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Contents

Foreword from the Editor
Towards Evidence-based Foreign Language Teaching and Research

Xinghua Liu

I am happy to introduce the eight papers in this issue. **Ying Xiao, Zheng-liu Liang, Qiang Li, Ruo-jun Jia** studied the feasibility of substituting audio-mediated listening tests with video-mediated listening tests in the Foreign Language Admission Test for Medical Doctoral Students (FATMD) administered by the National Medical Examination Center (NMEC) in China. They found that there were no significant differences between the performance of the video-mediated and the audio-only group.

Using a questionnaire survey and statistical modelling, **Sovicheth Boun** investigated the potential social and psychological factors in predicting language use anxiety among undergraduate students in Cambodia. The study found that three main factors (i.e., beliefs about the student's use of the target language, frequency of the target language use in formal contexts, and frequency of the target language use in informal contexts) significantly predicted language use anxiety.

In the third paper, **Min-Chen Tseng** surveyed the self-efficacy of Taiwanese university students from medical, arts, and comprehensive universities. It was found that the medical students exhibited the highest scores in the cognitive, affective, and ability aspects of self-efficacy and that there is a significant and positive correlation between time spent on English activities and students' self-efficacy.

With a quasi-experimental design, **Defeng Chen** and **Li Zhang**'s study revealed that Chinese undergraduate students in the experimental group with formative assessment made significantly better progress in their English academic writing than counterparts in the control group with summative assessment. This study supports the view that formative assessment is more effective than summative assessment.

Wei Xu, Rod E. Case, and **Gwendolyn M. Williams** examined the longitudinal pragmatic development among Chinese EFL learners in mainland China over one academic year. They found that mainly due to an increased overall L2 proficiency, the Chinese EFL learners made significant improvement over time in L2 pragmatics in terms of error judgment and correction.

Ruiying Niu examined university EFL learners' peer-peer interactions in performing collaborative text-reconstruction tasks and found that the learners engaged in six types of interactional process and all these interactional processes brought about four categories of word processing. The study then suggests that L2 lexical learning within collaborative output takes place at both social and cognitive levels.

Holden Kenneth G. Alcazaren and **Emerald R. Rafanan** conducted a review of language-in-education policies of representative developing countries from Asia and Africa and found that they were shaped by two inter-related issues, namely the devaluation of mother tongue and insufficient language policy-planning.

Through a quasi-experimental design, **Ruba Fahmi Bataineh** and **Na'em Ali Salah** studied the effects of drama-based instruction upon Jordanian EFL eighth-grade students' writing performance. They found that after a nine-week treatment, students from the drama-based instructional group significantly outperformed the control group in writing performance. They also found that drama-based instruction provided students with opportunities for practice, cooperation, and reflection on their writing and reduced students' anxiety.

After the above brief introduction, I feel obliged to say something beyond introducing the eight papers; I would like to address the scope of our publication and more importantly the direction of our field. I have been longing to talk about this topic, and Key Hyland's (Hyland, 2016) recent proclamation of the death of the editorial prompts me to take immediate action.

Generally, we receive a number of submissions in the form of personal teaching reflections, narrative summaries of certain teaching methods, and introductions of teaching materials and many inquiries about whether those types of submissions can be published. Normally I will respond by saying that at the moment our journal mainly publishes empirical research. By "empirical" I mean systematic reviews like meta-analysis and experiment-based studies. The choice derives from my understanding that we live in a diversified world and

findings from personal experience or case report from a very specific situation will have limitedimplications for other settings compared to those generated by well controlled research. As an international publication platform, we want to distribute the best available evidence to our community, and beyond, so that teachers have greater confidence in applying practices in their classrooms and so that researchers can readily replicate or research them at scale.

Such are the ideas at the core of evidence-based practice (EBP), something which may be new to many of our TESOL practitioners. The concept of EBP originated from evidence based medicine (EBM) which is defined as "the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients." (Sackett et al., 1996, p. 71). EBM advocates the integration of individual clinical expertise with the best available external clinical evidence, and takes into consideration the needs of medical researchers, doctors, and (see Figure 1). A doctor will practice EBM if they "devote their scarce reading time to selective, efficient, patient driven searching, appraisal, and incorporation of the best available evidence" (Sackett et al., 1996, p. 72).

Figure 1. Model of Evidence-based Practices (adopted from Shlonsky & Gibbs, 2004, p. 138)

EBPs evaluate research findings selectively and rank them as different evidence. The top level of evidence consists of findings from systemic reviews and randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Particularly, RCTs are regarded as the "gold standard" in producing evidence. The middle level of evidence normally includes research findings from true-experiments, quasi-experiments, single subject designs and participants as own controls studies. At the bottom of this scale are recommendations given in textbooks, findings from case reports, and suggestions offered by experts. The basic principle of EBPs is to select and apply the best available evidence. Only when the top level data is not available can we choose and use the lower level of evidence.

In response to the increasing demand for educational accountability, the concept of EBPs has prevailed in education and exerts enormous influence upon educational research. Its implication for educational research is to conduct high quality, well-controlled interventions. Taking writing research for example, Graham and Harris (2014, p.96) offer twelve recommendations for high quality intervention research in writing. We share similar criteria while we evaluate submissions to our journal.

1. Ask meaningful research questions
2. Test writing interventions that are well-founded and designed
3. Compare the targeted writing intervention to a credible control/comparison condition
4. Apply psychometrically sound assessments
5. Make the study as representative of the real world context as possible
6. Apply a rigorous design to answer the research questions.
7. Make certain the study is properly powered.
8. Properly analyze the data.
9. Ensure the study is conducted in an ethical manner.
10. Take steps to ensure that what is supposed to happen does happen.
11. Provide a clear, cogent, and full description of the study.
12. Design a series of studies to refine and test the writing intervention.

The implication of EBPs for instruction is that school teachers need to establish an awareness of EBPs and with

the help of their own expertise and teaching experience, they wisely select and apply EBPs in the classroom and evaluate teaching outcomes. Using writing instruction as an example, we now have a reasonably large research base from which to draw information on how to effectively teach writing. Through a systematic review of published meta-analysis, Graham, Harris, and Ray (2016) identified a dozen EBPs for teaching writing under four major clusters (see Table 1). Unfortunately, for various reasons, many school teachers are not aware of those EBPs and do not use them on a regular basis in their classrooms (Graham et al., 2014; Liu & Li, to appear).

Table 1
Evidence-Based Writing Practices (adapted from Graham, Harris, & Ray, 2016, p. 218)

Writing Interventions	Effect Size
STUDENTS WRITE	
Extra Writing	0.24*
Writing About Content Material	0.29***
Writing About Material Read	0.37***
SUPPORTING STUDENTS' WRITING	
Process Writing Approach	0.34***
Word Processing	0.44***
Word Processing Plus Additional Supports	1.46***
Peer Collaboration Around Process	0.74**
Setting Goals for Writing	0.80***
EXPLICIT WRITING INSTRUCTION	
Writing Strategies	1.26***
Add Self-Regulation to Strategy Instruction	0.50**
Motivation	1.07**
Creativity/Imagery	0.76***
Emulate Model Text	0.30***
Sentence –Combining	0.50***
Transcription Skills	0.55*
Vocabulary Skills	0.78**
WRITING ASSESSMENT	
Adult Feedback	0.87***
Peer Feedback	0.77***
Self-Assessment	0.51***
Machine Feedback	0.34*

*$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; ***$p<0.001$*

Of course, if an intervention is labeled as EBP, this does not mean it can be applied to any context with the same positive outcomes; context matters in terms of applying EBPs. Among many guidelines to deal with the challenges of implementing EBPs at scale, Wandersman et al.'s (2016, pp. 548-549) 10-step method is systematic:

1. What are the needs and conditions to address? (NEEDS/RESOURCES)
2. What are the goals, priority populations, and objectives (desired outcomes)? (GOALS)
3. Which science (evidence-based) models and best practices can be useful in reaching the goals? (BEST PRACTICES)
4. What actions need to be taken, so that the selected program fits with the community context? (FIT)

5. What organizational capacities are needed to implement the program? (CAPACITY)

6. What is the plan for the program? (PLAN)

7. How well is the program being implemented? (IMPLEMENTATION/PROCESS EVALUATION)

8. How well did the program work? (OUTCOME EVALUATION)

9. How will continuous quality improvement strategies be incorporated? (CQI)

10. If the program is successful, how will it be sustained? (SUSTAIN)

In short, foreign language research still often lacks rigor and foreign language teaching is still primarily experience-driven. In order to give our research more influence in foreign language educational policy-making and to render our teaching into a research-driven profession, the concept of EBPs should be integrated into our decisions and actions.

Xinghua (Kevin) Liu

School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Email: liuxinghua@sjtu.edu.cn

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Exploring the Feasibility of Video-mediated Listening Test in a Nation-wide Proficiency English Examination in China

Ying Xiao
Fudan University, Shanghai, China

Zheng-liu Liang
Fudan University, Shanghai, China

Qiang Li
National Medical Examination Center, Beijing, China

Ruo-jun Jia
National Medical Examination Center, Beijing, China

Abstract
Thanks to the increased accessibility of multimedia technology, video texts have been widely used in teaching English in Chinese foreign language classrooms. This trend provides great impetus for changes in the means of assessing listening in both achievement and proficiency tests, and suggests the potential possibility of supplanting the audio-only with a video-mediated listening test. This paper aims to explore such a possibility in the Foreign Language Admission Test for Medical Doctoral Students (FATMD) administered by the National Medical Examination Center in China. A total of 148 MD and PhD students who had just passed the equivalent of a language admissions test voluntarily enrolled. Participants were divided into an experiment group for a video-mediated listening test and a control group for an audio-only test. The results indicated no significant differences on average scores between the video-mediated and audio-only group. However, they did suggest the potential of supplanting the audio-only listening test with a video-mediated equivalent in FATMD without upsetting its well-established credibility and reliability, in light of the increasing use of computer-assisted English proficiency testing in China.
Keywords: English proficiency test, listening test, audio-mediated, video-mediated, EFL, ESP

Social Psychological Impacts on Language Use: Anxiety among Cambodian University Students

Sovicheth Boun
Salem State University

Abstract
Since its conception as a situation-specific construct, foreign language anxiety has been extensively investigated and expanded to account for the complex nature of language learning and teaching. This study aims to identify the underlying dimensions of beliefs about target language use, motivation, and the frequency of target language use. It also seeks to explore the extent of their impacts on the language use anxiety among Cambodian university students. Based on a survey of 129 students in two departments, the study revealed that three main factors (i.e., beliefs about the student's use of target

language, the frequency of target language use in formal contexts, and the frequency of target language use in informal contexts) significantly predicted the language use anxiety among the students. Implications for classroom instruction and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Self-efficacy and Time Spent Learning English: Differences among Taiwanese Students from Medical, Arts, and Comprehensive Universities

Min-Chen Tseng, Ph.D.
National Taiwan University of Arts, Taiwan

Abstract
The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and time spent learning English by students in different majors in Taiwan. The participant sample was comprised of 375 students from 20 academic departments at 8 colleges in 3 universities in Taiwan. Eighty-eight students studied at an arts university, 75 at a medical university and 212 at a comprehensive university. The EFL Learner Self-Efficacy Scale (ELSS) questionnaire was used. It was divided into three sections covering the cognitive aspect (11 items), affective aspect (13 items), and ability aspect (17 items). The results indicate that the self-efficacy level of medical students was the highest of the 3 aspects. The self-efficacy level of arts students in the cognitive and ability aspects was higher than those of comprehensive university students. Also, a two-way ANOVA indicated a significant interaction between learning time and students' schools in the three aspects of self-efficacy.

Formative Assessment of Academic English Writing for Chinese EFL Learners

Defeng Chen
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Li Zhang
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Abstract
Formative assessment (FA) has enjoyed much popularity in educational assessment in recent years, especially for the teaching of writing. However, the application of FA in academic English writing (AEW) has rarely been studied. Employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, this study is designed to explore the effectiveness of FA in the process approach of AEW for EFL learners in China. Results from a T-test show that

there is a significant difference in students' performance between the experimental and the control group. Meanwhile, the results of repeated measures ANOVA demonstrate significant difference among the three drafts produced by the participants in the experimental group. Qualitative studies also show that feedback provided by both peers and the teacher is treated seriously by most learners, which contributes to the gradual improvement of their writing. The results of the study suggest that FA may be more effective than summative assessment (SA) for the improvement of learners' AEW ability.

Longitudinal Pragmatic and Grammatical Development in English among Chinese Students

Wei Xu
Davidson Academy

Rod E. Case
University of Nevada, Reno

Gwendolyn M. Williams
Auburn University

Abstract
This study investigates pragmatic development among Chinese EFL learners, with reference to accuracy improvement in grammar. Sixty college students in mainland China were pre- and post-tested on their pragmatic and grammatical comprehension and production over one academic year. Their test results were compared with those of 14 native English speakers. Quantitative results show that these Chinese EFL learners developed significantly in both pragmatics and grammar over time. Qualitative analysis reveals that they differed from the native speakers in terms of contents and address forms in realizing certain speech acts.

The Mediation of EFL Learners' Interaction for Word Processing within Collaborative Output

Ruiying Niu
Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China

Abstract
Collaborative output has been found to facilitate L2 lexical learning due to the cognitive word processing engendered in it. Yet it is not clear how interactions involved in collaborative output could affect learners' word processing and hence their lexical

learning. This paper takes a socio-cultural perspective to investigate Chinese EFL learners' interactional processes involved in performing collaborative output tasks and how learners' interactions were associated with their cognitive word processing. A micro-genetic analysis revealed that the participants engaged in six categories of interactional process and participants' interactional processes mediated their word processing. The findings highlight the lexical learning mechanism afforded by collaborative output.

A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Language-in-Education Policies and Their Implementations in Developing Countries: The Case of Selected Asian and African Countries

Holden Kenneth G. Alcazaren
University of Perpetual Help, Molino Campus, Philippines

Emerald R. Rafanan
Philippine Science High School, Ilocos Region Campus, Philippines

Abstract
Many nations have attempted to create different language-in-education policies that would cater not only to the needs of learners but also to the demands of preserving a country's native languages. The emergence of multilingual education has led to a proliferation of research that shows the benefits of using a learner's first language. These issues have led the authors to investigate the different language-in-education policies of Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Botswana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda, and how they establish students' first languages as a medium of instruction. This paper examined 30 research articles with the goal of providing an in-depth understanding of each country's policies and implementation practices. The study also explored the different challenges and pedagogical implications of these policies to better understand emerging issues and insights. An identified issue is the devaluation of one's first language due to people's negative perspectives and poor policy planning. ,t was also not surprising that most of these developing communities understand the importance of English as a language of globalization. Thus, emphasizing the importance of establishing one's first language and strengthening the use of the English language in educational systems are two important considerations for policy planning.
Keywords: multilingual education, language-in-education policy, first language, multilingualism

The Effectiveness of Drama-Based Instruction in Jordanian EFL Students' Writing Performance

Ruba Fahmi Bataineh
Yarmouk University, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Irbid, Jordan

Na'em Ali Salah
Palestine Ahliya University College, Bethlehem, Palestine

Abstract

Despite a plethora of research on the utility of drama in the foreign language classroom (e.g., Boudreault, 2010; Gorjian, Moosavinia, & Jabripour, 2010; Zafeiriadou, 2009; Ziltener, 2011), less research addresses its effect on skill development (e.g., Al-Rabadi & Bataineh, 2015; Bataineh, Al-Rabadi, & Smadi, 2013). This study examines the potential effectiveness of drama in improving Jordanian EFL eighth-grade students' writing performance. A purposeful sample of two intact sections of 80 male students was selected from a secondary school in Irbid, Jordan. Using a quasi-experimental design, the two sections were randomly assigned to either an experimental or control group. The groups were pre-tested, treated, and post-tested. The instructional material comprised a story entitled The Boy from the Past from the students' own textbook, Action Pack 8. While the control group was taught per the guidelines of the Teacher's Book, the experimental group was taught a nine-week dramatization of the story, focusing on five aspects of writing, namely, thesis statement, unity, completeness and coherence, wording and cohesion, and organization. The findings reveal statistically significant differences in the students' performance on all five aspects in favor of the experimental group. The research concludes with relevant implications for writing instruction and teacher education.

Keywords: coherence, cohesion, drama, writing instruction