CONTENTS

2008 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD

> Forty ESL students responded to extemporaneous stimuli produced by 4 ESL teachers of different language backgrounds. The listeners rated each stimulus for foreign accentedness and comprehensibility (estimation of difficulty in understanding an utterance) on 9-point scales. They also answered comprehension questions to measure speakers' interpretability and transcribed each stimulus in standard orthography to assess speakers' intelligibility. The results showed that accentedness, perceived comprehensibility, intelligibility, and interpretability of NNESTs were all independent dimensions, except for an influence of accentedness on perceived comprehensibility (r = 0.503, *p* < 0.001, 2-tailed). Foreign-accented speech was only believed to be difficult to understand. Thus, the hypothesis that ESL students' negative attitudes are the result of reduced intelligibility and interpretability of NNESTs' foreign-accented speech was not supported in this study. Interestingly, students' high word-recognition rate did not entail better understanding of the utterance.

FEATURE ARTICLES

> In recent years, TESOL has called for the study of the social and cognitive factors that affect adult English learners' participation in formal language learning. This research project investigated the motivational processes of 10 adult immigrant English learners that led them to take an advanced community college ESL course. Using a mix of qualitative and quantitative strategies, the study found that the surveyed group of ESL students chose to engage in advanced language learning in order to, first and foremost, join the dominant language culture and community. Instrumental reasons, though quite important to these students, appeared to be outweighed by the integrative ones. The student's social identity proved to be an important factor in this process as student motivation often originated in the disjuncture between the learner's current and desired identities. Furthermore, students viewed language education as a necessary transitional path toward integration and attainment of a desired identity.

Miyoung Nam, Mary S. Benedetti, and Mina Kim

The purpose of this paper is to help understand South Korean graduate students' L2 writing difficulty and thus facilitate their socialization into their target discourse communities. Given that South Korean graduates' linguistic, cultural, and educational differences affect their academic writing practices in a North American academic setting, these factors must be explained to examine their influence on students' writing. This paper will briefly describe the linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds of South Korean L2 graduate students in terms of both their L1 and L2 writing. Second, it will scrutinize the previous research that focuses on how L2 students in general become socialized in North American university settings. Last, based on the discussion, suggestions will be made for deeper investigation of how L2 students in general and Korean students in particular become better socialized, focusing on their access to resources.

Michelle Jeffries and Youngjoo Yi

Generation 1.5 ESL students are often characterized as achieving quite advanced oral/aural proficiency but less developed academic literacy (Forrest, 2006; Singhal, 2004). And yet little is known about the relationship between their spoken and written discourse. Thus, this paper discusses a case study that explored the relationship of spoken and written discourse of a Generation 1.5 ESL student, whom we call Mary, in a college ESL composition classroom. The findings revealed that Mary employed speechlike features for her writing (i.e., use of colloquial language and lack of explicitness in linguistic and content terms). These findings indicate that Mary seemed to write the way she spoke, which contributed to making her writing informal, implicit, and less persuasive. In addition to examining the language features, we explored the effect of explicit instruction on the difference between spoken and written discourse. Such instruction turned out to be partially effective. Findings arising from this study suggest that Generation 1.5 ESL students such as Mary employ two approaches (i.e., writing/speaking and reading/writing connections) to improving writing.

Marguerite Conrad and Miriam Queen

Valdes (2001), in her article on ESL classrooms, defines the need for language-rich and culturally relevant reading materials as a prerequisite to reading growth. Rising from a collaboration between a community college ESL instructor and a university professor of reading methodology, the paper details the positive impact of using culturally relevant literature, specifically *The Journal of Wong Ming-Chung,* in an integrated skills course for adult ESL learners. During the course of the semester, researchers charted the level of student engagement with the book through multiple questionnaires, observations of class discussions, and student responses to writing tasks. The paper describes how the use of literature enabled the instructor to further integrate vocabulary and writing with the reading component of the class and how adding a multicultural dimension and perspective to the existing curriculum provided purpose and engagement for students.

CATESOL EXCHANGES

    ESL instructors, curriculum designers, and materials writers must make decisions about which linguistic features to teach and the sequence in which to present them. Historically, ESL professionals have had to rely on intuitions about language use and frequency to guide them in making these decisions. Recently, however, corpus linguistics studies have provided information about the language actually used by speakers and writers in natural situations, including the relative frequencies of features and words. Because more frequent grammatical structures and words will be more useful to students both receptively and in production, this information has great potential for advancing ESL instruction. This article emphasizes the importance of frequency information for the teaching of ESL and offers suggestions for change. In addition, it provides practical applications for teaching certain features and words that corpus linguistics has shown to be quite frequent; their frequency, however, is not yet commonly reflected in materials and practice.

    This survey-based study examined the preferences of adult English as a second language (ESL) learners regarding two types of corrective feedback in an Intensive English Program (IEP) setting. The first type of corrective feedback was implicit and included recasts and clarification requests, whereas the second type was more explicit and was represented by overt error correction and metalinguistic explanation. Additionally, a possible connection between the proficiency level of the students and their self-reported preferences was explored. The total number of participants was 87, representing 11 first-language backgrounds. The findings revealed that the ESL students in this IEP context generally preferred explicit feedback, but they did favor one particular type of implicit feedback—recasts. Furthermore, the more proficient students preferred feedback that focused on accuracy rather than fluency. The study has implications for the adult ESL grammar classroom in an IEP context, encouraging instructors to identify and consider students' self-perceived needs with respect to error correction.

    Teaching argument elements to English language learners (ELL) encourages reading comprehension because it demands understanding of assumptions informing texts; it also provides models to enhance character appeal and evidence selection in student texts. University ELL students may comprehend word meanings; however, embedded assumptions may remain obscure. An argument approach encourages examination of the values informing texts. Students investigate Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter From Birmingham Jail" for its claim, reason, evidence, persuasive appeals, and supporting assumptions. A close reading shows how King's selection of evidence takes his audience's values into account. A writing project requires a discussion of the values embedded in the "Letter" through an evaluation of King's character appeal. Then, students write a letter in which they take audience assumptions, values, and beliefs into account to select appropriate evidence and to increase their own credibility.

Ken Kelch and Ju Yin Yang

Content-based instruction (CBI) is a curricular option that enables second language learners to develop their language skills when the primary pedagogical focus is course content rather than linguistic analysis. In such a case, the course remains, ostensibly, a language class. But it is also possible to help students develop their language skills within the context of an academic subject–area course that they are already taking. This paper reports on a project to assist students in learning academic course content while at the same time engaging them in class activities that promote the development of their language skills. In a business English course taught in the San Diego Community College District, a task-based approach was implemented on a pilot basis as a means of providing international students with opportunities to acquire academic knowledge via a series of tasks designed to improve their target language skills. Such a task-based model allows students not only to meet their content-area needs but also to increase their second language proficiency through learner-centered, content-centered, and meaning-based instruction in a collaborative setting.

Murat Hişmanoğlu

The Internet has become one of the most important teaching tools in recent years in terms of its power to change everyday practices in educational settings. In parallel with the expansion of Internet use in the classroom, both teachers and students have begun to accept the changes. However, some obstacles still need to be overcome before teachers can effectively integrate Internet-based activities into class practices. This paper presents a brief history of technology use in foreign language education, describes some basic benefits and challenges of employing the Internet through specific illustrations taken from the researcher's educational experiences in the field of English language teaching, and provides several guidelines for teachers regarding effective use of the Internet in the foreign language classroom.

W. I. Griffith and Hye-Yeon Lim

This article examines a 1-month US-based teacher training/development program for Mexican teachers of English. Three sets of survey data were collected from 20 teachers—on the first day of the program, the last day of the program, and 6 weeks after the teachers returned to their classrooms. Feedback and assessments from program trainers were also examined. The data suggest that there were important changes in teachers' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors during the course of the 1-month program and that these changes persisted some weeks after the end of the program. The authors conclude by discussing features necessary for effective development programs. These include assessing the needs of the teachers and their schools' expectations, providing practice opportunities for teaching, and including a language component for the teachers.

REVIEWS