

From the Editor-in Chief, September 2014

Dear Readers and Colleagues

Welcome to edition 11, 3 of the Asia Journal of TEFL.

In this issue we publish five articles which cover an interestingly diverse range of research. The opening article of this issue reports on the challenges faced by lecturers and students in implementing English as a medium of instruction (EMI) courses in a Vietnamese university. This article is of particular relevance at the moment as an increasing number of universities across Asia move to introduce more EMI courses. The authors of the study, Nha Vu and Anne Burns, found a range of obstacles to the successful implementation of the EMI policy, including the low English proficiency of both teachers and students, few opportunities of teacher development in the use of EMI and a lack of suitable materials. While cautioning that their study was based on self-reported data, the authors make a number of sensible recommendations that should ensure that future EMI courses have more chance of success.

In the second article Angel Ma Qing constructed and evaluated a new memory-based vocabulary strategic learning framework, using Chinese university learners of English as participants in the study. The author concludes that the new framework is useful in distinguishing between specific vocabulary learning strategies and language learning strategies in general, while at the same time noting the complex non-linear relationship between success in vocabulary learning and the use of vocabulary learning strategies.

Ye-Eun Kwon and Eun-Joo Lee, the authors of the third article

in this issue, investigated the use of lexical bundles in Korean EFL teacher talk. In particular, they compared the quantitative and qualitative features of the lexical bundles in a corpus of native and non-native teachers' classroom talk. The results were of great interest – and to whet the appetite of the reader, the authors found, for example, significant differences between the native and non-native use of the bundle 'what did you...?'.

Our fourth article describes an empirical study of students' group-work formations carried out over one year. Students experienced random group construction, self-selection into groups, and also groups working together for a single week, and for an entire 14-week semester. The author, Paul Leeming, found that, generally speaking, students preferred to choose their own groups, but also to change groups after certain periods of time. The author also warns, however, that allowing students to choose their own groups may lead to 'social loafing' by some students in that they depend on their friends and other members of the group to do the bulk of the work. Thus, allowing students to self-select their groups may not be ultimately beneficial of their language learning.

In the fifth and final article in this edition, Harumi Nishida compared the reading strategies of intermediate and advanced learners. By interviewing the students to elicit how they had read the texts which had been provided, the author identified three notable differences between the reading strategies of intermediate and advanced learners. Of particular interest is the apparent importance of a knowledge of syntactic structures, as well as vocabulary size itself, in facilitating reading.

I am writing this editorial note in the immediate aftermath of a highly successful combined Asia TEFL and Malaysian English Language Teaching Association (MELTA) conference which was held in Kuching 28-30 August. In my own presentation I

expressed the hope that the journal will attain a reputation of supporting rigorous empirical research into the ways English is developing in Asia and as a 'multilingual' language, as a language spoken by increasing numbers of Asia multilinguals. Such research would include studies into how English is being shaped linguistically and culturally as it is being used in Asian contexts. Such research would also investigate evidence to show that English whether and in what ways English is becoming more 'Asia-centric' and less 'Anglo-centric' when used by Asian multilinguals in Asian contexts and the potential implications of any of these changes for language education policy in the region. I therefore call for readers and colleagues to consider these issues and also hope that those many presenters at the recent conference also consider writing up their presentations for submission to the journal.

This editorial note concludes on a serious topic. I am afraid to report that the editorial board has decided to redact the article by Saeedi, Kazerooni and Ketabi, 'Task Design and EFL Learners' Oral Production: understanding combined effects of information grounding and task structure' which we published in 2012 in Vol 9(4): 51-78 on the grounds of plagiarism. It was found to bear striking similarities to an article by Tavakoli and Foster, 'Task Design and Second Language Performance: the effect of narrative type on learner output', which was published in 2008 in *Language Learning* 58:439-473. I take this opportunity to remind all potential contributors to pay special heed to the Journal's policy on plagiarism below.

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*Australia, September 2014
Andy Kirkpatrick
Editor-in-Chief*