07–427 XUESONG, Gao (U Hong Kong, China; Gao@hkusua.hku.hk), Strategies used by Chinese parents to support English language learning. RELC Journal (Sage) 37.3 (2006), 285–298. doi:10.1177/0033688206071302

The paper reports on parental involvement in Chinese students’ language learning which has emerged as a major finding from an interpretative enquiry into their English-learning experiences. The data confirm that Chinese parents and other family members are closely involved in the study participants’ language learning, in particular, their development as competent English learners. They are indirectly involved the participants’ development as English learners as language learning advocates, language learning facilitators, and language teachers’ collaborators. Furthermore, they are directly involved in their children’s development as language learning advisors, language learning co-learners, and language learning nurturers. The findings suggest language teachers to be more proactive in establishing a school-family/teacher-parent partnership in learner development programs. Further research is also needed to support such a partnership.

http://rel.sagepub.com


The purpose of this action research study was to explore possibilities for scaffolding academic language and historical thinking for non-native English speaking students in two middle school classrooms. The teaching approach focused on six dimensions of historical thinking: background knowledge, cause, effect, bias, empathy, and application. The following questions guided the observations and conclusions: (1) What types of instructional activities appear to develop historical thinking skills and related academic language among English Language Learners (ELLs)? (2) How can teaching for a writing assessment help to shape this thinking and language development? Results suggested that multi-modal scaffolds for both thinking and language, designed to help students succeed on a motivating assessment task, developed cognitive and communication skills.

http://www.elsevier.com


This article examines alternating verbs (such as quemar (se) ‘to burn’) in second language (L2) Spanish by considering the learnability problem from a sequence learning perspective. In Spanish, verbs of the alternating class are obligatorily marked with the clitic se in their intransitive form. Errors of omission among English-speaking learners, who transfer zero-derived morphology from their native language, have been previously documented. This study also examines a different kind of error – overgeneralization of se to transitive event scenes – that is hypothesized to result from chunking se with particular lexical items. The results of a picture description task reveal that learners frequently make this type of overgeneralization error, but that they are able to recover from it at more advanced levels of proficiency. These findings suggest that the acquisition of L2 morphosyntax is shaped by learners’ familiarity with individual lexical items and the sequences in which they tend to appear.

http://journals.cambridge.org/jid_SLA

Reading & writing

doi:10.1017/S0261444807004399


Writing across the curriculum (WAC) programs had their genesis in grass-roots efforts to promote attention to writing in all disciplinary areas. At first based on generic faculty-development activities with little regard to systemic and institutional concerns, WAC programs are now more often engaged in assessment and research of writing, especially to measure the effects of the program on student learning and development. Yet little scholarship in WAC has analyzed assessment efforts in light of locations and types of WAC activities. This essay first describes two axes, one representing the ‘space’ or location of WAC activity, and the other representing levels of assessment and other research on writing. When brought together, these axes create a matrix of possible types and centers of WAC activity. A case is made for the DEPARTMENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM as a locus of activity for WAC implementation and assessment that has not been fully explored in program development.

http://www.elsevier.com

07–431 CHANOCK, KATE (La Trobe U, Bundunda, Australia; c.chanock@latrobe.edu.au), Help for a dyslexic learner from an unlikely source: The
This paper recounts the process by which a severely reading-disabled adult student taught himself to read and write Ancient Greek, and in so doing, improved his ability to read and write in English. Initially, Keith’s reading and writing were slow, difficult and inaccurate, accompanied by visual disturbance. However, motivated by a strong interest in Ancient Greek literature and philosophical ideas, Keith enlisted me (his Faculty’s academic skills adviser) to help him learn the language. Working on transliteration focused Keith’s attention on the alphabetic principle separately from meaning, while practising translation focused on the formal markers of meaning. Relieved of the stress of performing under pressures of time and others’ expectations, Keith made good progress with Greek and, after 6 months, found himself reading more fluently in English, without visual disturbance. This paper seeks to contribute to our knowledge of how adults learn to read, looking at the interplay of motivation, phonological awareness, knowledge of how form conveys meaning, and the learning environment. It both draws upon, and raises questions for, the neuroscientific study of dyslexia.

### References

**Reading & writing**


This article looks at the excessive use by Japanese students of linking words at the beginning of sentences. It explains the development of materials that incorporate corpus evidence designed to increase student awareness of the frequency and textual position of linking words in formal and informal contexts. The process leads students through enquiry methods and students discover solutions through problem solving activities. The origin of the problem (L1 interference) is described as well as the subjects and their error habits. Results are evaluated quantitatively from student data and qualitatively from teacher and student responses.

http://jalt-publications.org/tlt


Scripts are often borrowed or adapted for writing new languages, and the borrowing language usually includes sounds not found in the source language. Mechanisms for accommodating new sounds or phonotactics have not been studied as a group before, and a wide variety of cases is considered here. The techniques are found to fall into a limited number of categories: inventory reduction, inventory expansion, character combination, character alteration, character borrowing, systematic additions to characters, diacritics, and character simplification. Examples are presented from a range of script typologies.

http://www.benjamins.com


Discipline-specific approaches to English for Academic Purposes (EAP) tend to overlook the purposes of the disciplines themselves and the issue of transferability from academic to professional contexts. This becomes problematic in the context of the ‘new knowledge economy’ and emergent pedagogies in higher education, which are increasingly focused on attributes transferable to workplaces. This paper explores the chain effect of the ‘new knowledge economy’ on the purposes of newly vocationalized courses, on assessment tasks, and on the forms of learning and literacy required. I draw attention to a new set of generalisable skills and ways of thinking that are valued in this context, and to the implications this has for lecturers in the field of EAP.

I argue that specific approaches to the development of literacy in these contexts need to focus on the purposes of pedagogies rather than on specific written genres. I suggest that a broader definition of literacy, which recognizes face-to-face interactivity as one of the important communicative modes in this context, is necessary.

http://www.elsevier.com

07–435 **Dowdall, Clare** (U Plymouth, UK; c.dowdall@plymouth.ac.uk), *Dissonance between the digitally created words of school and home*. Literacy (Oxford University Press) 40.3 (2006), 153–163. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9345.2006.00421.x

This article considers the potential for dissonance that one 12-year-old child (Clare) may experience as a text producer using new technologies, when working across a range of contexts. In this ongoing case study, two types of text are explored: a computer-generated text produced as a homework task for school, and texts produced using an Internet-based social network site called ‘Bebo’. Key features of Clare’s text production in both contexts are identified and compared in an attempt to establish the dissonance that may be experienced as she switches from one context to another. However, by placing the texts alongside each other, it can be seen that although they look markedly different, the acts of composing the texts bear some significant resemblance. The article concludes by suggesting that experiences of dissonance in relation to text production may in fact be lodged more firmly with the recipient of any text.
when it fails to meet their social, cultural and linguistic expectations, than with the child composer.

http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/jnl_default.asp

07–436 ELBOW, PETER (U Massachusetts, Amherst, USA; elbow@english.umass.edu), Do we need a single standard of value for institutional assessment? An essay response to Asao Inoue’s ‘community-based assessment pedagogy’. Assessing Writing (Elsevier) 11.2 (2006), 81–99. doi:10.1016/j.asw.2006.07.003

Inoue’s experimental writing class [A. B. Inoue, Community-based assessment pedagogy; Assessing Writing 3 (2005), 208–238] was set up as a kind of laboratory of assessment which avoids the standard situation of a teacher unilaterally assessing and grading student writing according to his or her own criteria or standard. Inoue’s premise is that value in writing is socially constructed, and so he gets students to enact a social, communal process to work out the criteria for effective writing, thereby getting students to take full responsibility for assessing and even grading each other. The requirement for students to agree on a single model of good writing (a ‘rubric’ with various dimensions) must be questioned, however, because Inoue misunderstands how value is actually socially constructed. Within an institutional setting, the approach seems readily understandable, but how can feedback be coherent or final grades fair if they are based on multiple and competing models of goodness? It is not only feasible but also desirable to use multiple models of value in an institutional setting.

http://www.elsevier.com


The washback effect of tests on teaching has attracted considerable attention over recent years, but the critical question of how this translates into washback on learning remains under-explored. To address this issue, questionnaires relating to academic writing instruction were distributed to 108 learners from mainland China preparing for university study in the UK, either through studying for the IELTS test or through courses in English for Academic Purposes that did not include IELTS preparation. The same 24 questions were put to learners at course entry and at course exit and the results compared between courses and between occasions. The questions were also given to 39 teachers on IELTS and non-IELTS courses and their responses weighed against those from students. The results indicate that learner perceptions of course outcomes are affected by the course focus reported by teachers, but that the relationship is not deterministic. Although test preparation courses, as predicted by washback theory, did appear to cover a relatively narrow range of skills, there is evidence here that narrow preparation strategies were not driven primarily by learner expectations.

http://www.elsevier.com

07–438 HOLME, RANDAL & BUSSABAMINTRA CHALAIUSAENG (Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, China), The learner as needs analyst: The use of participatory appraisal in the EAP reading classroom. English for Specific Purposes (Elsevier) 25.4 (2006), 403–419. doi:10.1016/j.esp.2006.01.003


http://www.elsevier.com


This paper reports on a qualitative study that examined English as a second language (ESL) teachers’ perceptions of classroom-based reading assessments. ESL teachers’ use of classroom-based reading assessments, their understanding about the function and effectiveness of
this assessment method, and the factors influencing this assessment process are presented. Six middle school and 7 elementary school ESL teachers participated in this study. Data consisted of interviews with ESL teachers, classroom observations, and assessment materials teachers used in the classrooms. Constant comparative method was used for data analysis. Findings of this study include that ESL teachers highly value classroom-based reading assessments, considered them accurate and valuable and thought these assessments could provide great help to the daily teaching of reading. Teachers viewed state-mandated standardized testing negatively and of little value for English language learners. Student characteristics, statewide mandated tests, and district policies were three major forces influencing and controlling the kind of reading assessment used by teachers. The teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and uses of assessment have implications for teacher education programs and policymakers.

http://brj.asu.edu

07–440 Kirkgöz, Yasemin (Çukurova U, Turkey; ykirkgoz@cu.edu.tr), Designing a corpus based English reading course for academic purposes. The Reading Matrix (Readingmatrix.com) 6.3 (2006), 281–298.

This paper illustrates compiling a corpus of academic texts from the disciplines of economics and business administration, as the basis for designing a lexical component of the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) reading course and developing teaching materials for students intending to follow their university courses. The course is based on data-driven learning, and it is structured around a task-based approach with a particular emphasis on constructivism, which aims at getting students actively involved in the learning process. The development of the course and its classroom application are described. Students' perceptions of this innovative experience are discussed in relation to the benefits of this approach, both academically and in providing orientation for study in students' respective English-medium department.

http://www.readingmatrix.com/journal.html

07–441 Lambirth, Andrew (Canterbury Christ Church U, UK; a14@cant.ac.uk) & Kathy Gouch, Golden times of writing: The creative compliance of writing journals. Literacy (Blackwell) 40.3 (2006), 146–152. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9345.2006.00427.x

This paper examines the history, rationale, uses and abuses of writing journals in primary classrooms. We argue that writing journals form part of a pedagogy derived from an understanding of how children can be motivated to express themselves, independently of teachers. Moreover, they demonstrate the power of welcoming children’s home cultures into the classroom. However, we also wish to argue that the use of writing journals is part of the teaching profession’s ‘creative compliance’ that can still contribute to the marginalisation of effective educational practice. We document how, in some schools in England, writing journals have been reduced to token gestures towards creativity and independence and in effect collide with and support what is increasingly becoming a pedagogical hegemony.

http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/jnl_default.asp


This is a sociopolitically-oriented qualitative case study (cf. C. P. Casanave, Looking ahead to more sociopolitically-oriented case study research in L2 writing scholarship (But should it be called ‘post-process’?). Journal of Second Language Writing, 12 (2003), 85–102.) of the writing-for-publication experience of an NNSE (nonnative speaker of English) doctoral student of physics. Situated broadly within the argument that written texts are sociopolitical artifacts, and drawing upon the notion of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ [J. Lave & E. Wenger (1991). Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press] and a social constructionist perspective on research writing, the study describes how the novice scholar's writing-for-publication process is influenced by the power-infused relationships between him and the institutional context where publication is a graduation requirement for the doctoral students, the supervisors who possess greater expertise and authority, as well as the gatekeepers of his target journals in the Centre. I conclude by supporting an incorporation in English for Academic/Research Purposes (EAP/ERP) classrooms discussions of the sociopolitical issues as revealed in the present study.

http://www.elsevier.com


Rhyming tests have historically been used in the education system to assess reading readiness. English language learners (ELLs) have consistently scored poorly on these assessment tools. The current article examines a possible reason for this poor performance by ELLs. Specifically, the authors examined the relationship between semantic associations of visual images and performance on rhyming assessments for ELLs. Two groups of students, native English speakers and native
Spanish speakers, were tested using a typical rhyming assessment tool. As expected, it was found that the native English speakers outperformed the native Spanish speakers. An analysis of the native Spanish speakers’ errors revealed semantic interference. Educational implications of these findings are discussed.

http://brj.asu.edu

07–444 PENNEY, CATHERINE (U Newfoundland, Canada), JAMES DROVER, CARRIE DYCK & AMANDA SQUIRES, Phoneme awareness is not a prerequisite for learning to read. Written Language and Literacy (Benjamins) 9.1 (2006), 115–133.

Three lines of evidence suggest that phoneme awareness (as measured by phoneme deletion) is not a prerequisite for learning to read and spell. 1. A boy with a serious reading problem could provide letters to represent onsets and codas better than he could delete onsets and codas. 2. A contingent analysis of reading and spelling achievement and deletion of onsets or codas or deletion of one phoneme from a complex onset was undertaken in a sample of poor readers. Onset and coda deletion developed before the students’ decoding skills reached a third-grade level, but deletion of a phoneme from an onset developed along with reading achievement. 3. When phoneme deletion was tested by a recognition method, good eighth-grade readers erroneously accepted items with the entire onset deleted as being correct responses, and had longer response times on these items. Onset and coda deletion develop after onsets and codas are represented alphabetically and before children read at about a third-grade level. However deletion of one phoneme from an onset cluster develops slowly as literacy develops and is a difficult task even for good readers.

http://www.benjamins.com


Current theories on dyslexia refer either to phonological or perceptual factors. The phonological theory explains dyslexia by a deficit in phonological awareness which would affect the build-up of grapheme-phoneme correspondences. This is challenged by the magnocellular theory which ascribes dyslexia to a deficit in temporal processing of auditory and visual signals. However, the auditory deficit in dyslexia is not specifically temporal. Further, the perceptual deficit is not merely sensory but cognitive in nature as evidenced by both weaker discrimination of phonological contrasts and stronger discrimination of differences within phonological categories. This reflects a deficit in ‘Categorical Perception’ which is also sometimes associated with a weaker precision of the perceptual boundary between phonemes (‘Boundary Precision’ deficit). Categorical deficits are more reliable than magnocellular ones and might be no less reliable than those in phonemic awareness. The categorical deficit suggests that dyslexic children perceive speech with allophonic rather than phonemic units, which has straightforward consequences for the acquisition of phoneme-grapheme correspondences and might also explain the other phonological troubles associated with dyslexia.

http://www.benjamins.com

07–446 SUZUKI, AKIO (Josai U, Japan), Differences in reading strategies employed by students constructing graphic organizers and students producing summaries in EFL reading. JALT Journal (Japan Association for Language Teaching) 28.2 (2006), 177–196.

The big difference between summaries and graphic organizers (GOs) as adjunct aids for EFL reading is that GOs can reduce the cognitive burden on readers because of their two-dimensional spatial displays while summaries cannot. In this study, five Japanese high school students were required to construct GOs and another five were required to produce summaries while reading a passage written in English. They were required to report what they were thinking while reading the passage and producing adjunct aids so that their use of reading strategies could be examined. The results gained from think-aloud protocol analysis indicated that the GO group reported more general comprehension strategies than the summary group. The findings are discussed from the perspective that the task of constructing the GOs using visual argument allowed the students to employ more general comprehension strategies.

http://jalt-publications.org/jj


This paper introduces the Website Acceptability Tiered Checklist (WATCH), a preliminary version of a multi-trait scale that could be used by instructors and students to assess the quality of websites chosen as source materials in students’ research papers in a Humanities program. The scale includes bands for assessing: (i) the authority and reputation of the author(s); (ii) the accuracy and objectivity of the contents; (iii) evidence of academic rigor in the text; and (iv) the currency and maintenance of the site as well as the clarity of bibliographical information. The scale was used to evaluate the suitability of 84 Web–based sources selected by first-year English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students (N = 36) to support their points in a research-based argumentative essay. Each Web source was scored
Language testing

individually by two trained raters; inter-rater reliability (using the Cronbach-α test) was found to be 0.89 for the overall scores and between 0.77 and 0.87 for the individual bands. The paper discusses the value of using an instrument such as WATCH to assess students’ choices of websites, as well as potential difficulties faced by instructors when evaluating these sources.

http://www.elsevier.com

07–448 Zhu, Yunxia (U Queensland, New Zealand; zyunxia@unitec.ac.nz), Understanding sociocognitive space of written discourse: Implications for teaching business writing to Chinese students. International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching (Walter de Gruyter) 44.3 (2006), 265–285.
doi:10.1515/IRAL.2006.012

Confronted with various issues in teaching business writing to Chinese students in New Zealand, this paper sees the need for bridging the gap between genre-based research and teaching in an intercultural context. Specifically, it develops an intercultural reflective model in the light of Bhatia’s sociocognitive genre study as well as cross-cultural persuasion. As an important part of the model, New Zealand and Chinese experts’ intracultural and intercultural reflections on business writing are solicited and compared and the theoretical implications for teaching and learning business writing are discussed. It has been found, through a case study of analysing English and Chinese business faxes, this model can offer an in-depth understanding about discursive competence across cultures, and provide a link between genre-based theory, teaching practice and professional expertise.

http://www.degruyter.de/journals

Language testing

doi:10.1017/S0266078406004068

doi:0.1191/0265532206lt340oa

The immediate written recall task, a widely used measure of both first language (L1) and second language (L2) reading comprehension, has been advocated over traditional test methods such as multiple choice, cloze tests and open-ended questions because it is a direct and integrative assessment task. It has been, however, criticized as requiring memory. Whether and how the requirement of memory biases our understanding of readers’ comprehension remains unexplored. This study compares readers’ performance on the immediate recall and a translation task in order to explore the effect of memory on readers’ recall. Ninety-seven college students participated in this study. All participants were native speakers of Mandarin Chinese whose ages ranged from 20 to 22. The results showed that the translation task yielded significantly more evidence of comprehension than did the immediate recall task, which indicates that the requirement of memory in the recall task hinders test-takers’ ability to demonstrate fully their comprehension of the reading passage. The results also showed that the significant difference found in learners’ performance between the immediate recall and the translation task spanned the effect of topics and proficiency levels.

http://arnoldpublishers.com/journals

doi: 10.1017/S0266078406004068

Native speakers of English are a minority; there are far more non-native speakers in the world (cf. Kachru 1997, Pennycook 2001). In addition, native speakers’ standard or ’correct’ English, in terms of its grammar and phonology, is not always useful or even appropriate in international contexts (cf. Gisborne 2000, Newbrook 1998, Shim 1999). However, despite global changes in the use of the language, the norms for ENL (English as a Native Language) remain dominant, most notably for the assessment of oral proficiency. Yet it is a major deficiency in the use of international oral tests that the proficiency of non-native speakers is measured against unrealistic and irrelevant standards (cf. Jenkins 1996). The present paper focuses on the need to revisit the testing of English oral proficiency for non-native...