *Language Learning Strategies: Students' and Teachers' Perceptions*. *ELT Journal*, 61(2). 91-99.



This paper investigates the point of intersection of teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding language learning strategies (LLS). The study was conducted with 131 international students of a private English language school in Auckland. The researcher aimed to find out how teachers' reported perceptions of the importance of LLS correspond with students' overall reported frequency of strategy use and reported frequency of use of specific strategy items. The research instruments were conducted through student and teacher questionnaires which were analyzed using the SPSS program. The overall results reveal that students' and teachers' perceptions were not perfectly matched. The provision of triangulation (e.g. interview) should be considered for further studies.

December 12, 2008: Teaching speaking

The topic of focus for the 2nd Journal Club Meeting held December 12, 2008 was Teaching Speaking. Four articles were selected for presentation as reported below:

Presenters: Dr. Chatraporn Piamsai and Ajarn Pimpan Syamananda
Research Article: *Anxiety and Speaking English as a Second Language* by Lindy Woodrow (University of Sydney, Australia), published in *RELC Journal* 2006



The purpose of this study was to investigate the construct of language learning anxiety of a sample of students studying English for academic purposes. The study focused only on the oral performance as related to anxiety, which was the only factor studied. The correlational analysis indicated a negative relationship between in-class anxiety and out-of-class anxiety and oral performance.

Findings revealed European and Vietnamese participants tended to be less anxious and Japanese, Korean and Chinese participants tended to be more anxious. Quantitative data showed that “giving oral presentations” was rated the highest stressor and “taking part in group discussions” was rated the lowest, while qualitative data revealed that “giving oral presentations” and “performing in front of classmates” were rated the highest stressors. Nearly all of the interview participants reported experiencing some anxiety when “speaking in English with native speakers.”

Presenters: Ajarn Sirinut Sawatdeenarunat and Ajarn Araya Ramsin
Research Article: *Academic Listening/ Speaking Tasks for ESL Students: Problems, Suggestions, and Implications* by Dana Ferris and Tracy Tagg (California State University, Sacramento), published in *TESOL QUARTERLY* Vol.30, NO.2 Summer 1996



This study looked into the types of listening and speaking tasks professors expect or require of university students; the way(s) in which academic listening/ speaking abilities of ESL students fall short in enabling them to complete these classroom tasks successfully, and what university and university-preparatory ESL classes could do to better prepare their students for the oral tasks they will face in their university classes.

From the research, it was found that both developing communication strategies and developing listening strategies proved to be important in helping ESL students. It was suggested that EAP teachers should devote serious time and energy to making their ESL students aware of and ready for the interactive nature of U.S classrooms. It would be helpful to have subject-matter college professors come and address EAP students about their expectations of their own students. Also, teachers should be trained to respond clearly and effectively to students’ informal questions and comments. Teachers should also simulate free-form classroom lecture discussions for their students and analyze videotaped classroom interactions with their students so that ESL students can be better prepared for the realities of the U.S college/ university classroom. Further research is needed which examines accommodations professors make to assist their ESL students; the degree to which it helps the students; and the effectiveness of programs which train instructors to improve their ability to communicate effectively with ESL students.

Presenter: Ajarn Peeriya Pongsarigun

Research Article: Carless, D. (2008). *Student use of the mother tongue in the task-based classroom*. *ELT Journal*. 62(4), 331-338.



This study set out to identify and analyze key challenges facing successful implementation of task-based approaches and to find balanced and flexible views of student use of mother tongue (MT). The research question asked about how mother tongue use can be exploited in target language development.

The study revealed that sufficient input about goals, requirements, and language should be used, in addition to visual displays. Further, the more absorbing the task, the greater the risk of student use of the mother tongue. Therefore, fairly tightly structured tasks should be implemented.

Future research questions suggested were the following: (1) Is there any relationship between task-types and MT use? (2) Are there variations in extent and type of MT use stimulated by information gap, opinion gap, or decision making tasks? (3) How can MT be a positive resource in the task-based classroom? Under what particular circumstances? And how does the MT support TL acquisition? (4) What are the cognitive functions that are stimulated by MT use?

Presenter: Dr. Tanyaporn Arya

Research Article: *Listening Practice for Improving Effectiveness of Spoken Communication* by Yasue Kaji & Trevor Sargent, published in *TESL Reporter* Volume 39/April 2006.



This article investigated whether either a previous listening activity or a previous speaking activity was more helpful in the performance of a subsequent speaking task in order to gain insights into the significance of listening practice and speaking practice in the development of spoken communication ability among L2 learners. The findings of the study however were inconclusive. There was no formal support that prior listening practice, as opposed to a prior speaking practice, provides better preparation for a subsequent related speaking task. From the study, a prior listening activity seems to lead to a more effective and more efficient speaking performance. Tanyaporn noted the possibility of practice effect in the study as well as the number of subjects per group that could have affected the research results. Further recommendations were to replicate the study identifying the level of proficiency of subjects, focusing on linguistic competence or communicative effectiveness when scoring and incorporating qualitative analysis.

January 9, 2009: IT

Presenter 1: Aj. Ornuma Lakarnchua

Research Article: Mak, B. & Coniam, D. (2008). *Using wikis to enhance and develop writing skills among secondary school students in Hong Kong. System 36, 437-455.*



This study investigated authentic writing through the use of wikis which were used as a collaborative writing platform. The study was conducted in Hong Kong on secondary students' writing which lacked process, feedback, student revision, and social purpose. Thus, the researchers aimed to find out how students engage in collaborative writing through wikis, and what the effects of wiki-based collaborative writing on the finished product (i.e. a brochure) were. The overall results demonstrated that the authentic writing through wikis could raise students' confidence and creativity.

Presenter 2: Aj. Peeriya Pongsarigun

Research Article: Futagi, Y., Deane, P., Chodorow, M. & Tetreault, J. (2008). *A computational approach to detecting collocation errors in the writing of non-native speakers of English. Computer Assisted Language Learning, 21(4), 353-367.*



This paper aimed to describe and discuss the overall design and evaluation of the automated tool for detecting collocation errors in texts written by non-native speakers'. The overall results, detailed error analyses and possible improvements for the future were also discussed.

Feb 6, 2009: Teaching writing

Group 1: Presenters: Dr. Tanyaporn Arya and Aj. Sirinut Sawatdeenarunat

Research Article: Bitchener, J., Young, S., & Cameron, D. (2005). *The Effect of Different Types of Corrective Feedback on ESL Student Writing. Journal of Second Language Writing, 14, 191-205.*



The paper was about the investigation of the type of feedback given to adult migrant students on three types of error and its significant results. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether the types of feedback - (a) direct, explicit written feedback & student researcher with 5 minute individual conferences (b) direct, explicit written feedback only and (c) no corrective feedback - on three types of error (prepositions, past simple tense, definite article) resulted in improved accuracy in new pieces of writing over a 12 week period. The research wanted to find out to what extent the type of corrective feedback on linguistic errors determines accuracy performance in new pieces of writing.

Participants in the study were 53 post-intermediate ESOL (migrant) learners, predominantly mainland Chinese adults migrants, predominantly in their late 20s to early 30s and most have been in New Zealand for at least 2 years. They have just entered a post-intermediate ESOL program and they are on their second semester of a competency-based curriculum aiming to improve their English language communicative skills for the purpose of resettlement. They had to achieve one out of two writing assessments.

There were 3 treatment groups as mentioned above, with each having equal amount of time spent on learning grammar taught by the teacher. The direct written feedback consisted of full explicit corrections above underlined errors. The conference sessions, as mentioned previously were opportunities for Ss to ask about errors made & corrections given & additional explanations. They were conducted as follows: 1) the researcher explained which correction Ss did not understand 2) after the explanation, the teacher wrote down a sentence with a similar error for the student to correct 3) the teacher then referred to other instances of the same error in the written piece 4) all three targeted categories of error were discussed (prepositions, past simple tense, definite article) if such errors were made. Only one researcher participated in these conferences to control for content. The researcher was not involved in teaching any of the groups.

The researchers came up with the targeted linguistic errors by first identifying and categorizing all errors in the first writing task and decided that the three most recurring error categories will be focused on in this study. For the writing tasks, each participant completed four 250 word writing tasks during the 12 week period. Each task was of a similar type – an informal letter varying in content but allowed the participants the chance to use the targeted linguistics forms.

Each participant was exposed to all combinations of levels of two qualitative within-group factors (linguistic error & time) and between group factors (different type of feedback). So for the analysis, subjects were measured on their accuracy of the performance of each of the types of errors using the two-way repeated-measures ANOVA. Post hoc tests to evaluate differences among specific means were also conducted.

Results revealed no differential effect for any of the feedback options (feedback + oral, feedback only and no feedback) when they were considered as a single group. The type of feedback did not have significant effect on accuracy when the three targeted error categories were considered as a single group. The provision of explicit written feedback, together with individual conference feedback, resulted in greater accuracy. Only feedback on the past simple tense and the definite article resulted in greater accuracy because they are determined by the sets of rules (treatable). Feedback on prepositions are more idiosyncratic so it is untreatable.

Implications are that classroom writing teachers should provide oral feedback as well as written feedback. Also, teachers should focus on the more ‘treatable’ types of linguistic error.

Comments given by the presenters are that perhaps further studies could look into each proficiency level, whether or not different types of feedback will work more effectively for each level. Additional ‘untreatable’ errors, apart from prepositions and articles, could be studied. To differentiate treatable and untreatable types of linguistic errors, equal feedback time should be spent on them.

Group 2: Presenters: Aj. Pimpan Sayamananda and Aj. Woralan Kongpolphrom

Research Article: Lee, I. (2005). *Error Correction in the L2 Writing Classroom: What Do Students Think?*. TESL Canada Journal. 22 (2), 1-16.



This paper was concerned with students’ perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about teachers’ feedback on error correction in the writing classroom as well as some pedagogical implications.

Presenter 3: A. Wuthipong Laoriandee

Research Article: Sun, Y. (2007). *Learner Perception of a Concordancing Tool for Academic Writing*. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*. 20 (4), 323-343.



The presenter reported a study on the use of an online Scholar Writing Template (SWT) resulting in students' positive attitudes towards the SWT along with the implications and recommendations from the research.

Presenter 4: Dr. Wanlee Talhakul

Research Article: Tran, L. T. (2007). *Learners' Motivation and Identity in the Vietnamese EFL Writing Classroom*. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*. 6(1). 151-163.



The research revealed the issues of motivation and learners' identity in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing classrooms in Vietnam from the perspectives of the learners. The session provided the participants with productive input for further research.

Feb 13, 2009: Teaching vocabulary/ grammar

Group 1: Presenters: Dr. Satita Watanapokakul and

Aj. Walaipan Puengpipattrakul

Research Article: Ho, M.L. C. (2008). *Toward Exploring Errors in Grammar: A Systematic Approach for Language Teachers*. *TESL Canada Journal*, 25(2), 86-103.



This study focused on training student teachers at the National Institute of Education, Singapore to analyze grammatical features in primary-level writing with the hope to empower them to help their students. The analysis was based on the three-step approach designed by the researcher. The steps included the following questions: where is the problem? (identification of errors); what is the type of problem? (definition and classification of errors); and how can you explain the problem? (explanation of rule and exemplification). The results revealed the difficulties that the student teachers faced when analyzing the error types, and their attitudes towards the training. Some useful recommendations were also provided.

Group 2: Presenters: Dr. Suttirak Sapsirin and Aj. Peeriya Pongsarigun
Research Article: Laufer, B. & Girsai, N. (2008). *Form-focused Instruction in Second Language Vocabulary Learning: A Case for Contrastive Analysis and Translation*. *Applied Linguistics*, 29(4), 694-716.



This study aimed to investigate how contrastive form-focused and translation tasks lead to the acquisition of single words and collocations. The presenters reported the methodology and the data analysis that the researchers used in the study. The findings showed that the contrastive analysis and translation group performed significantly better than the meaning focused instruction and the non-contrastive form-focused groups.

