

# The TESOLANZ Journal

(The Journal of the TESOL Association of Aotearoa New Zealand)

# THE TESOLANZ JOURNAL

VOLUME 20 2012

The TESOLANZ Journal is published once a year by TESOLANZ, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Aotearoa/New Zealand (Incorporated), Te Ropu Kaiwhakaako Reo Ingarihi ki Iwi Reo Ke. The journal is double blind peer reviewed. A subscription to the journal is included in the annual membership fee of the Association. Enquiries about membership and subscription to the journal should be addressed to:

**TESOLANZ** 

Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington PO Box 600

Tel: (04) 463 5600 Fax: (04) 463 5604

Those interested in submitting an article or book review should consult the Notes for Contributors printed at the back of this volume and be a current member of TESOLANZ.

#### **EDITOR**

Dr Susan Gray Faculty of Education University of Auckland

#### **REVIEWS EDITOR**

Dr Rosemary Wette Applied Language Studies & Linguistics University of Auckland

#### **EDITORIAL BOARD**

Associate Professor Gary Barkhuizen Applied Language Studies & Linguistics University of Auckland

Associate Professor David Crabbe Linguistics & Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington

Dr Marcia Johnson General & Applied Linguistics University of Waikato

Associate Professor John Read Applied Language Studies & Linguistics University of Auckland

Dr Elaine Vine Linguistics & Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington Dr Rob Batstone Applied Language Studies & Linguistics University of Auckland

Dr Angela Joe Linguistics & Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington

Dr Jonathan Newton Linguistics & Applied Language Studies Victoria University of Wellington

Dr Gillian Skyrme School of Languages Massey University

Professor Cynthia White School of Languages Massey University

# THE TESOLANZ JOURNAL

# **CONTENTS**

EDITORIAL i
ARTICLES  What does every ESOL teacher need to know?  Closing plenary address at the 2012 CLESOL conference in Palmerston North
Emerging opportunities in new learning spaces: Teacher, learner and researcher perspectives
Teaching pragmatics to lower-level learners
Broadening career choices at secondary school: A case study of Korean born New Zealand students
TED Talks, vocabulary, and listening for EAP
BOOK REVIEWS  1) Developing courses in English for specific purposes and 2) New directions in English for specific purposes research  Reviewed by Patrick Coleman
Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners  *Reviewed by Elaine W. Vine
English as a lingua franca: A corpus-based analysis.  Reviewed by Joanna Smith
Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action.  Reviewed by Lynn Grant
Exploring English language teaching: Language in action  Reviewed by Rosemary Wette
NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

#### **EDITORIAL**

It is fitting that volume 20 includes invited articles from Emeritus Professor Paul Nation and Professor Cynthia White. Their research contribution to the teaching of English as an additional language has spanned the life of the Journal and beyond and is recognised throughout the world. The articles are based on their plenary presentations at the recent CLESOL conference in Palmerston North. The other articles, those selected for publication, exemplify TESOLANZ members' commitment to research-informed teaching and resource development.

At the CLESOL conference Paul Nation, the first president of TESOLANZ, was given TESOLANZ life membership in recognition of his significant contribution in building the TESOLANZ community. In this article he explores the shared principles that should underpin language teaching and the activities that bring these principles into practice. The article draws on his recent book "Everything the ESL teacher needs to know". The book, he argues, is an introduction for those entering the field but all will benefit from revisiting these research-based principle and practices. In particular, in a time when assessment seems to drive much of teachers' work, it is heartening to read of the key role of teacher as planner. Readers will not be surprised to discover Paul's further contribution to sustaining our community.

In our second article, through examining three new learning spaces created by globalization, and developments in technology and online social media, White explores the opportunities that these offer for learners and teachers. She argues persuasively that issues of identity, affect and community are critical to understanding the affordances that these new spaces offer.

Building on previous research, Denny, Healy and Macdonald wished to address teacher scepticism about the possibility of using semi-authentic discourse samples to teach socio-cultural norms to lower-level adult learners. They found that adult migrant and refugee learners at two sub-intermediate levels gained awareness of pragmatic norms from exposure to such samples but that the two groups required teaching adapted to their particular needs.

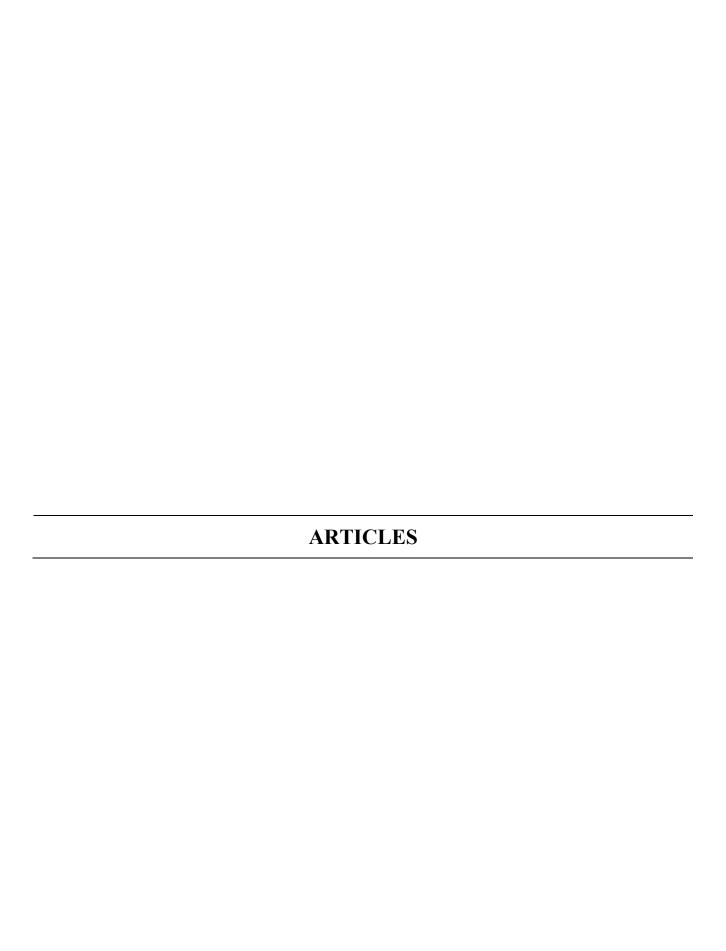
Ways of scaffolding participative opportunities for secondary school students from migrant backgrounds concern teachers and policy makers alike. In this article Kitchen drew on focus group interviews with senior Korean students to report on the networks they used in choosing their learning pathways. Most of the interviewed students chose from a narrow range of career pathways, those familiar to and favoured by their ethnic networks. However, the students said that they would have liked more assistance from the school, in particular, access to stories of career pathways unknown by their ethnic networks.

In the final article, Coxhead and Walls investigated the question of whether TED Talks (<a href="http://www.TED.com/talks">http://www.TED.com/talks</a>) provide substantive listening opportunities for English for Academic Purposes learners from a vocabulary perspective. They developed a corpus of six minute talks from six subject areas and used Nation's (2006) BNC lists as well as Coxhead's (2000) Academic Word List (AWL) to analyse the vocabulary of the talks. They found that the TED Talks have similar vocabulary loads to newspapers and novels (8,000-9,000 word families plus proper nouns). The AWL coverage over TED Talks is similar to its coverage over newspapers. TED Talks might be better suited for EAP learners with a vocabulary size of 5,000 word families or more.

The book reviews that follow have been selected to cover a range of areas relevant to language teaching and research, and to highlight current issues being explored in the literature.

In conclusion, it is important to thank all the contributors, those who submitted manuscripts for consideration in this year's volume of the journal. Part of the process involved in preparing a manuscript for publication involves responding to questions and guidance from experienced peers. In this respect, we are indebted to members of the Editorial Board for their perspicacity and generosity of spirit that characterize the reviews.

I encourage the many readers of the TESOLANZ Journal who have not yet contributed to the publication to consider doing so in the following year – either individually, or, collaboratively. You will find Notes for Contributors at the end the journal, but always feel free to contact the corresponding Editor by email (s.gray@auckland.ac.nz) if you require any additional information. The closing date for receiving manuscripts will be Monday 2 September 2013.



# WHAT DOES EVERY ESOL TEACHER NEED TO KNOW? CLOSING PLENARY ADDRESS AT THE 2012 CLESOL CONFERENCE IN PALMERSTON NORTH

# Paul Nation, LALS Victoria University of Wellington

#### Two books for teachers

This year (2012), two books will appear which are basic texts designed for teachers who have not had specialist training in language teaching. They are an attempt to answer the question "What are the basic things a teacher should know in order to teach English to speakers of other languages?".

Nation, Paul. (in press). What does every ESL teacher need to know? Seoul, South Korea: Compass Media. (available free in electronic form when published)
Nation, Paul. (in press). What does every EFL teacher need to know? Seoul, South Korea: Compass Media.

I wrote the book about EFL (English as a Foreign Language) first and was going to stop there, but then I also saw a need for a book about English as a Second Language. Before writing the ESL book, I thought that I might be able to use several of the chapters from the EFL book in the ESL book, but what surprised me was how different the two books turned out to be. There are of course very strong similarities too because the principles and many of the techniques of language teaching remain basically the same even though English is taught in two quite different situations. The major differences are outlined in Table 1.

#### **ESL** and **EFL**

Table 1: Comparing the Features of ESL and EFL Teaching

Features	ESL	EFL
Language needs	There are strong and immediate language use needs outside the classroom.	Often the learning has no obvious purpose.
Motivation	Because of immediate and long term needs, motivation is typically very high.	Motivation depends heavily on the quality of the teaching, and courses may be compulsory, which is not usually good for motivation.

Comparing the Features of ESL and EFL Teaching cont.

Features	ESL	EFL
Opportunities for learning	A wide range of opportunities for learning exist outside the classroom.	Classroom activities may be the most significant source of input and language use.
Cultural content	There are immediate cultural needs.	Much of the language learning may not be affected by cultural needs.

For me, the most striking difference is that ESL learners have obvious and immediate language use needs, and these needs affect the other three features of motivation, opportunities for learning, and the importance of cultural content. Well over one third of the ESL book is about needs analysis. Those chapters describe what needs analysis and environment analysis are, how to gather needs and environment analysis information, and what we already know about learners' needs in various teaching situations like one-to-one teaching, teaching small classes, teaching within the school system, teaching English to job seekers, and teaching English for academic purposes.

In Table 1, the list of features in the EFL column is rather negative, and this reflects the difficult task that EFL teachers face. It is much easier to learn a language in the country where it is spoken than to learn it as a foreign language. This is not true for all learners, and the learners who go against this trend would be an interesting study in themselves. Rather than follow the organization of the books, I want to look at the important shared principles which should lie behind language teaching and the activities which bring these principles into practice. I have ranked the principles in order of importance, and I have chosen what I think are the most important language teaching activities. I will also indicate what I think is *the* most useful language teaching activity.

# **Principles**

#### 1) Needs and motivation

Language courses should directly address the needs of learners who do the courses. This seems obvious, but this principle is not always put into practice. An important way of addressing the needs of adult learners is to use a negotiated syllabus, where the teacher and the learners negotiate the content of the language course and how it will be taught and assessed. Negotiated syllabuses still draw heavily on the teacher's experience and expertise but make sure that the needs of the learners are properly taken into account. It is not essential to use a negotiated syllabus, but the teacher should look carefully at learners' needs and how to address them.

#### 2) The four strands

The second most important principle involves having a well-balanced program which provides for different opportunities for language learning, learning through (1) meaning-focused input, (2) meaning-focused output, (3) language-focused learning, and (4) fluency development. Each of these four strands should have roughly equal amounts of time in a course. The principle of the four strands applies much more strongly where English is taught as a foreign language than where English is taught as a second language. However, even where English is taught as a second language, it is worth checking to see that the four strands are represented in the course and that no particular strand is strongly overrepresented or under-represented.

#### 3) Input

The principle of providing comprehensible input is contained in the idea of the four strands. However, this is such an important principle that teachers need to make sure that the learners are doing plenty of listening and reading which is at the right level for them. In an ESL situation, getting enough listening input is usually not a major issue, but it is also important that learners are doing a lot of relevant reading which is at the right level for them. This is particularly important when learners are in the school system.

One of the problems with gaining enough reading input is that graded readers end at around the 3000 word level, but learners need around 8000 to 9000 words to be able to read unsimplified text with any comfort. To fill this gap, we have created midfrequency readers adapted for advanced learners who know 4000, 6000, or 8000 word families. Each reader is available at each of the three levels, and all of the readers produced so far are available free on Paul Nation's website. We are keen to find volunteers to help create such readers, as the goal is to have at least fifty of them, each at each of the three different levels. It takes about 10 hours to create the three versions.

#### 4) Time on task

The time on task principle simply says that the more you do something, the better you will become at doing it. This somewhat crude principle is remarkably effective. It does not mean however that learners should struggle with material and tasks which are far too difficult for them. It does mean though that they should do substantial amounts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in order to improve these skills. If learners find difficulty in reading, this should not be a reason for the teacher to find other ways of presenting the subject matter that they need to know. It should be a reason for providing substantial amounts of relevant and supported reading so that they can develop this important skill.

# 5) Direction of effort

This principle simply says that we learn what we focus on. If we focus on gaining or communicating meaning, then that is what we will learn. If we focus on the form of

items, then that is what we will learn. Both of these focuses are helpful, but teachers need to look carefully at the activities they use, and what the learners are actually doing during the activity. Is the focus of the learners' attention on what the teacher wants them to learn?

Let us now look at what I consider to be the most important activities in a language course.

# The most useful language teaching techniques

Table 2 contains what I consider to be the most useful language teaching techniques. The ways in which these techniques are used will differ to some degree in various teaching situations and for various ages and levels of learners.

Table 2: The Twenty Most Useful Language Teaching Techniques

Skill area	Technique	Strand
Listening	Listening to stories	Meaning-focused input
C	Read and listen	Meaning-focused input
	(controlled listening)	
	Dictation	Language-focused learning
Speaking	Pair conversation	Meaning-focused output
1 0	Prepared talks	Meaning-focused output
	Problem-solving speaking	Meaning-focused output
	(role play)	
	Same or different (pronunciation)	Language-focused learning
	Identifying (pronunciation)	Language-focused learning
	Observation tasks	Language-focused learning
	4/3/2 (Repeated speaking)	Fluency development
Reading	Extensive reading	Meaning-focused input
_	Paired reading	Meaning-focused input
	Intensive reading	Language-focused learning
	Speed reading	Fluency development
Writing	Writing with feedback	Meaning-focused output
	Substitution tables	Language-focused learning
	10 minute writing	Fluency development
General	Linked skills	Message-focused strands
purpose	Issue logs	Message-focused strands
_	Word cards	Language-focused learning

Most of these techniques will be well known to language teachers. They are all described in detail in the books that I mentioned at the beginning of this talk. However, I will briefly describe a few of the ones that some teachers might not

recognise. Read and listen involves reading a text while listening to a spoken version of it. One of the great technological advances for listening is the availability of text to speech programs which can change written text into spoken language. Another important technological advance has been the ability to control the speed of spoken texts so that there is no distortion of the pitch during playback when the speed is slowed down or speeded up.

Observation tasks are particularly important where English is taught as a second language. In their simplest forms they involve the teacher providing the learners with a few simple questions to answer. They find the answers by observing native speakers either in real life or if necessary on TV. Here's an example.

What can you say to end a telephone conversation?

Besides what is said, is there anything about how it is said which signals the end of the conversation?

Such observation tasks can focus on spoken interaction, and can also focus on cultural issues such as meals or showing politeness to older people.

Paired reading involves learners working in pairs to read a text. The idea of working in pairs is so that the learners can get support during their reading.

Issue logs can also be called projects. They involve each learner choosing a topic which is of interest and relevance to them, gathering data on this topic, reporting to others in the small group at regular intervals about the data that they have gathered, and then eventually presenting both an oral report and a written report on what they have found. This activity stretches over several weeks.

If I had to go to a desert island and was only allowed to take one teaching technique with me, the one that I would take would be the linked skills activity. The linked skills activity involves focusing on the same piece of material through three of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. So, the learners could read a text about a certain topic. Then they talk in small groups about what they have read. Finally, they work in pairs to write a summary of their reading and discussion. In this activity the same content is focused on across the three skills of reading, speaking, and writing. There are many variations of linked skills activities and they set up ideal conditions for vocabulary learning in that they provide the opportunity for repeated retrieval to occur, for negotiation to occur, and for varied use and varied meetings of the new vocabulary.

It is worth considering which of the techniques in Table 2 are teacher-centred, group-centred, or involve independent work, because by classifying activities in this way, teachers can reduce their teaching load, giving responsibility to the learners for many of the activities.

# How could you make a substantial change to your English program?

If a teacher wanted to make a substantial change to their teaching program, what could they do? Here, substantial means a change that would have a strong effect on learning. It does not mean a change that would require changing the complete nature of the program. Any one of the following changes would have a very good effect on an English program. The ranked most significant changes to a program are as follows:

- 1 Extensive reading at the appropriate levels for input and fluency development
- 2 A fluency development program
- 3 Peer listening and speaking
- 4 Linked skills activities
- 5 Vocabulary size testing

An extensive reading program is listed as the most significant change because this change is well researched and has been shown to bring about lots of different kinds of useful learning. It is also a relatively easy change to make, but the major requirement is the availability of reading material. Note that an extensive reading program should have a meaning-focused input strand where learners read material which is at the right level for them so that they are meeting a few unknown words and constructions. It should also have a fluency development strand where learners read easy material but read it quickly.

Fluency development is important and this is why the second most substantial change would be the introduction of a fluency development program across the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The activities in Table 2 are classified into the four strands, and those in the fluency development strand are clearly indicated.

Peer listening and speaking activities provide opportunities for learners to learn from each other. Careful thought needs to be given to how pairs and groups are formed for such activities. Second language learners can benefit from being paired with native speakers of the language, and there are also benefits in cross-age peer tutoring.

I have already suggested that linked skills activities are probably the most useful of all teaching activities. This is likely to be because you get three for the price of one. Linked skills activities are very well known amongst primary school teachers but they may not be so well-known by other teachers. The ESL book I referred to earlier contains a chapter on linked skills activities.

The fifth change on my list is vocabulary testing. Over the last year I have been involved in a large vocabulary testing program looking at the vocabulary size of secondary school students. The findings of this research indicate that at each age level there is a wide range of vocabulary sizes, but even those native-speakers with the smallest vocabulary sizes have a large enough vocabulary to cope with their school

work. The rule of thumb for working out the vocabulary size of a young native-speaker is to take their age in years, take away 2, and multiply by 1000. So a 13-year-old is likely to have a receptive vocabulary size of around 11,000 word families (13 minus 2 times 1000). A 17 year old is likely to have a receptive vocabulary size of around 15,000 word families. Because learners do differ in their vocabulary sizes, it is worthwhile carefully measuring the vocabulary size of learners who need language support. The tests to do this are available free from my website. Careful measurement involves sitting next to the learner while they sit the test and encouraging them to stay on task and praising their successful answers. Such encouragement can increase their scores on the test so that their scores are a truer reflection of their knowledge.

# The teacher's jobs

This talk has focused on teachers, teaching principles and teaching activities. Let me conclude by looking at the teacher's jobs. The teacher's main jobs are (1) to plan a good course (the most important job), (2) to organize learning opportunities both in and outside the classroom, (3) to train learners in language learning strategies so that they are encouraged to be independent in their learning, (4) to test learners to make sure that they are making progress and that they know how well they are doing, and finally, the least important but still important job, (5) to teach. The reason for listing these jobs is to show that planning and organizing opportunities for learning are by far the teacher's most important tasks. Teaching is something that the teacher should do but should not overdo. If we look at these jobs from the perspective of the four strands, teaching is part of the language focused learning strand and only a part of that strand. That means that teaching should make up less than one quarter of the course time. The rest of the course time has the learners involved in learning through input, output, and fluency development. The learners should also be responsible for some of their language-focused learning.

At this conference I was awarded the substantial honour of life membership of TESOLANZ. I usually avoid such honours but in this case I was very proud and pleased to accept. I was the first president of TESOLANZ and I have felt great pride and pleasure in being part of this organisation. The CLESOL conference is always very well attended, and for a country as small as New Zealand, the numbers attending are very large indeed. This is a tribute to the professionalism of English teachers in this country. As a gift to the profession, I have decided to make the book 'What does every ESL teacher need to know?' available free in electronic form. I am grateful to Compass Media for their support in doing this. In writing this book, I have had the generous support of several ESL teachers in New Zealand who are acknowledged in the book.

**Note:** Look on Paul Nation's web site (<a href="http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation.aspx">http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation.aspx</a>) for Midfrequency readers, the Range program with lists going up to the 25<sup>th</sup> 1000, two parallel forms of the 20,000 Vocabulary Size Test plus a detailed description of the test. How to get a free copy of 'What does every ESL teacher need to know?' will also be explained there when the book is available.

# EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES IN NEW LEARNING SPACES: TEACHER, LEARNER AND RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVES

# Cynthia White School of Humanities, Massey University

#### **Abstract**

What are the new learning spaces? What do we know about them? How new are they really? What kinds of opportunities do they afford language learners and users? What do other teachers think? How can we learn more? New contexts and opportunities for language learning have arisen through globalization, together with developments in technology and online social media; these changes raise significant questions for learners and teachers in terms of their identities and practices. In this paper I look at three different contexts where technological and pedagogical innovation has created new learning spaces and emerging opportunities: an online teacher learning network, a telecollaborative intercultural exchange, and wiki-based collaborative writing. In each case I discuss the questions, frameworks and tools which were used to guide enquiry into the new learning environments — by teachers, learners and/or researchers. To conclude I argue that attention to issues of identity, affect and community can deepen our understanding of emerging opportunities in new learning contexts, and shed light on additional dimensions to the questions posed at the beginning of the paper.

#### Introduction

The field of English language learning and teaching is subject to constant change which is generated as new ideas and new learning environments emerge. Evident developments have occurred in language teaching methodologies, the understanding of learner needs and of classroom practices, and in the design of learning tasks. In terms of everyday practice, teachers and learners both generate and respond to a wide range of changes including curricula, assessment, course materials and in roles and skills. Within this context of ongoing change, last two decades have seen a compelling shift in the broadening of the contexts for language learning: teaching and learning increasingly take place within and across multiple contexts, both real and virtual, inclass and out-of-class, with co-present and remote partners. Learning is no longer hermetically sealed within the classroom, with the teacher and the textbook as the sole or principal source of target language texts and learning opportunities, where homework is the other acknowledged context where learning takes place.

Globalization and information and communication technologies (ICT's) are the two main forces at work behind these changes, which are both strong and enduring. In terms of globalization, we have seen flows of population around the world who need to learn English as a lingua franca, or for study, or business, or everyday life. In New Zealand the large number of international students who come to study in high school,

tertiary and private language schools, together with non-English speaking background migrants and refugees, are part of these trends. In terms of ICTs, technology is the new mediator of social, professional and educational life: every day we use the texts and tools of the internet, and these texts and tools in turn are transforming our language practices. (For example, how often do we now write formal business letters or letters to friends? What range of genres do we now use for email, texting, Facebook, in work, study and social life?) What it means to learn, teach and communicate in second language contexts has changed dramatically compared to two or three decades ago. The purpose of this article is to illustrate some of the new learning spaces, and the opportunities that emerge within them for learners, teachers and researchers. In particular we will look at a New Zealand-Germany telecollaborative exchange, an online teacher learning network, and wiki-based writing in Vietnam. But first, as further background to the article, I would like to reflect briefly on the way the field of English language learning and teaching has opened up over the past three decades, and the different trajectories that have developed.

#### **Evolutionary trajectories**

Communicative language teaching was undoubtedly one of the major twentieth century breakthroughs in language teaching: it arose from Dell Hymes' notion of communicative competence, a focus on language in use, and a belief that it is possible to organize language teaching in ways that are more authentic and provide opportunities for learners to use the target language in meaningful ways. The late seventies and early eighties spawned other new ways of organizing teaching: the rakau method for te reo Maori, the silent way, total physical response and others, all intent on solving the riddle of the right method for language teaching. Interest grew in extending and researching new teaching methodologies, and then introducing them to teachers, learners, classrooms, textbook writers and policy makers. Critical responses to the impact of new methodologies include Canagarajah's (2002) critique of the 'methods trade' whereby methodologies developed in largely western contexts were seen as exported to classrooms in very different sociocultural settings; this trade was seen as developing with little, if any, acknowledgement of existing practices, or of the prevailing skills, knowledge and expertise of local teachers. Holliday (1994) argued that since the methodological innovations in English language teaching were developed with western contexts in mind, attempting to transplant in other contexts resulted largely in 'tissue rejection'; such a response was largely seen as an outcome of initiatives which were insufficiently embedded in local realities. Critiques such as these are important since they caution us in thinking about the potential of new learning opportunities to also be aware of possible limitations, pitfalls and unexpected outcomes in actual contexts of use.

A second strong trajectory, influencing research and practice, is that of learner-centredness, captured in the title of the book, *Focus on the language learner*, edited by Oller and Richards in 1978. Principles of learner-centeredness, which may seem self-

evident today, were that instruction should be based around learner needs and individual responsibility for learning (Brindley, 1984), that teaching should be relevant and responsive to learner needs, and should take place within a prevailing culture of enquiry (White, 2007a), and that learners should be actively involved in the ongoing negotiation of meaning (Breen & Candlin, 1980). As learner-centeredness evolved, self-access learning, individualized instruction and independent language learning became hallmarks of this approach, with an emphasis on the learner as an active agent in learning processes. In terms of research, interest turned to the wide range of learner contributions that affect learning processes including affect, motivation, beliefs, learning strategies, aptitude and learning styles; the still influential edited collection by Breen (2001) remains an important landmark of this developing line of enquiry. The learner autonomy movement introduced new ways of thinking about language learning, emphasizing the choice, control, individual awareness and responsibility on the part of the learner and spawned new ways of organizing and managing learning opportunities. Fostering learners' critical awareness of processes of language learning and teaching (Cohen & White, 2008), and of their own practices as developing practitioners of learning (Allwright, 2003) are more recent developments in learnercentered approaches.

The development of new learning spaces, and within those spaces emerging opportunities for language learning, has sparked a further evolutionary trajectory for our field, and key amongst these are virtual learning environments. Such developments are redefining the boundaries of language learning and teaching, for learners, teachers and researchers. The remainder of this article will look at three new learning spaces – a New Zealand-Germany telecollaborative intercultural exchange, an online teacher learning network and wiki-based writing. Each new learning space will be briefly described, and then the focus will be on how teachers, learners and/or researchers have created, engaged with, investigated and learned from experiences in those spaces.

All too frequently reports on new learning environments focus on the potential of new technologies with relatively little weight given to the perspectives of those most involved, the individual learners and teachers. So here each new learning space will also be seen and understood through the eyes of individuals – Katiya, Will, Ngan and Phuong – which is also to acknowledge that experiences are subjective, situated, complex and dynamic. It is also helpful for us to think about the ecology of new learning spaces. Ecological systems theory (Gibson, 1986; Tudor, 2001) examines the complex relationship between environments and the person: it highlights the way in which individual learners 'seek to evoke a response from, alter or create an external learning environment in order to develop conditions conducive to learning' (White, 2003, p. 112–3). And within this paradigm, the notion of critical adaptive learning (Gu, 2006; White, 2011) seeks to explain how individuals work with the affordances of particular environments: each environment is seen as both framing and enabling

learning in particular ways – and individuals pursue both active and adaptive learning, with adaptive learning being a response to the framing features of particular environments (and active learning a response to the enabling features of the environment).

In the remainder of this article emerging opportunities in new learning spaces will also address how individuals pursue critically adaptive learning in order to construct an environment that is beneficial to their particular needs.

#### **Telecollaborative exchanges**

Web 2.0 platforms including blogs, wikis, YouTube and Facebook have revolutionized how we can use the internet: now groups and individuals can engage in collective activity (as in writing, reading and commenting on blogs), can collectively create new knowledge and new texts (as in Wikipedia), and can share knowledge, opinions, ideas and experiences within social networks. While early forms of the web offered texts for language learning, the new tools and spaces within web 2.0 allow individuals to work together to produce their own texts and form new social worlds – as such they are spaces that bring together the contributions of individuals, thus engaging the identities of users. Here we will see how questions of identity were central to the experiences of one heritage learner of German, Katiya, as she participated in a bilingual German-English telecollaborative project. Katiya's grandparents were German-speaking and she had memories of having stories read to her as a child in German: as an adult she was keen to reclaim her ability to speak German and so enrolled in a distance course through Massey University. One part of the course included a three week telecollaborative exchange with English for Academic Purposes learners at Muenster University.

Telecollaboration, or telecollaborative exchanges make use of online communication tools "to bring together language learners in different countries in order to carry our collaborative projects or undertake intercultural exchanges" (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006, p. 623). In this project, new learning spaces were created whereby learners could participate in bilingual online exchanges (German and English) using email or chat for example, where they could gain feedback on their target language and act as a native speaker resource for learners of English. In the telecollaborative project reported here intermediate learners of German at Massey University worked in small groups with advanced English language learners at Muenster University (for details of the project see vom Brocke, White, Walker & vom Brocke, 2010) to complete tasks, activities and projects which formed part of their course requirements. Figure 1 shows the configuration of tools and task settings which framed the learning environment:

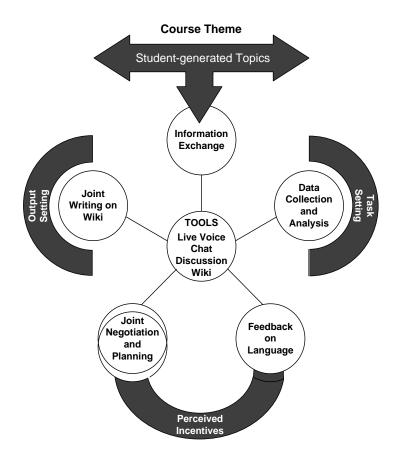


Figure 1: Configuration of technology and tools in the telecollaborative project environment (vom Brocke et al, 2010, p. 161)

Students needed to make use of critical adaptive learning to see how the different tools would work for them – wimba voice tools, email, wikis, for example; they took a lot of initiative and introduced other online tools including Facebook, YouTube, and skype, initially to add social presence and get to know each other, but also to negotiate and work together throughout the project.

The perspective taken by the researchers in the project was to analyse the nature of student engagement and collaboration drawing on the framework developed by Mangenot and Nissen (2006). According to this framework, collective activity takes place on three interrelated levels: a socioaffective level at which students develop and maintain relationships, an organizational level which involves complex planning and ongoing monitoring of progress, and a sociocognitive level where there is joint engagement, problem solving, and contributions to the different activities and goals.

Evidence of students' getting to know each other and developing an online presence was quite overt at the start of the group as in the following text chat:

- S1: ....where do you live in Switzerland? City or in the mountains? It is snowing?
- S2: But sunshine yesterday ...
- S2: but COLD
- S3: We got a little lake in Münster, it is a little frozen!
- S1: Okay I'm to slow in writing ...
- S4: Basel, married to a Swiss, trying to finish my degree, has anyone heard of three and half hour time difference?

but was maintained throughout the project, and often took place outside the project environment, most commonly through Facebook and blogs. Organisational dimensions worked on many levels, not only deciding when and how to work together, but also in negotiating the task at a particular stage:

- S1: Getting an idea of what people think globalization might be a good place to start?
- S2: Yes of course, thank you!
- S1: I mean, not very long ago I thought it meant McDonalds...

#### And then later on:

S1: I just thought about the problem how we want to integrate the aspect of "opportunities and challenges" in our project? Or do we want to figure out the relationship between NZ and Germany and illustrate opportunities and challenges in this special case....?

And the sociocognitive dimension involved ongoing negotiation and decision making, and a willingness to work with the perspectives of other contributors: the example below is from a group who began by considering the appropriation of cultural symbols:

- S1: In a globalised world many cultures or local communities sell their typical "culture stuff". I don't know how to call it exactly....
- S2: So we come finally back to the question, what 'culture' might be
- S1: Yes or what people think it is....when they come somewhere and want to see, buy or experience something typically mmmhh. Yes but we can also think culture got another meaning through globalization, through "Kommerz"...
- S3: Because now cultures around the world are picking up bits and pieces from other cultures
- S1: And also often sell their own.
- S2: I'm not sure if you can sell culture out. Culture is what people do, isn't it?

S3: Yes. There's a lot of Maori-based stuff on sale here. You can't sell culture, but you can sell its symbols.... I think it's better for a culture to exploit itself than for another culture to steal its symbols and do it for them... At least that way, they're \*choosing\* to do it!

(vom Brocke et al. 2010, p. 160)

The environment was not only framed by the tools available but by curricula outcomes. The New Zealand students were required to critically reflect on the interactions, and on their contribution to different aspects of collective activity: they were asked, for example, to identify and provide a commentary on their contribution to the collaborative empirical enquiry carried out by the Muenster students, to key interactions which shaped the focus of the enquiry and also interactions that were for them problematic. Learners thus traced how the collective activity and the project developed. Importantly they became aware of how the contributions they made and the responses of others both frame and enable different kinds of learning. Such learner perspectives on the collective activity provided both the teachers and researchers important insights into the opportunities offered by the different learning spaces within the telecollaborative exchange. Here we will look at Katiya's retrospective reflections at the end of the course.

Katiya began by pondering what the traditional course format offered her:

I don't have many opportunities to speak German in my part of New Zealand, and it feels like part of my heritage is missing in my everyday life. Learning in a formal way helped as a foundation, but it never quite felt real.

But the new learning spaces in the telecollaborative project inspired her once it became evident that she could use her German to get things done:

I became inspired when I found I could set up the meetings, and arrange things that worked ...it was only a small thing but my language worked, and it gave me a real sense of possibility, that I was one step nearer to going back to my roots and spending time living my life in German.

For Katiya, she could literally see the outcome of her language use in the online spaces, not just in the replies of others, but in the way her language shaped when and how others helped to develop the project. In short, she saw that she could perform a competent identity in German, and that her expertise was also needed by others. Katiya also valued the fact that she could keep returning to the online spaces to see what was going on and continue to check out both the form and meanings of the interactions. She made many Facebook friends through the project, and that became a way for her to continue to learn beyond the course:

I really appreciated and enjoyed this opportunity ... I learned so much from my counterparts in Germany, and in ways that I can continue learning. I am still friends on Facebook with them and can learn how they talk about their lives ... I could never have had this window in a more traditional course ... and it stays with me.

Thus the opportunities within the telecollaborative project were a portal into new friendships and into how the target language is used authentically in everyday life.

# **Online Teacher Learning Network**

The internet has also made possible the opening up of new learning spaces and networks for language teachers, including opportunities for peer support. Language teachers, in the course of their careers, are often called upon to develop or readjust their skills, knowledge and practices in the light of new curricula, new methodologies, new learning outcomes, new cohorts of learners, and so on. When teachers are asked to employ new technologies in their teaching, in sustained, embedded and pedagogically appropriate ways, this requires a rethinking of all aspects of practice (White, 2007b).

Here I want to look at the experience of one teacher, Will, who took part in a collaborative teacher learning project between Nottingham UK, Nottingham Ningbo (China), and Massey University. The aim of the project, funded by Nottingham UK, was to develop the use of technologies in language teaching, and an online environment was set up using google groups to encourage the sharing of experience and expertise (White & Ding, 2008). Twenty three teachers across the three campuses participated in the project. A specific research question that informed the study was: How do innovations in technology impact on teachers' collective and individual identities and professional autonomy? Here, in the case of Will, we will look at how questions of teacher identity emerged as central to his experience of blended language teaching.

Will was an experienced teacher of English for Academic Purposes, and had taught English in the UK, Africa and Eastern Europe. His students were enrolled in degree courses at Nottingham University, and chose to take additional classes to continue to improve their English language proficiency. Will's scheduled class times often conflicted with undergraduate classes, and so for this project he chose to introduce a Moodle environment into his courses, and for that part of his classes to be available online 24/7. Will, like many of the teachers, posted very little in the shared online environment, but in interviews he reflected very fully on what the new learning spaces meant for his classes, himself as a teacher, and interestingly, himself as a language learner. As a learner of Portuguese he had been enrolled in a distance course for some time and that experience became central to how he oriented students to the blended elements of his course:

I think it did help me. My Portuguese course is entirely by distance, not blended or distributed, also the platform they use is designed for language teaching ... it helped me explain the limitations of the online environment to the students, and how it fits with our weekly classes in this room.

Here, his experiential learning in the Portuguese course raised his awareness of the need to understand the framing features of the online learning environment, and that such critical adaptive learning was integral to getting started in distance or blended settings. Will noted that orienting students to the affordances and limitations of the opportunities in new learning spaces was in line with the processes he used as a teacher to raise students' awareness of the purpose of tasks or different parts of the curriculum. It was also the case that the distance teacher of Portuguese served as something of a near peer role model for Will (Murphey & Arao, 2001): he made ongoing reference to how she worked with her students, in the midst of many competing commitments and other professional demands, identifying greatly with her difficulties and her resilience:

I felt enormous sympathy for the teacher of Portuguese because she was in the same position as me – she was having to design this course as she went along. I was very appreciative of the amount of material she produced and she was doing other things, oral interaction through technology and she was doing her ordinary teaching at the university as well so I was staggered that she managed.

Will envisioned and re-envisioned himself in this new domain of online language teaching, not only through his classes but also through other aspects of lifewide learning, in this case the hours he spent in evenings and weekends learning Portuguese by distance. What qualitative longitudinal enquiry such as this can reveal is how individual understandings of new teaching spaces are influenced by factors which have a far greater reach than that defined by the project: while Will collaborated with other teachers in the project for him the key motivator and source of knowledge came through his experiential learning in the distance Portuguese project. It also illustrates how language teachers can now access new ways of learning from other teachers who are remote from their immediate physical environment.

This project has been a good breakthrough for me .... As a teacher I think with all the innovation around you..., you worry about what you may become, either very stale, or a new kind of teacher where you can do the role but not feel very comfortable. (....) But this is still an issue. In moments I really enjoy the new environments, but I still haven't managed to feel fully at ease...

We also have a picture of how identity is both dynamic – at times feeling competent and at ease as a teacher, at others not – and conflictual, in this case having complex attitudes to the need for innovation (being at once inspired and threatened). From a researcher perspective this last point aligns with Dornyei's (2005) identity and L2 self perspective: Will is motivated to engage with the new learning spaces by his ideal self

dimension (in terms of the possibilities they offer his learners and based on his experiences as a distance learner of Portuguese); he is also motivated by an ought-to self dimension, arguing that he feels he has to make changes as he is worried about becoming stale and out of touch. And finally we can see how identity is shaped and realized within experiences, activities and practices, mediated by others, with the distance teacher of Portuguese as a critical other here, together with peers in this teacher learning network.

# Wiki Writing

The internet has also opened up new spaces for collaborative writing, and arguably the most widely used are wikis: a wiki is a website which allows users to create, add and edit content. Importantly wikis are easy to use and allow for open editing of the content, where users are able to see and compare different versions of the text – through the archive and history review facilities, for example.

Here we will look at the opportunities afforded students in their first experience of wiki writing in a BA in TESOL Program at a university in Central Vietnam. The participants (N=60) were taking a compulsory course, *American Culture*, which has a strong emphasis on achieving cultural and linguistic competence through collaborative learning opportunities (Nguyen & White, 2011). As part of this students were required to collaborate in writing a 300-word essay on at least three similarities and/or differences between American and Vietnamese culture in areas of their choice.

From a research perspective, the focus of the study was a comparison of two cohorts of students in different discussion and collaborative writing contexts: the computer-mediated communication (CMC) cohort worked in online discussion and wiki writing spaces and the more traditional face-to-face discussion and paper-based writing groups formed the control cohort. Analysis of discussion transcripts revealed that more equal contribution was a marked feature of student participation in the CMC mode and this was supported by questionnaire data, interviews and observations. Figure 2 shows the Gini coefficients of participation inequality based on analysis of discussion transcripts showing that most control groups had a high figure of .20 or above; conversely, the greater equal participation is clearly presented in the CMC groups, most of which had a figure below .20.

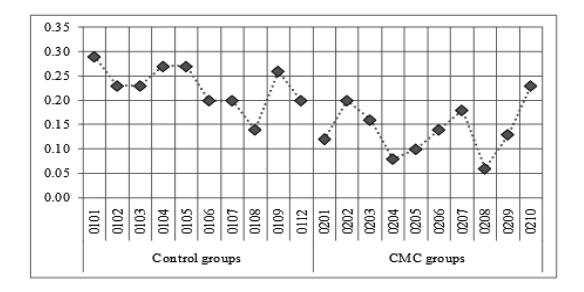


Figure 2: Gini coefficients of participation inequality by group (Nguyen & White, 2011)

After the discussion phase the students began work on collaborative writing and peer review, and the wiki was used as a platform for collaborative writing. Here too students commented that the wiki environment made equal participation more possible, particularly for students who were often quiet in class. Ngan commented as follows:

... I feel that the other members were more willing to listen to me when correcting on this [wiki]. It seemed difficult for me to persuade them in direct way like face-to-face. I just made use of the comment functions on the wiki to add mine. They looked more diagrammatic and logical.

Clearly being able to actually see the comments and edits took the writing process to a new level, where the written medium added weight and substance to the redrafting process. Comments such as these came within the part of the research enquiring into students' attitudes towards the wiki experience and what they identified as the affordances of that learning environment. Phuong, a student who used computers in her everyday life and had the highest GPA in the class commented that the wiki was 'an open study environment' in which students do not feel pressure in being observed by the teacher. The latter point about the absence of pressure is interesting since in this case the teacher was very evidently present in the wiki environment; Phuong went on to explain that any sense of stress is mitigated by the fact that:

Students are more interested in their study because they can use the social network, which used to be considered as a pastime, in their study. It somehow helps to decrease the pressure from common classes.

Thus, perceptions of the learning environment are influenced by experiences in other web 2.0 spaces, particularly as wikis, like Facebook, are both part of the social web.

Phuong also emphasises that alongside the sense of interest and enjoyment there is an increased sense of agency as students can access the learning environment 24/7, and accountability as their contribution is evident for all to see.

Additionally, this kind of class requires students to work independently, and they also have to keep themselves updated with group work, which makes them more responsible.

For Phuong, wiki writing required a good deal of investment and sustained commitment to collaborative work of the part of each group member with the contribution of each person evident in the marked-up text:

.... (what) I like most in the final collaborative product is that everyone contributed their own work to make a complete final product. Also, we spent time together to revise and improve our writing

In an email interview Phuong added that the new learning spaces in her course gave a chance for everyone to contribute their opinions, which is hardly seen "in common classes". Experiences in these virtual spaces are also subjective and situated in particular sociocultural frameworks and this case was no exception: what emerged from the Vietnamese study was an abiding concern with the interpersonal and intersubjective experience that was constructed in the wiki space. Phuong commented as follows:

In wiki peer exchange, I like being able to share with my partners, every time I want and feel free to give them my comments without worrying that I am hurting their feelings. It is because I can think carefully and choose appropriate words before I type them down. More than that I can delete previous comments and replace them with more suitable ones.

Phuong's concerns about the affective aspects of the wiki experience point to an awareness about the need to attend to interpersonal relationships, and that this was all the more salient because written comments remain: participants found this feature facilitating as it enabled them to think carefully before posting. Phuong also saw the environment as a way to develop links with fellow students, and that these links were of a different nature to what was possible in face-to-face settings:

This is also a good place for us to share things happening in our daily lives, which are now gradually reduced to meet the study requirements. I myself feel so close to my crew thanks to wiki.

Here student perspectives confirmed the quantitative research findings that more equal participation was made possible by features of the online chat discussion and wiki writing spaces. Additionally, learner perspectives drew attention to the salience of interpersonal, affective dimensions of relationships online, and of the communities that develop through discussions and interactions, as well as editing and commenting in wiki spaces.

#### Conclusion

The new learning spaces discussed here show us something of what is now possible in language learning and teaching, largely through the advent of computer-mediated learning opportunities. Through the eyes of Katiya, Will, Ngan and Phuong we have a picture of how individuals respond to and work within the virtual environments, early on in their experience of those spaces. We have a picture of the way the environments framed learning opportunities, both by the technological affordances of the spaces, but also as the environment was built moment by moment through the contributions of others. We also have a picture of the participants as critically adaptive learners, identifying what is possible within each new learning space, and working with those features in a productive way.

The studies reported here have also shown that issues of identity, affect and community come to the fore in new learning spaces as they engage all aspects of what it means to be a language teacher or learner, as those experiences create salient emotional responses and as individuals work to create a community that allow them to work in ways that are important to themselves, their goals and to other significant relationships.

Finally, the new learning spaces require us to continue to re-examine and rethink what it means to learn, teach and communicate in second language contexts.

#### References

- Allwright, D. (2003). Exploratory practice: Rethinking practitioner research in language teaching *Language Teaching Research* 7(2), 113–141.
- Breen, M. P. (Ed.). (2001). Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research. Harlow, England: Longman.
- Breen, M., & Candlin, C. (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(2), 89–112.
- Brindley, G. (1984). *The assessment of second language proficiency: Issues and approaches*. Sydney, NSW: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Adult Migrant English Service, Macquarie University.
- Canagarajah, A. (2002). Globalization, methods and practice in periphery classrooms. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching* (pp. 134–150). London, England: Routledge.
- Cohen, A. & White, C. (2008). Language learners as informed consumers of language instruction. In I. Kupferberg & A. Stavans (Eds.), *Festschrift for Elite Olshtain* (pp. 185–205). Jerusalem, Israel: Magness, Hebrew University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Gibson, J. J. (1986). *The ecological approach to visual perception*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

- Gu, Y. (2006). An ecological model of e-learning in Chinese context. PacCALL Conference, 16–19 November, Nanjing, China.
- Holliday, A. (1994). *Appropriate methodology and social context*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Mangenot, F., & Nissen, E. (2006). Collective activity and tutor involvement in elearning environments for language teachers and learners. *Calico Journal*, 23(3), 601–621.
- Murphey, T., & Arao, H. (2001). Changing reported beliefs through near peer role modelling. *TESL-EJ*, *5*(3), 1–15.
- Nguyen, L., & White, C. (2011). The nature of 'talk' in synchronous computer-mediated communication in a Vietnamese tertiary EFL context. *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching 1*(3), 14–36.
- O'Dowd, R., & Ritter, M. (2006). Understanding and working with 'Failed Communication' in telecollaborative exchanges. *CALICO* 23(3), 623–642.
- Tudor, I. (2001). *The dynamics of the language classroom*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Vom Brocke, J., White, C., Walker, U., & vom Brocke, C. (2010). Making user-generated content communities work in higher education On the importance of setting incentives. In U.-D. Ehlers & D. Schneckenberg (Eds.), *Changing cultures in higher education Moving ahead to future learning* (pp. 149–166). Berlin, Germany: Springer-Verlag.
- White, C. (2003). Language learning in distance education. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- White, C. (2007a). Focus on the language learner in an era of globalization: Tensions, positions and practices in technology-mediated language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 40(4) 321–326.
- White, C. (2007b). Innovation and identity in distance language learning and teaching. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *1*(1), 97–110.
- White, C. (2011). Inside independent learning: Old and new perspectives. In B. Morrison (Ed.), *Independent Language Learning* (pp. 14–23). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- White, C., & Ding, A. (2009). Identity and self in e-language teaching. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self.* (pp. 333–349). Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

# TEACHING PRAGMATICS TO LOWER-LEVEL LEARNERS

# Heather Denny, Jenny Healy & Flora Macdonald AUT University

#### **Abstract**

The teaching and learning of the pragmatics (socio-culturally determined norms) of a second language is vital if migrants and refugees are to live and work in the country of resettlement without miscommunication (Yates, 2008). One way of teaching these is by having learners listen to and work with naturalistic samples of native speaker interaction (Burns & Joyce, 1997). Following a series of action research investigations into the teaching of pragmatic norms using elicited recorded samples of native speaker role-play at intermediate level (Denny, 2008), the authors have turned their attention to learners at lower levels of proficiency. There are indications that it may be difficult to use authentic or semi-authentic samples to teach at this lower level (Denny & Basturkmen, 2011). This project sought to discover if lower-level learners can learn pragmatics by being helped to notice pragmalinguistic features in recorded discourse samples created from native speaker role-play. The research showed that this is possible, but that the teaching methodology needed to be adapted to the needs of this group of learners, using more teacher-facilitated activities and scaffolding, and focussing on the teaching of formulaic expressions.

#### Introduction

# Teaching pragmatics

The importance for language learners, particularly migrants, of knowing the socio-culturally determined norms, or pragmatics, of the target language is now widely accepted (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005; Riddiford, 2007; Wigglesworth & Yates, 2007; Yates, 2004). Yates (2008) points out that communications skills "are especially problematic for job seekers and employees from other language and cultural backgrounds...not all cultures have the same understanding about what is clear or polite communication" (p. viii). An awareness of the cross-cultural differences is essential learning for all newcomers if they are not to be misunderstood or judged to be deficient in what is regarded as self-evident communication skills by native speakers, particularly the monocultural majority of a country like New Zealand.

Pragmatics can be divided into sociopragmatics, the cultural norms implicit in an exchange, and pragmalinguistics, the way these norms are realised in language (Yates, 2004). Research shows that pragmatic norms are not learned by immersion in the target community and elements can be taught, even to beginner learners (Tateyama, 2001). Instruction (most probably explicit) is necessary (Kasper & Roever, 2004), although conditions for instruction are still being debated (Takimoto, 2007).

The use of authentic or semi-authentic discourse samples, rather than more artificial scripted textbook dialogues, to teach the linguistic and socio-cultural norms of spoken interaction has been widely supported (e.g. Burns & Joyce, 1997; Butterworth, 2000; de Silva Joyce & Slade, 2000; Yates, 2004). In addition, methodologies have been suggested for using this approach (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahon-Taylor, 2003; Huth & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006; Yates, 2008). Typically students listen to recordings of the discourse samples and do various tasks including guided consciousness-raising exercises, scaffolded practice of the 'noticed' language, role-played practice which is sometimes recorded and reflected on, experiments with the newly-learned language in interactions outside the classroom, and cross-cultural comparison of the target norms with those of the first culture.

Fully authentic New Zealand discourse samples have been used to teach the sociocultural norms of New Zealand English in various kinds of workplaces and New Zealand academic contexts to higher level learners (Basturkmen, 2002; Malthus, Holmes & Major, 2005; Riddiford, 2007). However there is a shortage of suitable fully authentic published local samples for lower-level learners.

There are a number of real and perceived barriers to teachers' use of authentic texts. It is difficult for them to access the time, resources and expertise necessary to search corpora and published collections of fully authentic texts, and adapt them for classroom use or make their own fully authentic recordings. The latter is ethically difficult and intrusive and access is not always possible for privacy reasons. From interviews conducted with ESOL teachers in a research project funded by the Northern Hub of Ako Aotearoa (Denny & Basturkmen, 2011) it was found that there can be a number of additional barriers to trialling this approach, particularly for teachers of lower-level learners. These include a feeling that the language in authentic samples is not controlled, making it hard to focus on specific language items needed by learners at this level.

To fill this gap, semi-authentic sample texts were developed using native speakers of varying ages and genders in contexts relevant to learners at four levels. Actors were asked to role-play a situation without rehearsal or script and with only an outline of the proposed exchange and its purpose Recordings were made and transcribed.

The aim of the current classroom-based study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching materials for pragmatic instruction which were developed for lower-level learners based on these semi-authentic elicited samples. This study builds on a series of similar classroom-based research projects (Denny, 2008, 2010; Sachtleben & Denny, 2012) and adds to previous evidence to create a fuller picture of its strengths and weaknesses with different kinds of learners, in a variety of levels and contexts.

#### Lower- level learners: issues

The research we had done to date in this series had been with higher-level learners (high-intermediate and advanced). Using semi-authentic or authentic samples to teach the pragmatics of New Zealand English (negotiation and casual conversation) in relevant contexts had been shown to be effective in high-intermediate classrooms. The methodology involved comparing pre- and post-test measures and conducting student surveys (Denny, 2008, 2010). The use of semi-authentic samples had also been shown, in a qualitative analysis of student blogs, to be effective in raising pragmatic awareness of students in an undergraduate interpreting class (Sachtleben & Denny, 2012). However in the Ako Aotearoa funded survey and interviews we found that teachers of lower-level learners in particular were very reluctant to use fully authentic materials for pragmatic instruction. They believed that the language in the sample texts would be too complex, confusing and distracting. Because it would not be controlled as to vocabulary, idiom, or structural features, it would be hard to focus on the language their learners initially needed to learn (Denny & Basturkmen, 2011). We therefore turned more in this project to issues for lower-level learners and the effect on their learning of using semi-authentic recorded samples.

# Action research and teacher development

This project used a form of action research called Self-Study Research (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy & Stackman, 2003) in which the classroom teacher researches his/her own practice in collaboration with a critical friend. In this case the critical friends were colleagues and members of the research team. One teacher was also a member of the research team. Action research has been widely advocated as a powerful form of teacher development, empowering teachers to develop their teaching skills in self-selected areas of interest and concern (Burns, 1999) in a cyclic process of reflecting, identifying areas of interest, collecting and analysing data, drawing conclusions, and reflecting on these conclusions, then starting a new cycle of investigation.

The current project involved two levels of learners, pre-intermediate and post-beginner. More details about these levels and learners are given below.

# Investigation into the teaching of the pragmatics of casual conversation to lowerlevel learners

# Research questions and methodology

The research questions were:

- 1. What evidence is there of development in the learners' awareness of the pragmatic norms targeted in instruction?
- 2. What activities do learners believe contributed and most contributed to this development?
- 3. What pedagogical issues (if any) arise in the use of semi-authentic recorded samples of elicited native speaker role-played conversation with lower-level learners?

Answers to these three questions at each level (post-beginner and pre-intermediate) were obtained from an analysis of pre- and post-instruction learner self-assessment surveys and DCTs, quantitative activity surveys and data in teacher reflective journals.

# Data gathering tools

Conscious awareness is a precondition for acquiring features of a second language (Schmidt, 1990). However when a learner becomes aware of a new feature he or she may not show this awareness in on-line production in a multi-tasking situation such as role-play. This is because interactive tasks require learners to mentally process what they hear, construct a reply and deliver the reply under time pressure (House, 1996) and this can be difficult, especially for lower-proficiency learners. We therefore decided to measure awareness only, using a data-gathering tool that allowed the learners to show that they were aware of the features in question without multitasking. Thus a learner self-assessment survey (Appendix 1) incorporating a simplified discourse completion task (DCT) was used. This tool, administered before and after pragmatic instruction, allowed the learners to self-assess their ability to complete a given communicative task (for example opening or closing a conversation) appropriately on a three point scale and giving examples of language they might use in the relevant context.

In addition, a quantitative learner survey was conducted after the teaching was completed in which the learners identified, from a list of all learning activities undertaken during tuition, all those activities which they believed had been helpful, and, for greater discrimination, two which they believed had been most helpful in learning the relevant norms (Appendix 2).

Triangulation was provided by data from teacher reflective journals in which the two classroom teachers recorded their perception of changes in learner awareness in the classroom and learner reactions to the various learning activities. The teachers also reflected on issues that arose around the use of naturalistic samples with lower-level learners and recorded the various activities undertaken in the classroom.

#### **Analysis**

The answers in the DCT items were assessed on a three point scale following predetermined criteria (Appendix 3), and this assessment was moderated by another member of the research team. This provided a teacher-generated rating for each learner on each skill. Then the self-assessment data in the same survey was collated, providing a self-assessed learner rating on each skill. Data from pre- and post-tests were compared and changes in the number of students showing full awareness and the number of individuals showing increased awareness calculated. Increased awareness was defined as any positive change in an individual's awareness of the skill. This could be from no evidence of the skill to some evidence or from some evidence to full mastery.

The quantitative data from the second survey, in which learners rated and ranked the classroom activities was collated and analysed using descriptive statistics. Themes emerging in the qualitative data from the teacher journals were identified.

# Post-beginner participant context

The fifteen post-beginner participants all came from a refugee background and originated from East Africa, the Middle East and South East Asia. They were studying in an EAL course (FFTO: Foundation Focused Training Opportunity programme) in a New Zealand university. This programme aimed to help refugees and new migrants with low or no qualifications to acquire the English they needed to progress to higher levels of study or to enter the workplace. For these learners successful communication was vital and, given the part that pragmatics plays in successful communication in the workplace (Riddiford, 2007; Yates, 2008), it was important to see if there were ways of raising their awareness of pragmatic norms. The decision to place students at postbeginner proficiency level was based on a short reading and writing test followed by an informal interview. They could understand instructions and information in very limited contexts. Their ages ranged from 21 to 51 years and their educational background ranged from zero to 13 years' formal education. They had relatively brief exposure to formal English study, both in New Zealand and prior to coming to New Zealand. Since coming to New Zealand, the length of time that students had studied English ranged from one month to 3½ years. The teacher (also one of the researchers) was responsible for introducing learners to exchanges relevant to their needs at this stage of settlement, and the norms of casual conversation and inviting were two types of exchanges believed to be important to help them communicate with native speakers. Within a 17 week semester course, the eleven hours of work on pragmatics occurred in lessons over five Thursdays (weeks 8, 10, 11, 12, & 13). These eleven hours do not include pre- and post-tests.

# Teaching strategy: Post-beginner

One semi-authentic conversation recording was used to expose learners to a sample of native speaker conversational discourse. It was created by giving two native speakers general guidelines (the relationship between the speakers and the fact that an invitation should be issued and refused) and asking them to role-play without rehearsal or script. This phone conversation was between two middle-aged friends, a man and a woman. Learners listened to the whole conversation several times, and answered questions on the 'gist', then completed worksheet activities, listening again to the invitation and refusal segment or referring to the transcript. Activities included a pre-listening discussion question, general and then detailed comprehension questions, a vocabulary matching exercise, and questions about staging and other pragmatic features of the exchange. (See question samples Appendix 4). The pragmatics-focussed questions were confined to the invitation and refusal exchanges in the sample to make them more manageable at this level, but also looked at starting and finishing a conversation.

During the teaching cycle for pragmatics there were also activities in which the students in pairs practised moves in the conversation, such as explaining the reason for not being able to come. This was followed by semi-structured conversation practice of acceptance and refusal. Generic conversation frames, partly based on the sample dialogue, were used, with the teacher taking one role, and then with the class listening as two students role-played the conversation with teacher feedback. Finally the students took part in paired role-plays of the whole conversation. So teacher input consisted of feedback and clarification when checking answers with the class, and corrective feedback during controlled practice and freer role-play.

Only one semi-authentic sample was used with post-beginners because of limited resources and time. Functions not represented in this sample (for example accepting an invitation and starting a face to face conversation) were modelled by the teacher or elicited from the students in a teacher-fronted session.

## Pre-intermediate participant context

There were twelve pre-intermediate consenting students, whose ages ranged from 21 to mid-fifties. They had spent an average of only one year nine months in New Zealand and all were enrolled in the most advanced level of the FFTO programme. They were able to understand spoken information and instructions in familiar contexts and complete practical transactions in English and had come to New Zealand as refugees from seven different countries. Formal education ranged from zero to 13 years, although more than half of them had less than seven years. While two students had no English prior to coming to New Zealand, the majority had studied English for less than five years in their home countries and up to three years in New Zealand.

# Teaching strategy: pre-intermediate

The pre-intermediate level class was also taught conversational skills including inviting and accepting or refusing an invitation. The teacher was not a member of the research team but kept a journal. The teaching approach was similar to the post-beginner class, although at this level a greater number of teacher-made samples were able to be used. The teacher-made samples for this level included two between colleagues (one between two middle-aged New Zealand men, the other between two middle-aged female teachers) and one between two female friends in their early twenties who had not seen each other for some time.

In each of three lessons students listened to a different recording. They then answered a range of worksheets questions for comprehension and to help them notice linguistic features and native speaker socio-cultural norms. (See Appendix 5 for samples). Teacher attention was given to all nine conversational skills included in the pre- and post-teaching tests. The transcript was used for language focus, for example to find natural expressions for suggestions and arrangements, and to check understanding. Other activities included group and whole-class discussion in which target language

and cultural features were compared with those of the students' first languages and cultures, and paired practice with teacher feedback. Both spoken and written teacher input during the analysis of the pragmatic features in the samples was a significant part of the teaching strategy.

#### Results

### Post-beginner level

Figure 1 represents the results of the pre- and post-tests in the teacher-assessed DCT. The first two bars (black and light grey) show the difference between the pre-test and the post-test scores, representing the number of participants demonstrating instances of full awareness of the skills involved in managing invitation conversations appropriately. (Note that the skills bracketed were not taught from the semi-authentic samples.)

From this chart it can be seen that in the pre-test (black bar), students showed evidence of full awareness in only four of the conversational skills. However, post-teaching, there was, in all skills except one, an increased number showing instances of full awareness, and this increase, represented by the difference between the black and light grey bar, ranged from 20% to 60%.

The contrasting decrease in the number of students showing evidence of full awareness of *clarifying* from the pre- to the post-test could be explained by the fact, confirmed by teacher journal data, that less classroom time was spent on this skill than on the others because of the larger number of students showing pre-awareness of the relevant clarifying norms.

The third bar in Figure 1 (dark grey) shows the number of participants showing individual increased awareness, for example from 'not aware' to 'partly aware' or 'fully aware' or from 'partly aware' to 'fully aware' as measured by the teacher assessment on the DCT (See Appendix 1). For example for inviting (question 6) one student wrote 'I hopeful to you visit us.' on the pre-test and was rated N (not appropriate), then 'I really love you to come' on the post-test and was rated S (somewhat appropriate). Another wrote 'Can you come to house for visit' on the pre-test, rated N, and 'Actually I was ringing to invite you .....' on the post-test, rated Y (appropriate). Both were evidence in our view of increased awareness. Individually, there was an increase in the number of participants demonstrating individual increased awareness of the appropriate language in all nine skills and this increase was substantial (46% to 66%) in six of the seven skills taught using the semi-authentic samples. Again, seeking clarification showed the smallest increase.

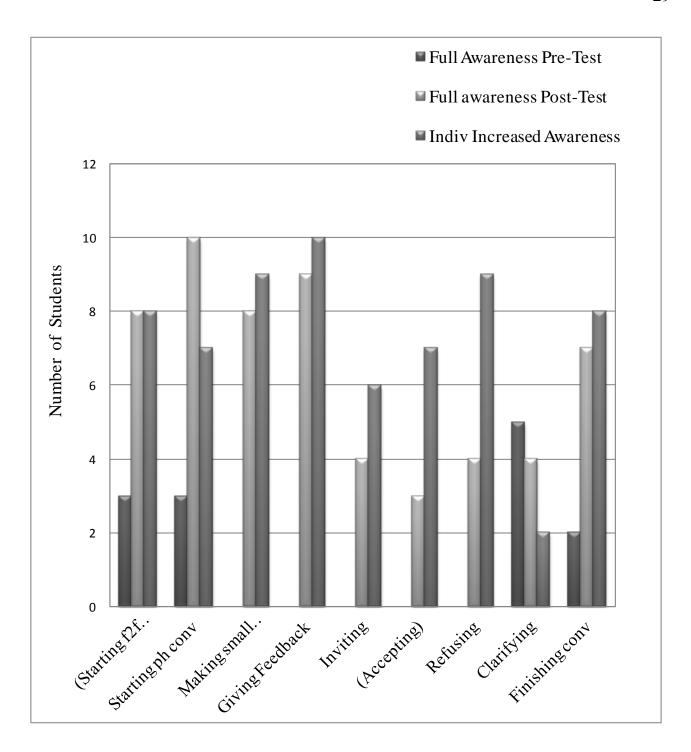


Figure 1. Post-beginner: Student awareness of conversation skills (pre-instruction and post-instruction) and individual increased awareness in conversation skills (N=15)

Figure 2 shows the various classroom-based activities used in instruction and the student feedback on which activities they believed were helpful and which two they believed were most helpful.

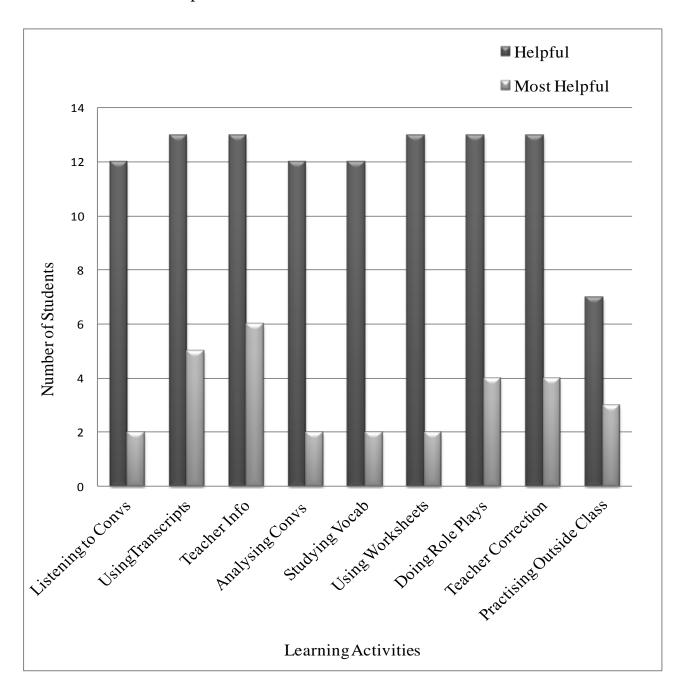


Figure 2. Post-beginner: Student perceptions of helpful and most helpful learning activities (N = 15)

The black bars in the chart (Helpful) indicate that the majority of the students rated all of the activities as being helpful.

Looking at both data sets, and using the 'most helpful' (grey bar) to discriminate where the figures for 'helpful' were the same, the activities which were most highly

ranked were *teacher information* and *using transcripts*. These were followed closely by *doing role plays* & listening to the *teacher correction* when practising. Activities rated most highly were those perhaps involving a greater degree of teacher input or more 'real-life' activities, and students showed they valued the transcript, possibly for support in understanding the conversation.

The activity with the least 'useful' ratings was *practising outside class*, perhaps because it precluded any teacher correction and feedback and demanded a greater degree of independence than lower-level learners usually have. They possibly also hesitate to initiate conversations with expert speakers.

We also note that the data shows that *using transcripts* was rated more highly by students than listening to the conversations. This suggests that post-beginner students were learning from the semi-authentic texts, but needed the additional support of the transcript.

Teacher journal data confirms the positive attitude of the learners to the approach: "Almost every day after or during class, one or more students commented to me on how useful they found what we were covering and practising". And the role of the transcript was explained: "It seemed more logical for students to answer these from the transcript (not the recording), so I asked them to do this... in groups. Worked well". Also why the teacher decided to supplement the noticing activities based on the one semi-authentic sample with other types of input, "Did lots of chalk and talk and some oral practice about beginning and end of conv / feedback / time, day, date.... prepositions / lang for accepting and refusing...because the dialogue didn't give many useful examples of ... these things". With more sample dialogues and more time this may not have been necessary.

#### Pre-intermediate level

Figure 3 represents data similar to that shown in Figure 1 but relating to the preintermediate class.

From this chart it can be seen that in all nine skill areas there were some students who were already aware of the appropriate language before teaching began, as measured by the teacher pre-test. This ranged from nine who already knew how to start a conversation appropriately, to two who could ask appropriate questions and two who were able to accept an invitation. When the data for the pre- and post-tests shown in the first two bars was compared, there was a small (8.3% to 25%) increase in the number of students showing instances of full awareness of the socio-cultural norms in six of the nine skills: *making small talk, using polite questions, giving polite feedback, changing the subject, inviting* and *finishing a conversation*.

The fact that the increase, although small, occurred in these skills could be because these functions, apart from *using polite questions*, can be carried out with the use of formulaic expressions which students at the pre-intermediate level are generally familiar with or can easily acquire, perhaps because they are more often heard and therefore more easily noticed. Typical formulaic language used by learners in the DCTs included 'how' questions in small talk, for example 'how've you been?', which featured on one of the samples; using 'anyway' to change the subject; 'would you like to' for invitations and 'I have to go' as a pre-closing.

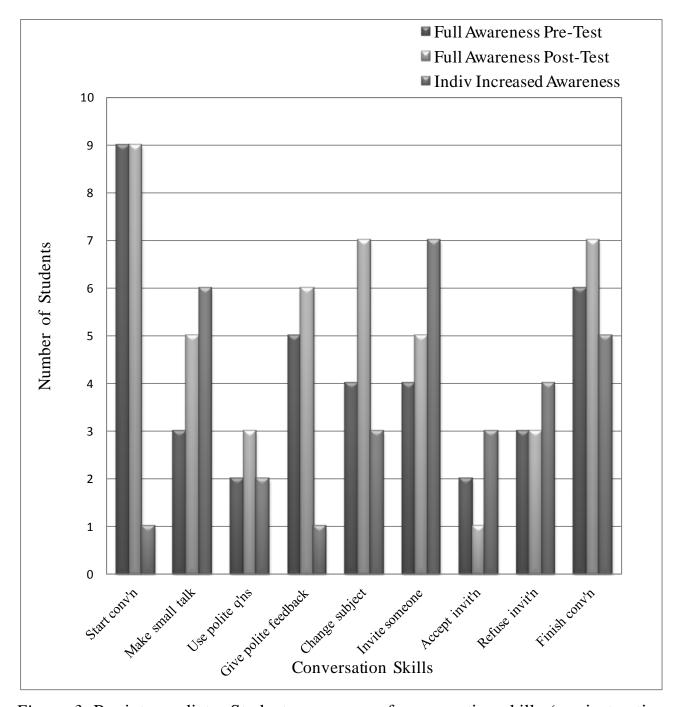
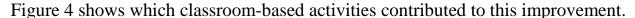


Figure 3. Pre-intermediate: Student awareness of conversation skills (pre-instruction and post-instruction) and individual increased awareness in conversation skills (N=12)

In contrast, the findings indicate that in *using polite questions* and *accepting and refusing invitations*, which require more complex language and interactional skills, students were less likely to gain awareness of relevant norms. One example of this complexity is the need to process what has just been said while formulating a suitable response, always difficult for lower-level learners. This kind of difficulty is identified by House (1996) in his study of German learners of English pragmatics.

The data represented by the third bar in the chart measures the number of students whose individual awareness of the skill increased. As for the post-beginner data the increase could be from none to some or full awareness, or from some to full awareness, meaning that some who showed increased awareness had not yet shown evidence of full awareness, hence the seemingly contradictory data for finishing a conversation.

This data indicates there is evidence of improved individual awareness in all nine skills, with a more substantial increase (41.6% to 58%) in the skills of *inviting* someone, making small talk, and finishing a conversation. As noted previously these functions can more readily be expressed using formulaic language.



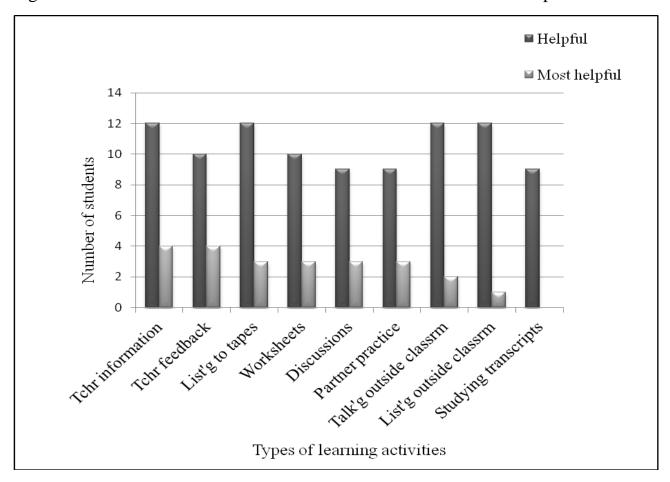


Figure 4. Pre-intermediate: Student perceptions of helpful and most helpful learning activities (N=12)

The ranking of the classroom-based learning activities was arrived at in the same way as for the post-beginners. The data represented by the first bar ('helpful') shows, as for the post-beginners, that all activities were helpful to the majority of students, with 75% or more of students selecting each activity. However when students were restricted to selecting only two which were 'most helpful' (see the second bar) the activity rated overall as the most helpful in learning conversation skills was information told by the teacher. Teacher feedback followed closely, with listening to conversation tapes ranked third if 'helpful' and 'most helpful' data were considered together. The students' positive response to the listening was reflected in teacher journal comments: "The class got better at listening for the target language and listened enthusiastically. The class appeared to understand and complete all questions well". Studying the transcripts was the least favoured activity, with no student selecting it as most helpful. In fact teacher journal data shows that the transcripts were used very little during teaching: "The students did not appear to need the transcripts during the listening lessons". However, when they were used, the teacher's comment was "The class did the exercise well, much discussion was generated". In contrast to the findings for the post-beginner level the data indicated that listening to semi-authentic texts was seen as very helpful. It is also interesting that more students at this level learned from contact outside the classroom. However, as with the post-beginner class, the three most highly ranked activities involved teacher input.

#### **Discussion and conclusions**

Looking at outcomes common to both levels it is clear that these lower-level learners could learn features and pragmatics of conversation from semi-authentic models. There were modest to substantial increases in the numbers who were able to show awareness of these norms, and students in both classes rated either listening to the authentic conversations or reading the transcripts highly in the activities survey. In general it seems that functions easily expressed in formulaic language are those showing a greater increase in awareness, highlighting the importance of teaching these multi-word units to lower-level learners. The improvements in the pre-intermediate class were small, however. This is surprising since our research at higher (Denny, 2008, 2010) and now lower levels has shown greater benefits. Further study would be needed to see what other factors might influence this result.

In addition it is noticeable from the results of the activities surveys that the teacher-directed activities (teacher information and teacher feedback) are consistently more highly ranked by these particular learners than they have been at higher levels in our previous studies. This suggests that although these learners at lower proficiency levels could learn from semi-authentic sample texts, they believed they benefitted from more teacher guidance. However individual teaching or learning styles may also be a factor here. Further research could explore these variables.

There were differences between the levels. For post-beginners the analytical activities (using worksheets to analyse stages in conversation, and studying conversational

vocabulary and expressions) were less highly rated in the 'most helpful' data. This is not surprising as analysis is highly language dependent. Also, whereas the transcript was less valued or needed at the pre-intermediate level, at the post-beginner level the higher rating of *using transcripts* suggests that the support of the transcript was important with complex samples. There are other task design and learner variables that might have affected the outcome, and a closer analysis and more detailed data on these factors could strengthen further research.

There is of course limited generalisability for these findings given the small number of participants. However, taken together with the similar results in our previous cycles of action research, trustworthy evidence is building that semi-authentic discourse samples are valuable tools for the teaching of natural spoken language to migrant and refugee learners, and are valued by and accessible for learners, with scaffolding, even at lower levels. This study has also highlighted the need for such scaffolding at these levels and the value of prioritizing the teaching of formulaic language and the importance of learner noticing. Given such encouragement, we will continue to use and refine this methodology.

#### **Acknowledgements**

This research was funded by an AUT Faculty Contestable Research Grant. Many thanks to Karen Stacey and the anonymous reviewers for their very helpful remarks on the earlier drafts of this article.

#### References

- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Mahan-Taylor, R. (2003). *Teaching pragmatics* [Online]. Retrieved from
  - http://exchanges.state.gov/education/engteaching/pragmatics\_htm
- Basturkmen, H. (2002). Learner observation of, and reflection on, spoken discourse: An approach for teaching academic speaking. *TESOL Journal*, 11(2), 26–30.
- Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative action research for English language teachers*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Burns, A., & Joyce, H. (1997). *Focus on speaking*. Sydney, Australia: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Butterworth, A. (2000). Casual conversation texts in Listening to Australia. In H. de Silva Joyce (Ed.), *Teachers' voices 6: Teaching casual conversation* (pp. 3–10). Sydney, Australia: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- de Silva Joyce, H., & Slade, D. (2000). The nature of casual conversation: implications for teaching. In H. de Silva Joyce (Ed.), *Teachers' voices 6: teaching casual conversation* (pp. viii–xv). Sydney, Australia: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
- Denny, H. (2008). Teaching the pragmatics of negotiation in New Zealand English to adult migrants: The role of whole naturalistic texts. *Prospect*, 23(1), 46–57.

- Denny, H. (2010). Improving the teaching of the pragmatic norms of conversation: A journey of reflective teacher action research. *TESOLANZ Journal*, 18, 40–54.
- Denny, H., & Basturkmen, H. (2011). The role of teacher consultation in teacher education: A teacher development project focused on designing and evaluating pragmatics-focused instructional materials. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 17(1), 102–107.
- Eslami-Rasekh, Z. (2005). Raising the pragmatic awareness of language learners. *ELT Journal*, 59, 199–208. doi:10.1093/elt/cci039
- House, J. (1996). Developing pragmatic fluency in English as a foreign language. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18, 225–252.
- Huth, T., & Taleghani-Nikazm, C. (2006). How can insights from conversation analysis be directly applied to teaching L2 pragmatics? *Language Teaching Research*, 10, 53–79.
- Kasper, G., & Roever, C. (2004). Pragmatics in second language learning. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 317–334). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Louie, B., Drevdahl, D., Purdy, J., & Stackman, R. (2003). Advancing the scholarship of teaching through collaborative self-study. *Journal of Higher Education*, 74, 150–171.
- Malthus, C., Holmes, J., & Major, G. (2005). Completing the circle: Research and classroom practice with EAL nursing students. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 11(1), 65–89.
- Riddiford, N. (2007). Making requests appropriately in a second language: Does instruction help to develop pragmatic proficiency? *TESOLANZ Journal*, 15, 88–102.
- Sachtleben, A., & Denny, H. (2012). Making the implicit explicit: Raising pragmatic awareness in trainee interpreters, using semi–authentic spontaneous discourse samples. *TESOL Journal*, *3*, 126–137. doi:10.1002/tesj.7
- Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 129–158. doi:10.1093/applin/11.2.129
- Takimoto, M. (2007). The effects of referential oriented activity in the structured input task on the development of learners' pragmatic proficiency. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 13(2), 46–60.
- Tateyama, Y. (2001). Explicit and implicit teaching of pragmatic routines: Japanese sumimase. In K. R. Rose & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 200–222). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Wigglesworth, G., & Yates, L. (2007). Mitigating difficult requests in the workplace: What learners and teachers need to know. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 791–803.
- Yates, L. (2004). The secret rules of language. Prospect, 19(1), 3-21.
- Yates, L. (2008). *Teaching in Action 3. The not-so generic skills: Teaching employability communication skills to adult migrants*. Sydney, Australia: Adult Migrant English Programme Research Centre.

# Appendix 3: Sample questions from self-assessment survey and DCT - Post-beginner

You are having a conversation with a friend. Please tick one box for each sentence and answer the questions:

		Yes	Sometimes	No
1.	I can politely start a conversation face to face.			
	What do you say?			
2.	I can politely start a conversation on the phone.			
	What do you say?			
3.	I can politely ask the usual beginning questions in a conversation.			
	Write one question.			
4.	I know when it's my turn to speak.			
5.	I know the words to use to show I am listening.			
	What words do you use?			

# Appendix 2: Sample activities survey – Pre-intermediate

langu	e tick every activity that helped you to understand the culture and cultural age of conversation in NZ English. can tick as many as you need to.
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.	Listening to people outside the classroom  Talking to people outside the classroom  Information told you by the teacher (spoken)  Information written in worksheets  Group or class discussions in the classroom  Conversation practice with a partner in the classroom  Teacher feedback or correction during practice with a partner  Listening to conversation tapes  Studying transcripts of conversations using worksheets
Write 1. 2.	here the two activities from the nine above that helped you improve the most.

# Appendix 3: Criteria for assessment – Post-beginner

The learner can, according to core NZ English socio-cultural and pragmatic norms covered in the course:

Skill	Yes (Y)	To Some Extent (S)	No (N) No Response OR as below
1	Start face to face conversation appropriately	Address or greeting inappropriate	Both inappropriate OR one /both missing
2	Start phone conversation appropriately	Address or greeting inappropriate	Both inappropriate OR one /both missing
3	Ask the usual beginning questions in a conversation appropriately (small talk)	Inappropriate form (including register & grammar) OR inappropriate small talk topic	Small talk topic and form inappropriate
5	Use feedback to indicate listening	Inappropriate feedback	No feedback
6	Invite someone appropriately	Language partially appropriate e.g. too abrupt or direct	Language inappropriate e.g. not a request
8	Accept an invitation appropriately	Language partially appropriate e.g. too abrupt or direct OR no pleasure shown	Language inappropriate i.e. more than one mistake
9	Refuse an invitation appropriately	Language partially appropriate e.g. too abrupt or direct OR no reason given	Language inappropriate i.e. more than one mistake
10	Seek clarification appropriately	Impolite OR too abrupt	Impolite AND too abrupt
11	Finish a conversation appropriately	Some pre-closure, but not all, or some inappropriate	No pre-closure

# *Key to categories:*

**Yes** – Does this without any pragmatic errors (i.e. there may be minor grammatical errors, but the form and content are fully appropriate)

To Some Extent & No – As described above.

## Appendix 4. Sample worksheet activities – Post-beginner

<i>1</i> .	Questions	to raise	pragmatic	awareness	(sampl	le)	)
------------	-----------	----------	-----------	-----------	--------	-----	---

- What word does Judy use just before she says why she is ringing?
- What are the first eight words that Judy uses to explain why she is ringing?

.....

## 2. Role play activities

# **Speaking Practice**

- I. Now practise saying these things politely with another student:
  - 1. Practise saying why you are ringing.
  - 2. Practise explaining what you are inviting them to and when it is.
  - 3. Practise saying you can't come and why.
- II. Now listen to the teacher having a <u>whole</u> invitation conversation with some students.

# **Beginning of the Conversation:**

A:	Hello speaking.
B:	Oh hi lt's here. How are you?
A:	I'm fine thanks. And you?
B:	lately? (or: How's the family?)
A:	
B:	Actually I was ringing to invite you to

# **End of the Conversation:**

- A: Oh, well. See you soon.
- B: Yes, see you soon. Bye bye.
- A: Goodbye.
- III. Now you practise having an invitation conversation with some students.

# Appendix 5. Sample worksheet activities – Pre-intermediate

# **AN INVITATION ON THE PHONE**

Listen again for details to learn about the language used. [After two global listening activities]

1.	Listen to the first half of the conversation a couple of times. Write down how they greet each other on the phone. Try completing the small talk questions that Jo Anna and Jenny ask each other. These standard questions are called 'openers'.					
	Jo Anna:					
	Jenny:?					
	Jo Anna:?					
	Jenny:,					
2.	Travel becomes the topic of this casual conversation from lines 6-47. Listen for the typical follow-up questions Jenny asks about Jo Anna's trip. Write down as many as you can. The first one has been done for you. [Sample].					
	a. You went to India. Is that right?					
	b. And?					
	c. Mmm is Goa? d. Wow?					
3.	What common small words (discourse markers) do you hear them begin their responses with?					
	To introduce questions,					
	Neutral responding words,					
	To introduce a response that needs some thought					
	Before an unexpected (surprising) response					

enny:	Do you want to get together sometimeand have a coffee
To Anna:	- <u></u>
Jenny:	Soumdo you want to come round to my place?
Ia Anna:	
In English	h, we let each other know when we want to end the convice expressions used (lines 65–70).
In English Write in th	h, we let each other know when we want to end the convice expressions used (lines 65–70).
O	h, we let each other know when we want to end the convice expressions used (lines 65–70).
In English Write in th	h, we let each other know when we want to end the convice expressions used (lines 65–70).
In English Write in th	h, we let each other know when we want to end the convice expressions used (lines 65–70).

- 6. Now it's your turn to practise making an informal invitation on the phone.
  - Find a partner.
  - You are workmates.
  - Imagine you have just had a holiday and one of you rings the other to catch up. Ask them what they did over the break.

# BROADENING CAREER CHOICES AT SECONDARY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF KOREAN BORN NEW ZEALAND STUDENTS

# Margaret Kitchen University of Auckland

#### **Abstract**

Subject teachers in secondary school classrooms play an important role in their students' future pathways. Vaughan and Gardiner (2007) contend, however, that students, and society at large, would benefit from teachers committing to a more deliberate and planned role. They argue the benefits of subject teachers engaging in talk with students around the kind of lives students want to live, and, in particular, the benefits of drawing on their memory stores to talk about their own and others' career trajectories in their specialist fields. Such talk enables visualisation of potential learning and working communities for students (Damasio, 2010). For students from migrant backgrounds whose communities may not have wide work experience in Aotearoa New Zealand, who do not have broad networks of contacts familiar with the New Zealand workplace, whose memory banks have stories from very different contexts, such talk will address an even more pressing need. This article reports on whose memory banks New Zealand resident Korean born students drew on in planning their career pathways while in Years 12 and 13 at a large urban secondary school.

#### Introduction

This article presents senior secondary school Korean students' self reports of how they were choosing their career pathways. Traditionally, Korean parents have a significant role in their children's career choices (Li, 2012). Tan (2008) reporting on a Korean school careers evening in Auckland, suggests that Korean parents tend not to see beyond becoming a doctor, judge, or public prosecutor as a career path for their children. These are the high-paying 'respectable' jobs ending with 'sa' (for example, doctor = 'uisa'; lawyer = 'byunhosa'; judge = 'pansa'). The Korean parents in the larger study from which the data presented here are drawn pointedly told me that they wanted to learn about forging other career pathways and asked for help in accessing stories of Korean students who had done this in New Zealand. However, in the busy life of the school, the senior students in this study, seen as 'excellent' students by their school, were drawing on ethnic resources for advice and were following those traditionally favoured career choices. Of the two students who didn't, one drew inspiration from the school's extra-curricular service programme and the other found her desired career by googling.

# Career guidance and the role of stories: The New Zealand context

In both their review of New Zealand literature and in their survey of secondary school principals and careers staff, Vaughan and Gardiner (2007) found that career guidance delivery remains haphazard in some schools and that careers teachers/transition

advisers are commonly marginalised within schools, having little power. They claim that this is poor prioritisation, that the role of school careers/transition advisers is potentially very significant both for individual students and for the public good of society. They contend that guidance and careers development strategies and skills should be privileged over career information. Vaughan and Gardiner's more radical recommendation is that all subject teachers engage students in talk around the kind of lives students want to live. They contend that if subject teachers told stories from their memory stores and planned with the students their life pathways, students would be more motivated to study. Neuroscience supports Vaughan and Gardiner's recommendation about the power of stories. Damasio (2010) explains how hearing others' stories activates empathetic mirror neurons enabling the listener to engage in later mirror action. Listening to stories is the way humans learn to plan and then activate their own envisioned futures. Damasio contends that the ability to dream, and then put into practice, a good future for self and for society is the major evolutionary benefit of the modern brain. Storytelling has a role in motivating all students, but particularly students from migrant communities whose memory banks have fewer stories from the New Zealand context. Kiely's (2012) study of students from Asian backgrounds at a large Auckland school, reported that teachers currently play a very small role in students' visualisation of future careers and that parents play by far the greatest role. Storytelling, used deliberately in other contexts by the Ministry of Education, for example to encourage schools to emulate other schools' innovative policies and practices (Ministry of Education, 2012), could be moved into mainstream classrooms.

# Career guidance and the role of stories: An international context

International studies show that for migrant students from Asian backgrounds, ethnic stories are crucial in students' academic success, but in a host country they can also be constraining. Zhou and Kim's (2006) large, longitudinal study of Korean and Chinese high school students in Los Angeles is clear about the crucial role for academic success of supplementary education centres and churches in fostering cultural values and knowledge, and ethnic networking. These institutions encourage ethnic pride and teach Korean language and are "the locus of social support and control, network building and social capital formation" (p. 20) in facilitating Korean students' academic school success. However, such ethnic institutions can limit the choice of career pathways and do not provide wide networks to help secure jobs.

Beyond school, the ethnic resources become constraining. Many go into engineering not just because their families want them to, but also because their coethnic friends are doing so. After graduating they lack the type of social networks that would help with job placement and occupational mobility (Zhou & Kim, 2006, p. 24).

Like the students in this New Zealand study, the students in Zhou and Kim's study had had all or most of their education in the host country, yet they hadn't developed significant social networks beyond the Korean community. The students were

academically successful, Zhou and Kim argue, because of the support of ethnic institutions. Yet the students also chose from a narrow range of career options and had fewer opportunities both for work placement post university and for ongoing job mobility. The stories the students had listened to were from traditional ethnic sources. The question raised is: In what ways could schools supplement the clearly important role that ethnic institutions play in forming the dreams of students from migrant communities? Some answers have been drawn from Damasio's (2010) neuroscientific analysis and another strand of current interest within second language acquisition providing likely insight is the notion of possible future selves (Dörnyei, 2005; Kubanyiova, 2009; Pavlenko, 2002; Ushioda, 2009).

#### **Future selves**

The notion of possible selves derives from work in social psychology on self-schemas. Markus and Ruvolo (1989, p. 212) explain that:

Possible selves can be viewed as the future oriented components of the self-system. They represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and especially of what they are afraid of becoming. Imagining possible future selves requires links not only to the past, to the home culture, but also links to the mainstream host society.

Valsiner (2007, p. 90–91) describes the trajectories of movement of migrant students as "simultaneously striving towards the 'foreign' and the 'home'". While these possible selves are individualised, they are also social. Many of these possible selves derive from social comparisons in which the individuals' own thoughts and behaviours are contrasted to those of salient others. These possible selves are task and context related. They give direction. They help with the setting of goals and plans, with ontask behaviour, and energy levels.

At the cognitive level, possible selves provide focus and organization to one's intended activity, they guide the recruitment of appropriate self-knowledge, the development of plans, and the search for appropriate behavioural strategies. (Markus & Ruvolo, 1989, p. 236)

Students from migrant backgrounds benefit from having salient others in their home and host cultures. Empowering students to effectively participate in society, (in both local community and wider contexts) is one of the aims of the current school curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 7). The starting point of "The New Zealand Curriculum" is the "Vision" of young people as "confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners". Damasio (2010) would explain that the students envisoned here develop an optimal functional layer of life management ("sociocultural homeostasis"), an "as-if loop" that promotes good in the host society. The visions students have of their future selves can be drawn from salient others who are coethnic and other, from Valsiner's 'home' and 'foreign'. Aligning with visions of future selves, the overarching question for the large ethnographic, participatory study from

which the data in this article are drawn was: What are the Korean parents' hopes and dreams for their children's education in New Zealand? How might these be realised?

## This study

## The research question

The data reported on in this article came in response to this question to the students: What do you want to get out of school for yourself? Once the first participant, Jade, spoke saying that "for now my aim is to do well at school, to pass NCEA with excellence then go to a good university, that's my highest aim for now" (H, 40), the rest followed her lead talking about university study and proposed careers.

## The participants

The study was set in a large urban secondary school. At that time, 13% of the students were Korean (10% resident students, 3% international students). The data discussed in this article come from interviews with eight senior Korean who were permanent residents. They had lived in New Zealand between eight and 14 years. This article focuses particularly on two of these students, Jade and John, because these two students, in some ways, illustrate different ends of the continuum. The school's two Korean teachers collaborated to choose the student participants. I had stipulated that the students should be over 16 years of age and members of Years 12 or 13 with actual, or potential, leadership roles within the school. Grace (an ancillary staff member with responsibility for Korean international students and Korean family liaison) said that she had invited as participants very motivated, positive students: "Jade is a leader for her Whanau. The others are not leaders but excellent students. I have discussed with John [Korean-born teacher] to choose them" (personal communication, April, 7, 2010).

# Overview of research approaches and analysis

The data are a small part of a large ethnographic, participatory/advocacy study that explored the educational hopes and dreams of members of a Korean community attached to one secondary school. This study, and the larger one, drew on the following approaches: pragmatism, being informed by critical theory, but not driven by it; exploration of the particular while making connections to wider political, social, and educational scenes; for analysis, Charmaz's (2006) practical exemplars of modified grounded theory for coding, memoing and theory building, and for the (reasonably) close analysis of text, techniques of discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003).

# Research approaches, data collection and analysis in practice

The eight senior students had three rounds of focus group interviews, followed by a fourth round with the group split into two. There were also email exchanges, for example, I would email reflections on the previous week's discussion and some would respond with comments. As well, there were email exchanges following regular data confirmation checks.

I used various methods in collecting data. I was keen to involve the students in setting their own small research agendas. At the first interview I asked them if they would be interested in choosing a research focus and making field notes for one day. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998, p. 2) write passionately about the way that students as researchers are enabled to "read the world" helping them to understand and also change it by creating a vision of "what could be". I gave each participant a small spiral-bound pocket note book for the purpose of noticing and collecting data. I tried to foster a shared research climate. I kept in my mind certain relevant research findings and when it seemed opportune, shared these with the students, in this way fostering a research disposition. For example, I shared the findings around the model Asian thesis (He, Phillion, Chan, & Xu, 2008), and Korean expectations of the teacher's role in creating harmony (including participative opportunities for all) in the class (Choi, 1997).

I would transcribe the data the day of the interviews while the data were fresh in my mind, and so that I had time to reflect on what the questions might be for the next interview. I also kept in mind the parents' suggestions for change at the school. In this list were 'informative and inspirational talks by graduated students'; and 'more subject information, especially regarding possible career pathways'. I was interested in the students' opinions on these issues.

Once data confirmation checks were completed I numbered the data (roughly into meaning or topic chunks) and displayed these in a word document, in the first of a series of columns. I read the data closely, writing comments in adjoining columns. I named segments of data with a label that categorised and summarised in order to grapple with the meaning. I searched the data and assigned themes or codes. I looked for further, finer categories, later, adding slightly more blended or patterned comments and relevant literature. Much later I moved onto memoing, following the patterns offered by Charmaz (2006) in her practical guide. In memoing I used the following headings: Topic, How the category emerged, Beliefs and assumptions that support it, Practical significance and Contrary evidence. This article arises from one of the memos.

# Findings and discussion

# Reliance on family members for career and study advice

The students were choosing traditional careers similar to the Korean students in Zhou and Kim's (2006) study (see Table 1). Medicine and engineering were popular choices. The interviewed students were perceived as 'excellent' senior students by the two Korean teachers. They were students who were achieving well academically and consequently could choose from a range of career options. When I talked to them it was just over halfway through the year and they were in the process of choosing their career pathways.

Table 1
Students' career choices

Pseudonym	Proposed Career
Anna	Vet
Bin	Medicine
Cindy	Medical radiation therapy
Harry	Undecided, possibly engineer
Jade	Working for United Nations
Jae	Dentist
John	Doctor or engineer
MG	Doctor

In their choices the students were explicit about being influenced by family members, especially parents. John, for example, talked about his adherence to cultural norms concerning school, norms that had been inculcated from an early age. Interestingly he uses the plural pronoun *we* inferring that the other students had had similar teaching and share his views (H, 43):

The main reason for coming to school is to get good grades, because we have been taught from a young age that if we get good grades then we can have a happy future rather than be a rubbish collector or something. So the main purpose is to get good grades and live the rest of your life happily.

John's parents, and probably other ethnic institutions he attended, had linked hard work at school with future happiness. They had cautioned him that his future would be unpleasant if he didn't work hard and painted a picture of taxing, smelly, manual work. John had internalised this image his parents had given him of a feared self. He had adopted his ought-to self so that it became his ideal self (top grades giving him wide choices) and he was considering engineering and medicine. It is difficult to discern whether John's ideal self was his own or his parents' construct. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) raise the relationship between the ideal and ought-to selves as a question that needs further investigation. In John's case Markus and Nurius's (1986) 'salient figures', or Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2009) 'authority figures' were, John reported, solely his parents and possibly other ethnic institutions (the agent is absent in the passive construction "we have been taught"). Had the school asserted more of a role by actively inviting John to consider other, diverse images, would John have made different choices? John had been in New Zealand for 14 years but he still reported that he saw himself as an outsider, for example, when it came to social and academic groups within the classroom.

Other students mentioned getting advice from wider family members. MG said (I, 57): "I am thinking of medicine. I am getting the information from my godfather's son. He is in 4<sup>th</sup> year biomed already. We talk about how to study and what you need for biomed and university life." MG said that he talked with his godfather's son when he saw him at church. Jae said that he wanted to do dentistry in Otago. He commented (I, 54): "I get all my information from my brother he's at the university right now so I asked him like 'What should I do?' and he gave me information about that".

In contrast, Jade's ideal future self arose from her extra-curricular school experiences. She had received so much satisfaction from her service opportunities at the school that she wanted to pursue a career in helping others. School service opportunities such as the chance to go and paint classrooms in a partner, but under-resourced, school in Fiji had been influential in her future orientation. Jade's future self vision grew out of the school's commitment to the value of service, and the development of empathy, core values in the school's policy documents. Like the other students in this study, Jade, whose thinking about working for the UN in third world countries was confirmed after seeing an *American Idol Gives Back* television programme and adverts for the *40 Hour Famine*, was clear about the role of her parents in keeping her on track with traditional academic subjects that she was not passionate about (I, 69):

Like the whole UN kind of thing . . . my mum . . . she said 'Well in order to do that at first you need to do everything like go to uni get all the academic things. In order to help people.' Like she tells me and I kind of go like: 'I can't be bothered doing that kind of thing because I really don't enjoy doing physics and things like that', but I still do it, but she goes: 'How will you become a leader if you can't even you know to do things that are your own thing, how will you manage to help others?' Yeah, so my parents have a big influence on me to help others.

Jade exemplifies the role of both ethnic and mainstream resources in decision making. She was pursuing her ideal future self fostered at school on advice from her mother. Her mother had given advice when she became concerned that her daughter was developing service career ideas without being prepared to put in the hard work necessary to achieve her goals. Jade was emphatic that her parents were very non-traditional in many ways. She was careful to emphasise that her parents were not typical Korean parents concerned narrowly about study. They were happy for her to focus on helping others rather than making money. However, she commented that "they still care about academics, and they still value that but it's not just that, it is everything around it as well" (I, 69).

Jade was not detached from the cultural norms of her family. Like the Hmong students' in Lee's (2001) study, Jade perhaps accepted her parents' authority because they had made significant adjustments to the host culture. Lee (2001) found that migrant parents' willingness and ability to adopt various aspects of the dominant

culture seem to be directly related to the students' ability to maintain aspects of their minority culture, the children accepting their parents' authority because they saw their parents making certain adjustments. Hurh and Kim (1984) coined the term *adhesive adaptation* to characterize this acculturative process.

Jade had used salient others in both home and host country contexts (her mother, her involvement in school service programmes and television programmes and advertisements) to develop her ideas of her future pathway. Jade was the outlier of the group in that she was the most engaged in mainstream school life of the eight interviewed students. She positioned herself as being different from the other interviewed students in terms of having a broader view of life ("I'm sort of different than those people here", H, 49). She initially qualified the difference, "sort of", but then continued, tellingly using the demonstrative adjective "those" [the other Korean students] and the imprecise noun "people" to emphasise the distance between herself and the others whom she saw as staying within their Korean friendship comfort zone. She specifically raised the notion of broadening world views through cross-cultural friendships (H, 49):

Most Koreans don't try, you have your own group of friends and they just stay there because they're comfortable. When you interact with others you get so much a wider view of everything else because different cultural backgrounds.

Jade had developed her own future self-guide, based on her own reflection on her experience at the school. She developed, from the beginning, a future-self guide, making the choice in primary school to learn English more quickly by not sticking with coethnic students all the time.

Jade's future orientation was international, not local. Jade's school, if it had taken an active role in talking with Jade about her visioning process, may have suggested service roles within the New Zealand or Pacific context. After all, the vision in the curriculum document talks about educating students to participate in creating "a sustainable social, cultural, economic, and environmental future for our country" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 8), and Jade's service experience, so far, was in the New Zealand and Pacific region. Jade hadn't tapped into the school's pathway planning support systems. Aside from her mother, and the school's service focus, the only other salient influence Jade mentioned feeding her chosen future-self was the emotional pull of global television images.

Most of the students were missing connections to the social capital of the host society necessary for consideration of a wide range of career options and necessary for networks used in job placement. For Jade, stories of teachers working to help a poorly resourced Fijian school, or the international television images, are her future self guides. Cindy googled. The other students were modeling themselves on salient others within the Korean community. The interviewed students may have had more diverse

stories to choose from had the school played a more active role in storying. Such stories could be the enabling means or facilitators Zittoun (2006) contends are required to construct new meanings in unfamiliar contexts, although Marshall, Young and Domene (2006) claim that the processes by which people construct their repertoire of possible selves remains understudied. If the vision in the 2007 curriculum is to build a healthy, diverse society where all contribute, then the school would be implementing the national curriculum if it more actively pursued engagement with migrant students regarding wider participation in local, national and international communities.

## Role of school Careers Centre

In general the students didn't perceive the school as contributing to the process of choosing future pathways. When I asked the group who helped to give them career advice at school, Harry said, "No one" (i. H, 33). The Korean students had trouble collectively remembering the Career Centre's name: "Our school has something called a [long pause] a Conference Centre" (I. Cindy, 41). Anna interjected, supplying the name, 'Careers'. The students continued to mix up the names, variously calling the centre 'Conference' or 'Careers'. The students reported that they hadn't made good use of the Careers Centre. Cindy said: "Not many people go to Careers department. Not many have a good knowledge" (I. Cindy, 58). While Jade pointed out that all students were given an interview at the Centre, Anna countered that it was only for five minutes, and that they weren't really listened to. Cindy added: "And it's stuff we already know" (I. Cindy, 46). Cindy, who had used her own resources to sort through online information to ensure she had the requirements for entry to medical radiation therapy, was backed up by MG who commented that his friends were lacking important career information (I, 36):

To add on to what [Cindy] said, you know how she wanted to do a course in, a first aid certificate. Another one is that, for example, if you wanted to become a doctor and want to go and do biomed there is a test you must do for UMAT. I found out that a lot of my friends who wanted to become a doctor didn't know what UMAT was.

However, they all agreed that students generally didn't maximise their use of the Careers Centre as well as they should. MG said (I, 41): "That's where we can ask really detailed information. Like how many credits to go to university. We should utilise the Career Centre more. Most of my friends haven't been to the Conference Centre".

The successful student group had had most of their schooling in New Zealand so it is perhaps surprising that most of them felt left to their own resources when it came to developing their visions of their future-selves. Their length of time in New Zealand may have led to assumptions about their familiarity with the local context and their access to resources such as Career Centres and salient others. The students were opting for those traditionally respectable jobs ending with *sa*. These students' hard work and success had put them in a position to adopt, and they had adopted, their cultural ought-to selves.

#### The students' suggestions

While the students had developed future self-guides, these had not been developed through interaction with their school. They would have liked more access to Kiwi networking or Kiwi resources in sorting out their goals and in working out the steps to reach these goals. They had a clear message for the school: they, too, required more bridging support from the school in sorting out career pathways.

The students were aware that the Careers Centre did organise people to come from the universities and talk to students. Jade felt that students should make better use of it, and that this might open their eyes to other possibilities. She took up MG's suggestion that the regular time currently allocated to other activities during tutor time (such as learning to learn time) be used instead for talking about possible futures (I. Jade, 38):

So I think it would be better like a person speaking about the university could use that time so everyone could listen to it, everyone has to listen to it so even if that is not the university you want to go to it might open a new career for you or it wouldn't hurt to listen. So you can always get more ideas or stuff like that. Instead of having [learning to learn time] you could use that time to do stuff like that because when you have like courses upstairs like at lunchtime and I heard that, that like not many people go to it.

The students suggested ongoing regular talk about possible future selves. Bin said that he wanted more advice. In echoes of Vaughan and Gardiner (2006) he envisaged teachers knowing their students well and mentoring their future trajectories. In his ideal school world he envisaged "teachers getting to know what each student wants to do and helping them find out more about it" (I, Bin, 49). For Bin, mainstream teachers should have close knowledge of their students and use their voices and memory stores to assist the students in creation of futures selves. For these Korean students, having most of their schooling in New Zealand, and being successful academically, did not, for the most part, enable engagement with school resources for future pathway planning in their adopted country.

Like the students in Zhou and Kim's (2006) study, the interviewed students were 'excellent' students and so were able to choose career pathways favoured by their ethnic networks. Jade was an outlier to some extent. However, the students said that they would have liked more assistance from the school. As pointed out in the introduction, the interviewed parents, too, asked for access to stories of career pathways in the host country, stories currently unfamiliar to them.

#### **Implications**

Reaching out and exchanging real dialogue with a migrant community is challenging for all schools. The school in this study had made real efforts to meet with its Korean community, sometimes more successfully than others. Resources under-utilised that might suit the Korean community are online resources. Korean adults and students are

accustomed to a very technologically advanced online environment and consequently are very skilled and active in this field. Even if the school felt that the resource had to be in English, the Korean community's English reading skills are generally more advanced than their oral skills and the written word is less transitory, allowing processing time.

There could be links to motivating stories about alternative career pathways. For example, young Korean-born New Zealanders who are doing well in the creative maker short "Blue", film Stephen Kang with his film arts (e.g. http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU1104/S00361/nz-short-film-global-bonanza.htm; artist Jeena Shin, http://www.artspace.org.nz/exhibitions/projects/jeenashin.asp/; intermedia artist Hye Rim Lee, http://www.listener.co.nz/culture/super-bunny-superbeauty/).

There could be links to mainstream career sites such as the award-winning Digital Pathways Development site (<a href="http://www.digitalpathways.org.nz/">http://www.digitalpathways.org.nz/</a>) that aims to ensure the students' learning is meaningful for the future, with exploration of the relationship between curriculum learning areas and career education.

At the classroom level, too, teachers could consider using secure groups on social networking sites such as Facebook to implement curriculum related tasks, thus facilitating cross-cultural interactions in cyberspace and wider network building, interactions that don't take place in the classroom. New Zealand evidence suggests this would work well. Wilson, a teacher at an Auckland high school, found that his media studies Facebook group offered a more level playing field for participation for Korean students (Cavanagh, Maguiness, Wilson, & Kiely, 2011).

Space prevents discussion of the important role of social interaction and networking in English language development. Whose stories are made available to us and whose stories we choose to listen to will significantly affect trajectories both in personal terms and in terms of our participation in, and contribution towards, a healthy multicultural society.

## Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my PhD supervisors, Associate Professor Gary Barkhuizen and Dr. Rosemary Wette from the Department of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics, Auckland University, for their wise guidance during the larger study from which this report is derived. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Board of Trustees and principal of the school where the study took place; the two Korean teachers; and the research participants, the Korean students.

#### References

- Cavanagh, B., Maguiness, C., Wilson, N., & Kiely, S. (2011). *Teaching IS inquiry: How teachers at Albany Senior High School embed inquiry into their work*. Paper presented at the Dean's Invitational Seminar Series.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis. London, UK: Sage.
- Choi, M. (1997). Korean students in Australian universities: Intercultural issues. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 16(3), 263–282.
- Damasio, A. (2010). *Self comes to mind: Constructing the conscious brain*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2009). Motivation, language identities and the L2 self: Future research direction. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 350–356). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research. London, UK: Routledge.
- He, M. F., Phillion, J., Chan, E., & Xu, S. (2008). Immigrant students' experience of curriculum. In M. F. Connelly (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of curriculum and instruction* (pp. 219–239). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Ho, E., & Bedford, R. (2008). Asian transnational families in New Zealand: Dynamics and challenges. *International Migration*, *46*(4), 41–62.
- Hurh, W. M., & Kim, K. C. (1984). Adhesive sociocultural adaptation of Korean immigrants in the U. S.: An alternative strategy of minority adaptation. *International Migration Review, 18*(2), 188–216.
- Kiely, S. (2012). Exploring possible selves as a motivating factor for English language learners. Unpublished postgraduate manuscript.
- Kubanyiova, M. (2009). Possible selves in language teacher development. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 314–332). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Lee, S. J. (2001). More than "model minorities" or "delinquents": A look at Hmong American high school students. *Harvard Educational Review*, 71(3), 505–529.
- Li, J. (2012). *Cultural foundations of learning: East and West*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41(9), 954–969.
- Markus, H., & Ruvolo, A. (1989). Possible selves: Personalized representation of goals. In L. A. Pervin (Ed.), *Goal concepts in personality and social psychology* (pp. 211–241). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Marshall, S. K., Young, R. A., & Domene, J. (2006). Possible selves as joint projects. In J. Kerpelman & K. Dunkel (Eds.), *Possible selves: Theory, research, and application* (pp. 141–161). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers.

- Ministry of Education (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Author.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Curriculum stories*. Retrieved from: <a href="http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories">http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-stories</a>
- Pavlenko, A. (2002). Poststructuralist approaches to the study of social factors in second language learning and use. In V. Cook (Ed.), *Portraits of the L2 user* (pp. 277–304). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Tan, L. (2008, July 28). Young Koreans push NZ options. *New Zealand Herald*. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.nzherald.co.nz/asia-new-zealand-foundation/news/article.cfm?o\_id=600622&objectid=10522932">http://www.nzherald.co.nz/asia-new-zealand-foundation/news/article.cfm?o\_id=600622&objectid=10522932</a>
- Ushioda, E. (2009). A person-in-context relational view of emergent motivation, self and identity. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language, identity and the L2 self* (pp. 215–228). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Valsiner, J. (2007). Culture in minds and societies: Foundations of cultural psychology. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Vaughan, K., & Gardiner, B. (2007). *Careers education in schools*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.
- Zhou, M., & Kim, S. S. (2006). Community forces, social capital, and educational achievement: The case of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 76(1), 1–29.
- Zittoun, T. (2006). *Transitions: Development through symbolic resources*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

# TED TALKS, VOCABULARY, AND LISTENING FOR EAP

# A. J. Coxhead & R. Walls Victoria University of Wellington

#### **Abstract**

Are TED Talks useful listening fodder for English for Academic Purposes learners from a vocabulary perspective? To find out more about the vocabulary of TED Talks, we developed a corpus of six minute talks from six subject areas, with ten talks in each subject area. We then analysed the vocabulary load of these talks, first over the whole corpus and then over each individual subject area. We found that the talks in our corpus have a similar vocabulary profile to novels and newspapers, as found by Nation (2006). The coverage of the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) over the corpus is approximately 4%, just under half the coverage over written academic texts. The article concludes with a discussion of implications of this study for EAP teachers and learners.

#### Introduction

The main purpose of this article is to determine how to give intermediate and advanced level learners listening practice with authentic yet accessible texts which do not impose too much of a vocabulary load. We chose TED Talks because they are currently recommended as listening practice for EAP students by the Language Learning Centre at Victoria University of Wellington; and translated into many languages. These dynamic, topical, and at times theatrical, web-based talks are presented by a wide range of speakers. Nurmukhamedov and Sadler (2011, p. 187) report these talks are free, scripted without second language learners in mind (and are therefore authentic), and cover a very wide range of high interest professional and academic topics, such as technology, business, and design. Beginning with a brief literature review of vocabulary load research, this paper will give a short background to TED Talks, including its benefits to EAP learners. We will then consider two small previous studies of the vocabulary load of TED Talks. A discussion on the current study, its implications and limitations, and future research possibilities conclude the article.

# Investigating the vocabulary load of written and spoken texts

Finding out how many words learners need to read a text can be done by carrying out an analysis of vocabulary load. One way to do this is to use Nation's (2006) British National Corpus frequency lists, which start from the first 1,000 word families and at the time of writing continue up to 25,000 word families. Nation (2006, p. 79) discusses the concept of coverage of his word lists over written and spoken texts and finds,

if we take 98% as the ideal coverage, a 8,000–9,000 word-family vocabulary is needed for dealing with written text, and 6,000–7,000 families for dealing with spoken text.

Note that the 98% figure is aimed at independent use of texts by learners, meaning learners will be working without the support of their teacher.

Nation (2006) has carried out a range of corpus-based studies and finds coverage of 8,000 to 9,000 word families over a novel, 3,000 word families over a graded reader, and for Shrek, the movie, 7,000 words plus proper nouns. Coxhead (under review) found similar coverage of novels in a secondary school English literature corpus of novels, films, and Shakespearean sonnets and plays that are currently used in New Zealand secondary school English classrooms. A replication study with a much larger corpus is underway (see Coxhead & White, in press). In a study of texts written for children, Webb and Macalister (in press) found that a 10,000 word family vocabulary size was needed to reach 98% coverage. Their study indicates that texts written for native English speaking children are not necessarily useful as extensive reading materials for second language speakers because of this problem of vocabulary load in the texts. To the best of our knowledge, there are very few studies that have examined vocabulary load and listening texts for EAP.

## Vocabulary load and listening comprehension

Two studies that have looked at text coverage and listening comprehension are Bonk (2000) and Staehr (2009). Bonk's (2000) study of the listening comprehension of 59 Japanese university students of varying English proficiency levels suggests that 60% of the participants achieved 'good' comprehension at 90% and higher knowledge of the words in the texts. Good comprehension was defined as understanding of the main point in addition to knowledge of one or two correct details. Schmitt (2008) notes that the Bonk used a dictation to establish lexical knowledge marking of words and the researcher excluded both repeated lexical words and all function words. Schmitt (2008) recalculated the scoring of Bonk's study and found the lexical knowledge may consequently be closer to 95% for listening comprehension, as opposed to 98%.

Staehr (2009) looked at the advanced listening comprehension of 115 Danish learners of English and found that 98% coverage was needed for comprehension of a listening test from the Cambridge certificate of proficiency in English (CPE). This study used broader measures, considering both vocabulary breadth and depth. The results were then linked to the CPE, which contained measures for gist, detail, implicit and explicit opinion, and inference. These tests were used in an attempt to increase measure validity, and it is this which may help to explain the further difference in vocabulary levels between the two studies. For the purpose of this study, 98% has been taken as the likely level needed to ensure sufficient comprehension. As we can see from these two studies and as Nation & Webb (2011, p. 169) point out, there are very few studies in this area, that the results so far are 'inconclusive', and much more research is needed.

#### **TED Talks and EAP**

TED Talks, (http://www.TED.com/talks), is a freely available source of interesting and varied listening opportunities online. TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design. The origin of the talks is a conference of the same name. These content-rich

short talks are given by experts at TED conferences and are recorded. Many of the talks are translated into a wide range of languages, including English. The TED website seems well set up for language learners and teachers. By clicking on the transcript of a TED Talk, listeners can replay phrases or whole sections of the talk. They can post their own comments on the talks they listen to, and can read the comments of other listeners. They can even compare transcriptions in English with their own first language, as many TED Talks are translated. Some talks are subtitled as well.

TED Talks can be used in a variety of ways by EAP learners and their teachers. For example, TED Talks are used as listening material by EAP teachers in the English Proficiency Programme at Victoria University of Wellington in a number of ways. One teacher uses them to promote independent learning through an integrated project of listening, speaking, reading and writing on a topic of interest to each learner in the class. Another uses a particular talk on development issues that also serves as an introduction to statistics. The Language Learning Centre at Victoria University of Wellington recommends TED Talks for independent listening practice. Furthermore, an English language teacher blog, Kalinago English, (Sylvester, n.d.) has noticing and learning lexical items as the second activity in a list of ways to teach using TED Talks.

## Studies of vocabulary in TED Talks and spoken academic English

Wang (2012) compiled a corpus of TED Talks up to 20 minutes in length to compare with the vocabulary in longer talks in Physical Sciences and Social Sciences from the British Academic Spoken Corpus (BASE) (Nesi &Thompson, n.d.). The BASE corpus is available on the Oxford Text Archive. The TED Talks corpus for Wang's (2012) study contained ten talks in three topic areas (science & technology, global issues, and business) with a total of 80,885 words. The BASE corpus contained 40 lectures and ten seminars in two disciplines with a total of 643,649 tokens. The BASE corpus was roughly eight times larger than the TED Talks corpus. Wang (2012) reported that the coverage of the first 3,000 word families of Nation's (2006) British National Corpus (BNC) list was 93% for the TED Talks and 90.65% for the BASE lectures and seminars (page 36). Unfortunately, Wang (2012) did not report on the number of word families required to meet the 98% coverage, necessary for independent text use according to Nation (2006).

In another recent study of the vocabulary of TED Talks, a 221-word section of a TED Talk by Ken Robinson on the topic 'Schools kill creativity' was analysed by Nurmukhamedov and Sadler (2011) as part of a study on podcasts for second language learners. Using West's (1953) A General Service List of English Words (GSL) and Coxhead's (2000) An Academic Word List (AWL), Nurmukhamedov and Sadler (2011, p. 188) found that 90% of the words in the section of Robinson's talk were also in the first 2,000 words of the GSL, 5% were also in the AWL, leaving 5% not

occurring in any of the three lists. These figures are a starting point for our further investigation of the vocabulary of TED talks using the GSL and AWL lists and a larger corpus of talks.

Our main question is whether the vocabulary load of TED Talks in our six by six corpus closer to the 8-9,000 of written texts such as newspapers, novels, and academic texts, or the 6-7,000 of spoken text reported by Nation (2006). Another question is whether the coverage of the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000) over the TED Talks corpus is similar to written academic texts, at around 10%, as Nurmukhamedov and Sadler (2011) found in their small study. Also, do TED Talks in different subject areas have different vocabulary loads? Finally, we wanted to find out whether TED Talks might be a way for higher proficiency learners with academic goals to encounter 'mid-frequency' vocabulary. That is, the vocabulary between 3,000 or 4,000 and 8,000-9,000 word families. This mid-frequency vocabulary poses a "Catch 22" situation for language learners precisely because it does not occur very frequently in texts.

## **Research questions**

- 1. What is the vocabulary load of the total TED Talks six-by-six corpus using the BNC and AWL word lists?
- 2. Do the six subjects in the TED corpus have similar or different vocabulary profiles?

# Methodology

TED Talks are available in a range of lengths: three, six, nine, 12, and 18 minutes. We decided to focus on six minute TED Talks because the three minute talks were too short, and a listening text of 12 minutes would take half an hour to play through twice, meaning it would possibly be too long for a one hour language class. We thought teachers would more likely select a six minute listening segment over anything longer.

We decided to work with six topics within the TED Talks. These topics are business, design, entertainment, global issues, science, and technology. We decided on ten talks for each topic, so the corpus contains the transcripts of 60 TED Talks. Examples of the TED Talks in our small corpus include Dianna Cohen speaking on the topic of 'Tough truths about plastic pollution' (Global Issues); Evan Grant on 'Making sound visible through cymatics' (Science); and Markus Fischer enthusing about 'A robot that flies like a bird' (Design). Appendix One contains the list of topics and speakers in each of the six topic areas in our TED Talks corpus for this study.

A problem with categorisation of talks meant that some talks appeared in both Science and Technology on the TED Talks website. If a talk was already selected for one topic, we made sure it was not duplicated in the corpus. Another problem was that 'six minutes' is not a particularly strict category in TED Talks. It is likely to contain talks

from four to six minutes long, which means the talks range from around 400 running words up to nearly 1000. This means that the ten talks in each topic were not evenly balanced, as suggested by Nation & Webb (2011, pg. 159). Table 1 shows the number of running words in each topic in our six by six corpus. We included talks by native and non-native speakers and several which had subtitles in cases where the accent might have been difficult to follow.

Table 1: Number of running words in the TED Talks six by six corpus

TED Talks Topic	Running words
Business	8880
Design	7156
Entertainment	6719
Global Issues	6744
Science	7498
Technology	6659
Total	43656

The Range Programme (Heatley, Nation & Coxhead, 2002) was used to run the BNC, GSL, and AWL lists over the TED Talks corpus. This programme is available on Paul Nation's website (http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation/nation.aspx). We also used a proper noun list and a list of spoken fillers (such as *ah* and *um*) developed by Paul Nation in our analysis.

#### **Results and discussion**

Research Question One: What is the vocabulary load of the total TED six-by-six corpus using the BNC and AWL word lists?

The vocabulary profile of the total six by six TED Talks corpus is similar to Nation's (2006) findings for novels, newspapers, and academic texts. That is, to reach 98%, we need 8,000 - 9,000 word families plus proper nouns (1.44%) for the whole TED Talks corpus in this study. Table 2 below shows the coverage figures of the BNC lists plus proper nouns in our TED Talks six by six corpus. The results in this table show that 95% coverage is reached at around 4,000 word families (93.69%) plus proper nouns (1.44%).

Table 2: Coverage of the TED Talks six by six corpus up to the 9,000 level of Nation's BNC lists (Nation, 2006)

BNC lists	Coverage over TED Talks six by six corpus
3,000 + proper nouns	93.69
4,000 + proper nouns	95.47
5,000 + proper nouns	96.21
8,000 + proper nouns	97.84
9,000 + proper nouns	98.09

We reach 98% coverage at around 8,000-9,000 word families. Note that the figures are not rounded in the tables so that we can see seemingly minor shifts in coverage, for example between the coverage of 5,000 to 8,000 word families plus proper nouns.

This means that these TED Talks have a slightly different profile from other 'spoken' texts such as movie scripts (Nation, 2006; Webb & Rodgers, 2009). We presume that like many conference papers and movie scripts, TED Talks may often be carefully scripted. Unlike most fiction movie scripts, however, TED Talks tend to focus on more academic topics such as climate change and new technologies.

Wang (2012) found that the first 3,000 word families of the BNC lists by Nation (2006) covered 93% of a 80,885 word TED Talks corpus with three topic areas. Our study finds slightly lower coverage (closer to 92%) by the first 3,000 word families of the BNC lists over six topic areas (see Table 3 below for details).

Table 3: Coverage (by percentage) of the six by six TED Talks corpus by the first 3,000 word families of Nation's (2006) BNC and proper nouns

TED Talks Topic	Business	Design	Entertain	Global	Science	Tech
3,000	92.31	92.06	92.62	92.22	92.18	90.02
Proper nouns	1.33	1.44	1.62	1.32	1.61	1.98
Total	93.64	93.50	94.24	93.54	93.79	93.10

Note that the coverage of the Technology TED Talks by the first 3,000 word families of the BNC is 2% lower than the other topics. Note also that the number of proper nouns in Technology is slightly higher than the other topics at 1.98%. Despite these differences, the coverage over five of the six topics by the first 3,000 word families plus proper nouns hovers around 93%, with Entertainment slightly higher at 94.24%.

We ran the TED Talks six by six corpus through the Range Programme using West's (1953) GSL, Coxhead's AWL, and Coxhead & Hirsh's (2007) pilot Science list for EAP. Table 4 shows that the coverage of these word lists and proper nouns is 92.54% over the TED Talks corpus, meaning that around 7% of the words in the corpus do not appear in any of the three lists. The coverage of the AWL over a 3.5 million corpus of written academic texts was 10% (Coxhead, 2000), compared to nearly 4% of our TED Talks corpus. This finding is similar to Nurmukhamedov and Sadler's (2011) study for the AWL coverage of a small TED Talk section (221 words) of a TED Talk. The coverage of the GSL in our study is 5% lower than Nurmukhamedov and Sadler's (2011) study. The difference in sizes between our corpus and the small text corpus is probably the reason for the difference in coverage as words have more opportunity to occur more often in a larger corpus.

Table 4: Coverage of the TED Talks six by six corpus by the GSL, AWL, and EAP Science lists

Word List	Tokens %
GSL 1 <sup>st</sup> 1,000	81.56
GSL 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1,000	4.85
AWL	3.90
EAP Science list	0.79
Proper nouns	1.44
Total	92.54

Some of the most frequent words in the AWL in our TED Talks six by six corpus include *design*, *image*, *images*, *computer*, *percent* and *technology*. The coverage of the EAP Science List (see Coxhead & Hirsh, 2007 for more on this list) was 3.79% over a 1,761,380 word corpus of university Science texts, but covers only 0.79% of the much smaller TED Talks six by six corpus. These lower coverage figures of the EAP Science list over the TED Talks corpus suggest that the talks might contain more specialised and current vocabulary (such as *crowdsource* and *cymatics*), as well as more everyday spoken language that is not reflected in the GSL/AWL and EAP Science lists, such as *guys* and *amazing*.

Research Question Two: Do the six subjects in the TED corpus have similar or different vocabulary profiles?

The key point of this research question is whether some TED Talks topics in the corpus might perhaps be easier for second language learners. Table 5 below shows the coverage figures of the BNC and proper noun lists over each topic area in our corpus.

Table 5: Percentage of coverage of BNC lists and proper nouns over each TED Talk subject

TED Talks Topic	Business	Design	Entertain	Global	Science	Tech
3,000 + proper nouns	93.64	93.50	94.24	93.54	93.79	93.10
5,000 + proper nouns	95.76	96.20	96.42	96.11	96.69	96.10
8,000 + proper nouns	97.24	98.10	98.31	97.86	98.07	97.65
9,000 + proper nouns	97.49	98.33	98.5	97.96	98.42	97.98

Design, Entertainment, and Science meet 98% at 8,000 word families plus proper nouns. Business, Global Issues, and Technology are very close to 98% at 9,000 word families plus proper nouns. With topics such as 'How to start a movement' by Derek Sivers, 'How to succeed? Get more sleep' by Arianna Huffington, and 'How to tie your shoes' by Terry Moore, it might seem that the Entertainment TED Talks might contain less difficult vocabulary, yet the figures in Table 4 above suggest otherwise. Note that 95% is reached for all topics at around 5,000 plus proper nouns.

#### Implications for teaching and learning

TED Talks appear to be closer to written texts in coverage (at 98%) than spoken texts such as movies. Therefore, our results suggest that EAP learners who know 5,000 word families might need scaffolding to support their listening to TED Talks whereas learners with larger vocabularies would need less support. Teachers can test vocabulary size using Nation's Vocabulary Size Test (VST) up to 20,000 word families based on the BNC lists (Nation & Beglar, 2007) on Nation's website at http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation). See also Myq Larsen website called my.vocabularysize.com. These tests can help teachers and learners find out roughly how many words students know, and use the results from this study to ascertain whether TED Talks are within the vocabulary knowledge of their students.

Even for learners with a vocabulary size of around 5,000 words, TED Talks may still have some benefits for independent and guided learning. The website provides a range of possible scaffolding for learners, from visual support (such as graphics, pictures), the use of actual objects (such as ballbots in Fankhauser's talk about a newly developed robot that moves on a ball), translations, subtitles, glosses, and transcripts. This means that learners are provided with many means of support for their comprehension.

Another implication of our study is that different TED talks topics have varying vocabulary loads, so EAP students might be well served by listening to talks on topics which have a slightly lower vocabulary load at 8,000 (design, entertainment and science). In the first instance, learners could also choose topics they know a great deal about, for example, tying shoelaces and getting more sleep. Then they might move on to Eythor Bender talking on the topic of human exoskeletons, and Taylor Wilson on how he built a nuclear reactor at age 14. While the vocabulary profile of these talks is similar, the background knowledge level might need to be higher in one topic than another. Learners can also use the transcription tool on the TED Talks website to regularly check their understanding of specific sections of a talk. They can also use dictionaries to generate a more intensive reading exercise.

The analysis of the AWL in TED Talks (around 4%) suggests that the coverage is around half that of written academic texts (10%). This figure is similar to newspapers as Coxhead found in an unreported study. The GSL/AWL/EAP Science lists plus proper nouns cover up to around 93% of the TED Talks corpus, which means these lists do not go far enough to support independent listening in terms of vocabulary coverage. However, if teachers are focused on the AWL as a tool for guiding decisions on vocabulary in class, they could analyse and focus on the AWL vocabulary in the transcripts of talks using websites such as Tom Cobb's Compleat Lexical Tutor (http://www.lextutor.ca/) and Sandra Haywood's AWL Highlighter or AWL Gapmaker (http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocab/awlhighlighter.htm). Equally, they could use the Compleat Lexical Tutor and the BNC lists to investigate the vocabulary load of texts and identify words that could be glossed or pre taught. These tools are also available for students to use, but guidance on interpreting the results might be necessary.

Finally, mid-frequency vocabulary does feature in the TED Talks corpus. The coverage of the 4,000-8,000 BNC lists in this corpus coupled with the support offered to the listeners may well be a solid basis on which to build knowledge of words in the mid-frequency bands.

#### Limitations and further research

The main limitation of this study, like others on vocabulary load so far, is the need for validation of the percentages of coverage at different levels of comprehension for learners. Another limitation is the size of the corpus. While it is based on a small, quite

well-balanced corpus of TED Talks, a larger corpus that includes longer talks would provide more opportunities for lexical items to occur. Also, we decided to focus on six minute talks based on our belief and experience that language learning teachers can be pressed for finding class time to listen to longer texts. Clearly, we could have sought opinions of more teachers, analysed the length of listening texts that are commonly used in classrooms, or even observed classes in action to confirm our beliefs. Finally, a greater variety of topics might have also shed more light on the vocabulary load of these talks.

It would be very interesting to investigate the vocabulary load of longer (12 and 18 minute) TED Talks, like Wang (2012), but going beyond the first 3,000 word families of the BNC lists. Perhaps the longer talks might allow for more repetition of midfrequency words. Also, reading on a narrow topic allows for repetition of vocabulary (Schmitt & Carter, 2000), as does listening to television shows on related context (Rodgers & Webb, 2011). It would also be interesting to compare the vocabulary of TED Talks with other scripted talks, such as the news and short documentaries on related topics on TV or radio, or to determine what sort of vocabulary development might take place for learners who follow a consistent programme of using TED Talks as part of their studies.

#### Conclusion

This study finds that the 8,000-9,000 plus proper nouns needed to cover 98% of the TED Talks six by six corpus seems to hold over the six topics in this study. Therefore, these talks are similar in vocabulary load to newspapers, Shakespearian sonnets, Pride and Prejudice, and The Hunger Games (or novels in general). When we consider how small the differences in coverage are over one topic and another, there seems to be little point in choosing one particular topic to study over another. There does seem to be a point, however, in considering TED Talks seriously when thinking about selecting interesting listening materials for EAP students with reasonable vocabulary sizes.

#### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the teachers and Language Learning Centre staff members who talked about TED Talks with us and the two anonymous reviewers for their useful feedback on this article.

#### References

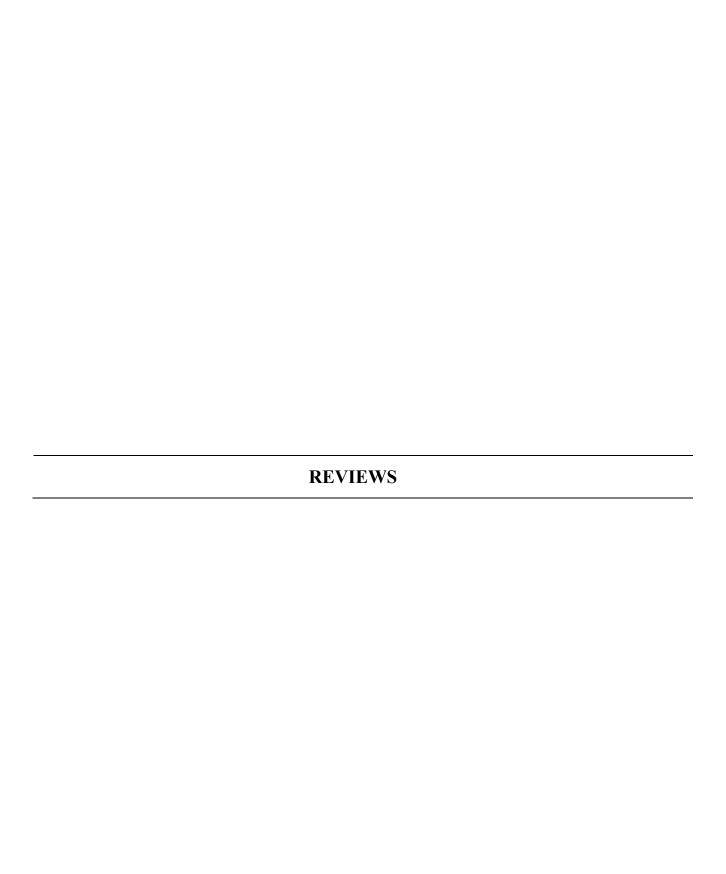
- Bonk, W. (2000). Second language lexical knowledge and listening comprehension. *International Journal of Listening*, 14, 14–31.
- Coxhead, A. (under review). Researching vocabulary in secondary school English texts: The Hunger Games and more. *English in Aotearoa*.
- Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. TESOL Quarterly, 34(2), 213–238.
- Coxhead, A. & Hirsh, D. (2007). A pilot science word list for EAP. *Revue Française de Linguistique Appliqué*, *XII*(2), 65–78.

- Coxhead, A. & White, R. (in press). Building a corpus of secondary school texts: First you have to catch the rabbit. *New Zealand Studies in Applied Linguistics*.
- Heatley, A., Nation, P., & Coxhead, A. (2003). Range. Retrieved from http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation/nation.aspx on
- Nation, I. S. P. (n.d.). About mid-frequency readers. Retrieved from http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/publications/About-Mid-frequency-readers-2.pdf.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2006). How large a vocabulary is needed for reading and listening? *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 63(1), 59–82.
- Nation, I. S. P., & Beglar, D. (2007). A vocabulary size test. *The Language Teacher*, 31(7), 9–13.
- Nation, I. S. P., & Webb, S. (2011). *Researching and analyzing vocabulary*. Boston, MA: Heinle Cengage.
- Nesi, H., & Thomson, P. (n.d.). British Academic Spoken English Corpus. Retrieved from http://wwwm.coventry.ac.uk/researchnet/BASE/Pages/BASE.aspx.
- Nurmukhamedov, U., & Sadler, R. (2011). Podcasts in four categories: Applications to language learning. In B. Facer & M. Abdous (Eds.), *Academic podcasting and mobile assisted language learning* (pp. 176–195). Portland, OR: Book News.
- Rodgers, M. P. H., & Webb, S. (2011). Narrow viewing: The vocabulary in related television programs. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(4), 689–717.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language teaching research*, 12(3), 329–363.
- Schmitt, N., & Carter, R. (2000). The lexical advantages of narrow reading for second language learners, *TESOL Journal*, *9*(1), 4–9.
- Staehr, L. S. (2009). The relationship between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension as a foreign language. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 31, 577–607.
- Sylvester, K. (n.d). 10 Speaking English activities using TED.com. Retrieved from http://kalinago.blogspot.co.nz/2011/09/10-speaking-english-activities-using.html
- Wang, Y. (2012). An exploration of vocabulary knowledge in English short talks: A corpus-driven approach. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(4), 33–43.
- Webb, S., & Macalister, J. (in press). Is text written for children useful for L2 extensive reading? *TESOL Quarterly*.
- Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2009) Evaluating the vocabulary load of written text. *TESOLANZ Journal*, *16*, 1–10.
- Webb, S., & Rodgers, M. (2009). The vocabulary demands of television programs. *Language Learning*, 59(2), 335–366.
- West, M. (1953). A general service list of English words. London, England: Longman, Green and Co.

### **Appendix 1: TED Talks Six by Six Corpus**

Topic area	Talk title	Ted Talker	
Business	3 things I learned while my plane crashed	Ric Elias	
	8 secrets of success	Richard St. John	
	Build a tower, build a team	Tom Wujec	
	Catherine Mohr builds green	Catherine Mohr	
	Doodlers, unite!	Sunni Brown	
	Let's simplify legal jargon!	Alan Siegel	
	Selling condoms in the Congo	Amy Lockwood	
	The day I turned down Tim Berners Lee	Ian Ritchie	
	Tracking the trackers	Gary Kovacs	
	What's wrong with our food system	Birke Baehr	
Design	A mobile fridge for vaccines	Adam Grosser	
	A next-generation digital book	Mike Matas	
	A photo real digital face	Paul Debevec	
	A robot that flies like a bird	Markus Fischer	
	Designs to save newspapers	Jacek Utko	
	Grow your own clothes	Suzanne Lee	
	Robots that "show emotion"	David Hanson	
	Shake up your story	Raghava KK	
	Wearing nothing new	Jessi Arrington	
	Wii Remote hacks	Johnny Lee	
Entertainment	Building US relations by banjo music	Abigail Washburn	
	How to start a movement	Derek Sivers	
	How to succeed get more sleep	Arianna Huffington	
	How to tie your shoes	Terry Moore	
	Lies damned lies and statistics about TED Talks	Sebastian Wernicke	
	Robots that show emotion	David Hanson	
	Silicon based comedy	Heather Knight	
	the 8 billion ipod	Rob Reid	
	The magic of truth and lies (and ipods)	Marco Tempest	
	The surprising spread of idol TV	Cynthia Schneider	

Global issues	Haunting photos of polar ice	Camille Seaman	
Global Issues	On the world's English mania	Jay Walker	
	Photos that changed the world	Jonathan Klein	
	Pop culture in the Arab world	Sherren el Feeki	
	Texting that saves lives	Nancy Lublin	
	The 100 000 classroom	Peter Norvig	
	The hidden light of Afghanistan	Monica Bulaj	
	The refugees of boom and bust	Cameron Sinclair	
	The technology of storytelling	Joe Sabia	
	Tough talks about plastic pollution	Dianna Cohen	
Science	A 3D atlas of the universe	Carter Emmart	
Belefice	A new prosthetic arm	Dean Kamen	
	Hands-on science with squishy circuits	AnnMarie Thomas	
	How to grow fresh air	Kamal Meattle	
	Making sound visible through cymatics	Evan Grant	
	Our natural sleep cycle	Jessa Gamble	
	The mathematics of history	Jean Baptiste Michel	
	The science behind a climate headline	Rachel Pike	
	Underwater astonishments	David Gallo	
	Your genes are not your fate	Dean Ornish	
Technology	404, the story of a page not found	Renny Gleeson	
	A magical tale	Marco Tempest	
	Building blocks that blink, beep and teach	Ayah Bdeir	
	Crowdsource your health	Lucien Engelen	
	Finding planets around other stars	Lucianne Walkowicz	
	How can technology transform the human body?	Lucy McRae	
	Human exoskeletons*	Eythor Bender	
	Meet Rezero, the dancing ballbot	Péter Fankhauser	
	Mining minerals from seawater	Damian Palin	
	Yup, I built a nuclear fusion reactor*		
		Taylor Wilson	



## Basturkmen, H. (2010). Developing courses in English for specific purposes. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. ISNB 978-0-230-22798-9 (pbk). 157 pp.

Belcher, D., Johns, A.M., & Paltridge, B. (Eds). (2011). New directions in English for specific purposes research. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. ISBN: 978-0-472-03460-4 (pbk). 282 pp.

#### Reviewed by Patrick Coleman, Lincoln University

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a field was apparently launched by C.L. Berber's seminal article some 50 years ago (Swales, 1988). Over the last half-century, numerous books and articles have debated the merits of various methodologies and strategies, and the two books under review make a significant contribution to ongoing discussions in ESP.

Basturkmen's book is a how-to guide for planning and delivering ESP courses. Discussion questions at the end of each chapter fit in with her aim that the text should be used in pre-service language teacher education or in-service professional development programmes. While the introduction deals with the definitions, areas and effectiveness of ESP, Part 1 of the book focuses on the main considerations in an ESP course. It begins with needs analysis, a process that is crucial to any successful course. Basturkmen defines and summarises the process as well as describing how needs analysis has developed over the years. Three hypothetical scenarios are given: a general academic purposes discussion course, a writing course for overseas trained dentists, and a language for homecare workers course. Each scenario looks at the background to the course and consequences of decisions taken. In all these cases there are problems, and an analysis of what could have been done is provided. These scenarios demonstrate that a poor needs analysis often leads to a poor course outcome.

Part 2 is dedicated to four case studies, and sample materials are provided to illustrate applied ESP theory. The case studies are English for the police, medical doctors, academic literacies in visual communication, and thesis writing. All follow a similar template of context, needs analysis, specialist discourse, course and materials, difficulties and constraints. A summary and discussion is provided at the end of each study. The English for police case study illustrates the effort that is needed to design a course, and to allow for flexibility as it develops. In this case, time constraints meant self-access and online learning were developed, although feedback from participants showed they still wanted face-to-face contact with a teacher.

The concluding chapter of this book brings together information from the case studies and how they interrelate. Basturkmen's case studies support the notion that needs

analysis is the cornerstone of any ESP programme, with a proviso that the type of needs analysis selected will depend on the particular theoretical approach of the course designers. For instance, in the first case study the teachers used a corpus-linguistic perspective to conduct their needs analysis. So doing any needs analysis is not simply mechanically following a system, but a process that is influenced by the theoretical perspective as well.

The second book, entitled *New Directions in ESP Research*, provides examples of some of the latest ESP research. It is divided into two parts. Part 1 looks at issues in ESP research, while Part 2 deals with methodologies and ESP research. A useful feature is the comment at the end of each chapter that either discusses future directions or suggests further research possibilities. In Chapter 1, Hyland revisits the area of discipline specificity by focusing on four-word lexical bundles, and drawing on a corpus of 3.5 million words. He attempts to show how these bundles differ across disciplines. Implications for EAP courses indicate that simply teaching generic skills are not enough, as students are judged by how they acquire language and knowledge in their specific disciplines. Chapter 2 looks at media discourses, and compares reports from Australia and China on September 11. This analysis combines text analysis with differing cultural views and shows differences in the way the texts were written. In Chapter 3, Cheng examines what happens in the ESP classroom using language and context specificity. She asked students to annotate research articles from their own disciplines and analyse them through writing conferences. Belcher and Lukkarila in Chapter 4 focus their needs analysis on learner identity, and they offer useful tips for classroom activities that include writing short autobiographies and reflective journals. Mauranen ends Section 1 with research on English as a lingua franca in academic settings (ELFA).

Part 2 deals with methodologies in ESP. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on genre analysis. The first one by Flowerdew reviews three different approaches to genre analysis and suggests how they can be combined and applied to teaching. The next chapter by Tardy outlines the history of genre analysis and uses grant award abstracts to examine how genre analysis can be used gain a greater understanding of a target genre. In chapter 8, Starfield uses ethnographic research in response to poor performance in academic writing by black South African students compared to their white counterparts. She links the background of a select group of students to the way they constructed their title pages for Sociology essays. Still in South Africa, Johns and Makalela provide an overview of needs assessment and its link to critical ethnographic research, using a predominantly Black South African university as a case study to demonstrate the principle that ESP researchers need to be aware of their own biases and subjectivity when creating programmes and dealing with learners.

The final two chapters of this book delve into various aspects of corpus linguistics, with a research report by Lynne Flowerdew and a co-authored piece by Kandil and Belcher that combines critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to analyse

web-based news reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. John Swales, one of the founders of modern ESP, offers an appraisal of the contributors to the volume and some brief comments on the future of ESP in the final piece of this volume.

I would thoroughly recommend Basturkmen's book, as its mix of theory and practice make it an invaluable text for anyone serious about ESP. The *New Directions* book is aimed at a scholarly audience, but those wanting to improve their ESP knowledge would benefit too. Unfortunately I found that some ESP authors used opaque, pretentious language of the worst kind. It reminded me of George Orwell's (1946) warning that "bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation even among people who should and do know better". Plain English explanations would have helped in a number of instances. Despite this stylistic quibble, both texts provide helpful insight into current ESP trends.

#### References

Orwell, G. (1946). Politics and the English language. *Horizon*, *13*, 252–265. Retrieved from http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e\_polit

Swales, J. M. (1988). Episodes in ESP: A source and reference book on the development of English for science and technology. New York, NY: Prentice Hall.

## Burns, A. (2010). Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners. New York and London: Routledge. ISBN 0-415-99145-5 (pbk). 196 pp.

#### Reviewed by Elaine W. Vine, Victoria University of Wellington

The blurb on the back of this book says that its intended audience is ESL/EFL teachers who are new to doing action research. Burns reiterates this in her preface to the book, and adds another group of readers: academics who are working with such teachers. The book begins with a chapter titled "What is action research?". This is followed by four chapters, each focusing on one of four phases in implementing action research: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. In a "postscript" chapter, Burns presents two accounts by teachers of their own action research projects.

In Chapter 1, Burns notes that the four-phase action research model she has used to organise the following four chapters is based on Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) model, and that the model has been criticised in the action research literature as being too fixed and rigid. She points out that she has chosen it to structure her discussion because she finds it a convenient model. I agree with her on this point, given that she has focused attention on the need not to treat it as a lockstep model, and that throughout the book she has reiterated the need to be flexible and recursive in

interpreting the model. Burns has effectively explained and illustrated both how to do action research and why it is worthwhile to do so.

The chapters have a consistent format, beginning with pre-reading questions and including reflection points and action points along the way. There are also "classroom voices" sections in each chapter where Burns includes a range of comments and examples from teachers who have carried out action research studies. These voices resonated for me and I think they also will for most readers with classroom teaching experience. The examples come from a range of ESL/EFL contexts, but I found that I could relate the ideas and issues raised to my own experiences even if they were not in similar contexts. Some of the excerpts in these sections come from published studies, which has the added advantage of allowing readers to follow up and read more about the studies if they want to.

The one thing I didn't like about the chapter format was that each one ended with its own separate list of references, rather than there being a single list of references at the end of the book. What I found at the end of the book was a very useful list of further reading and resources organised a chapter by chapter. For me, the further reading and resources material would have been better placed at the end of each chapter, where they would have related closely to what I had just been reading about, while the list of references would have been better placed at the end of the book to enable the reader to quickly find full details of references from all chapters. It was irritating to have to find the end of the chapter each time I wanted to see these details. Inevitably, there was also considerable repetition of sources in the end-of-chapter lists of references.

Throughout the book the print size is very small, which is not very reader-friendly. However, the content of the book is reader-friendly. Burns has written in an accessible style without oversimplifying important concepts and processes. At the top of page 125 there is also an error that affects meaning in a way that is consequential. The text reads "the mean won't be affected" where it should read "the median won't be affected". There are some other minor errors in the book but they are few and they are unlikely to cause readers problems. This one, however, may cause confusion, particularly for readers who are not confident with statistical concepts.

Despite these quibbles, I recommend Burns' book to ESL/EFL teachers who are engaged in action research projects, who are considering doing action research in their classrooms, or who simply want to find out what action research involves. Teacher educators would also be wise to consider using this book with pre-service or in-service teachers in their courses. Burns has extensive experience of working with teachers in action research projects, which is evident both in her previous publications in this field and in this book. The way that she has integrated teacher experiences into her book

through the "classroom voices" sections will be particularly attractive to her target audiences of teachers and teacher educators.

#### Reference

Kemmis, S. & McTaggart, R. (Eds.). (1988). *The action research planner* (3rd ed.). Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press.

# Prodromou, L. (2010). *English as a lingua franca: A corpus-based analysis*. London, UK: Continuum. ISBN 978-0-8264-2585-0 (pbk). 297 pp.

#### Reviewed by Joanna Smith, United Institute of Technology

This book is a valuable contribution to the debate around what is being labelled "English as a Lingua Franca" (ELF). In the preface to the paperback edition, Prodromou outlines the sometimes quite aggressive views and misunderstandings that have arisen ELF literature, summarizing support for ELF, circles of language use, standard English and the label "native speaker" (whether mythical or not). He states that he even feels obliged to defend some of his views in the earlier hardback edition, as the two years between editions saw much ink spilled on the topic, and, in his view, some misrepresentation of his own ideas.

The book is not hard to read, and for an academic piece it is written in a refreshingly personal way. Prodromou's own experience with ELF is a personal one, and is nicely narrated in the prologue. One example is the admission that "nowadays, when people ask me if I am a 'native speaker' of English, I reply 'I don't know.' I used to think I was a 'native speaker' but, after researching English as a lingua franca, I am not sure any more" (p. xxiii). Prodromou approaches the topic through the lens of corpus linguistics, an area which has grown considerably in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) over the last couple decades. One of the main insights of corpus linguistics has been the recognition of the phraseological or idiomatic nature of much of what we say and write. When seen from an ELT perspective, according to Sinclair (1987) idiomaticity allows learners, like "native speakers", to produce English more confidently and "with less effort" (p. 159). However, Jenkins (2000,) one of the key proponents of an ELF approach to ELT, considers that knowledge of idiomatic usage is not essential in order for ELF to become a worldwide lingua franca.

Here is where Prodromou picks up the debate. He compares the role of idiomaticity in English as a native language (ENL), and its comparative role in English as a lingua franca (ELF), stating that "...for the L1 user, idiomaticity, in all its guises, makes for ease of processing and the promotion of fluency, while in L2 use it seems, in some of its manifestations at least, to be error-prone and elusive... what makes the L1 user

sound natural may make the L2-user sound odd" (p. xxv). He goes on to state that his hypothesis here is based on 30 years of experience in language teaching, and the observation that even advanced users of English as a lingua franca avoid or have difficulty with idiomaticity (p. 93).

The book is divided into two sections: background and foreground. In the first part, comprising six chapters, the author provides an overview of corpus linguistics, ELF, idiomaticity and its role in fluency, followed by an examination of L2 conversation. In the second part, he presents his own original research into L1- and L2-user conversation, including data from his own corpus of successful users of English (SUEs). His analysis focuses not on the larger, more colourful or metaphoric chunks such as 'kick the bucket', but rather on smaller, higher frequency formulaic expressions, such as collocations and clusters like 'you know', 'you see', 'sort of', 'and then' and 'a bit of'. Chapter 7 provides the background to his corpus data, chapter 8 looks at the frequency of two-word phrases, and chapters 9 through 12 give a more detailed analysis of 'sort of' and 'you see'.

The final two chapters in the book are a summary and discussion of key findings. One of the most interesting points from Chapter 13 is the extent to which the deficit model of L2-users is accepted. Prodromou demonstrates clearly that attempts on the part of an L2-user at verbal play are usually misconstrued as linguistic incompetence, while the same behaviour on the part of an L1-user is seen as creativity. While he is quick to remind the reader that his conclusions come from a limited data set, these insights certainly resonate with my own experience in teaching and learning languages.

The final chapter tries to bring together the various threads in the book to answer some of the core questions in the ELF debate today. One of the questions has to do with whether ELF is, in fact, its own variety of English, and whether it can, like other varieties, be studied, described and taught. Prodromou comes to the conclusion that this is not a binary issues in which non-acceptance of ELF is a vote of confidence in "native-speaker norms". Rather, he proposes a "third space" based on an alternative view of English in the world that is neither native-speaker driven nor ELF-driven, but based on how the *user* wishes to deploy the language in the process of constructing and co-constructing multiple identities in the modern world. He suggests that teachers can focus on strategies and processes of language negotiation in order to equip users with a repertoire of different kinds of language competence. As a teacher of advanced English learners, or what Prodromou labels SUEs, I appreciated his viewpoint, and his findings certainly inform my choice of learning materials, and my approach to what "English" is.

#### **References:**

Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Sinclair, J. (Ed.). (1987). Looking up: An account of the COBUILD project in lexical computing. London, UK: Collins.

### Walsh, S. (2011). Exploring classroom discourse: Language in action. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. ISBN 978-0-415-57067-1 (pbk). 239 pp.

#### Reviewed by Lynn Grant, AUT University, Auckland

This book is part of the *Routledge Introduction to Applied Linguistics*, a series of introductory level textbooks designed primarily for pre-service teachers entering postgraduate studies or language professionals returning to academic study. As explained in the Introduction, the central thesis of the book is that language teachers can improve their professional practice by developing a clear understanding of classroom discourse, especially the complex relationship between language, interaction and learning. Walsh argues that most teacher education programmes devote time to teaching methods and subject knowledge, but few devote time to interactional processes and the way language is used to establish, develop and promote understandings. Therefore, he attempts to answer the following questions:

- Why is communication in the classroom so important?
- In what ways can teachers make effective use of their language?
- What is the relationship, if any, between the language used by teachers and learners and the learning which occurs?

The book is divided into nine chapters, with Chapter 1 examining the main features of classroom discourse, and Chapters 2 and 3 looking at the relevance of classroom discourse to teaching and learning. Chapters 4 and 5 evaluate different approaches to studying classroom discourse, while Chapters 6 and 7 introduce the SETT (self-evaluation of teacher talk) framework to help practitioners evaluate their own use of language while teaching. Chapter 8 focuses on the concept of 'classroom interactional competence' (CIC), and Chapter 9 presents the conclusions. Following the concluding chapter are 21 pages of "Task commentaries" from each chapter as well as one appendix on how the SETT works and another on the transcriptions used. A glossary and suggestions for further reading are also provided.

The book is user-friendly and made more interesting by the inclusion of several speech extracts and tasks (shaded in grey) throughout each chapter, as well as end-of-chapter summaries. For example, one extract is about the teacher's error correction strategy, and another about how students negotiate for meaning. The tasks that are distributed throughout each chapter include one asking for comments about the effectiveness of a

teacher's error correction strategy, how appropriate it is to elicit student feelings and attitudes, and the effect of the error correction on the discourse. Another task in the "Classroom discourse as reflective practice" chapter asks the reader to consider different scenarios (e.g. students refusing to speak English when working independently, or teaching that is dominated by question-answer routines), say why each might be a problem, and what kind of data you, the teacher, would collect to help make improvements in your practice. Each task is designed to get the reader to apply the theory that has been discussed in relation to the extract or task. Reading the summary at the end of a particular chapter is a good way to find out whether you want to read the chapter in more detail.

In terms of the readership, while the book would be useful to postgraduate students and teachers returning to study, it could also be useful to new teachers – in fact, to any language teachers – to make us all more aware of the importance of the language we use in the classroom. Walsh points out that by us identifying specific features from the classroom discourse, we can see how direct error correction, wait-time, teacher echo, display questions, and so on, provide clues to the ways in which a "space for learning" (p. 34) is either opened up or closed down, and these kinds of reflections would no doubt be beneficial for all teachers.

One of the strengths of the book is the variety of extracts and tasks, followed by discussion of main points covered. Another is the two chapters which examine approaches to discourse. Chapter 4 looks at different approaches to studying discourse including interaction analysis, system-based, "ad hoc" discourse analysis and conversation analysis approaches, while Chapter 5, looks at alternative approaches such as corpus linguistics (concordancing, word frequency counts, word lists, key word analysis, cluster analysis), as well as "combined approaches". These more theoretical chapters give in particular experienced teachers a new way of looking at classroom discourse.

It is more difficult to identify weaknesses, other than the fact that the book is so dense and covers such a lot that it is easier to process by dipping into it and reading different chapters rather than reading it from cover to cover. My overall recommendation is that this book is worth reading. The more we, as language teachers, are aware of the language we ourselves use in the classroom, the more we can deliberately open up those "spaces for learning' and ensure that we think more carefully about not only what we say in the language classroom, but also how we say it.

### Hall, G. (2011). Exploring English language teaching: Language in action. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. ISBN 13:978-0-415-58415-9. 282 pp.

#### Reviewed by Rosemary Wette, University of Auckland

This book is one of the Routledge *Introductions to Applied Linguistics* series, and its stated aim is to introduce readers who are beginning or returning to academic study to four key themes in English language teaching (ELT). These are classroom interaction and management, method and post-method approaches, second language learners, and instructional micro- and macro-contexts. On the whole, the book lives up to expectations and provides a succinct, up-to-date, readable reference tool that could be used by readers to brush up on or be introduced to important themes, terms and debates in the field. As such it is a welcome addition to the ELT literature.

Each of the four parts of the book comprises three chapters, with a final 40-page section providing a commentary on selected discussion tasks, glossary, suggested further reading, references and index. The first three chapters focus on the language classroom: its social as well as pedagogic nature, patterns of classroom interaction, classroom management and the creation of learning opportunities, and metaphors used to describe some of the diverse range of classroom contexts in which ELT takes place. This first section provides useful information on different types of "teacher talk" and classroom interaction patterns, classroom management in different types of teaching contexts and the dynamics of teaching large classes.

The second set of chapters focuses on approaches to ELT methodology. It reviews the most influential of the "name" methods that have come and gone over the last fifty years, and discusses what aspects of these methods teachers in the 21st century might still find useful. This section of the book also examines theories of second language learning, and the part played by the individual's cognition and social interaction in second language acquisition. Hall also outlines for the reader a number of current "dilemmas" in ELT. These include the value of explicit grammar teaching, focus on form or forms, use of inductive and deductive approaches, and the pros and cons of including the learners' L1 in L2 instruction.

The third theme of the book is the language learner. Learner attributes, including those of "good language learners", learner attitudes, autonomy, identity, beliefs and affect are all considered and discussed in the course of Chapters 7–9. Attributes of learner diversity and aspects of learner development are the main themes of this section, and this includes developmental sequences, learner identity, investment and receptivity. The focus of the final section is on the institutional and social contexts that surround the ELT classroom, and Hall's discussion ranges from the global spread of English, to teachers who are non-native speakers of English, to syllabus planning, ESP and CLIL

(content and language-integrated learning), the range of syllabus components in current use in the ELT curriculum, context-appropriate methodologies, teaching materials, and textbooks.

This book is written in an engaging, accessible style, and makes good use of illustrative examples from the literature and from different teaching contexts. Some chapters include shaded boxes with discussion questions and tasks, which are taken up by Hall in the Commentary chapter. These are helpful but, given the book's intended readership, could perhaps have been used more extensively (there are only 18, spread over 12 chapters). A ten-page glossary provides further assistance, but would have been more useful if entries had been cross-referenced to the topics covered in the book.

My main reservation about recommending *Exploring English language teaching* for pre-service teacher education is that I think it would completely overwhelm readers not already reasonably familiar with the content areas covered. To give an example, Chapter 2 ranges over qualities of a good teacher, classroom management strategies, high v. low structure contexts, teacher talk, classroom interaction patterns, new technology in the L2 classroom and teaching large classes — which is an interesting read if you already know about these topics and how they relate to each other, but otherwise probably too much to absorb. The book aims for comprehensive coverage of classroom teaching, but in some chapters coherence and judicious selection of what is most relevant to ELT in 2012 are sacrificed in order to meet this goal. Admittedly, these are limits to what any single book can include; however, the absence of detailed references to curriculum content make it more difficult for the reader to envisage how the content of some chapters would play out in actual instructional contexts.

Despite its small shortcomings, I give the book a solid recommendation, especially as a source for professional development reading by experienced teachers who want to brush up on key issues, debates, advances, ideas and current possibilities in the field of ELT.

#### NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

- 1. Contributions to *The TESOLANZ Journal* are welcomed from language educators and applied linguists within and outside Aotearoa/New Zealand, especially those working in Australia and countries in the South Pacific.
- 2. Contributions should in general be no longer than 5000 words.
- 3. Referencing conventions should follow that specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). This publication is available in most university libraries. In the text, references should be cited using the author's last name and date of publication. If quotations are cited, the reference should include page numbers (Brindley, 1989, pp. 45–46). The reference list at the end of the article should be arranged in alphabetical order. The reference list should only include items specifically cited in the text.
- 4. As far as possible, comments and references should be incorporated into the text but, where necessary, endnotes may be placed after the main body of the article, before the list of references, under the heading Notes.
- 5. All graphics should be suitable for publication and need no change.
- 6. It is understood that manuscripts submitted have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere.
- 7. Enquiries and draft submissions should be sent by email to the Editor, Dr Susan Gray, University of Auckland, <a href="mailto:s.gray@auckland.ac.nz">s.gray@auckland.ac.nz</a> . The preferred format is WORD.
- 8. All submissions should be accompanied by a full mailing address, a telephone number and, if available, an email addresses and/or fax number.
- 9. Submissions will be considered by the Editor and members of the Editorial Board.
- 10. Those interested in submitting a book review should contact the Review Editor, University of Auckland, <u>r.wette@auckland.ac.nz</u>
- 11. The closing date for the submission of manuscripts for 2013 is **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September.**

