

Editorial

I am delighted to welcome you to the first issue of the *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL*. These papers are refereed proceedings from the annual TESOL research colloquium held at the University of Sydney by the Faculty of Education and Social Work TESOL Research Network. At the 2006 colloquium we had guests from the University of Melbourne, Macquarie University, the University of New South Wales, the University of Technology, Sydney, the University of Western Sydney and the University of New England. A number of the speakers at the colloquium submitted their papers to the University of Sydney Papers in TESOL and are included in this issue. There were more submissions, however, than we could contain in a single issue of the Papers. There will be two issues of the University of Sydney Papers in TESOL in 2007 to accommodate this.

I am also especially pleased, and grateful to, the people who agreed to be on the editorial board for the University of Sydney Papers in TESOL. The reviewers come from well beyond the University of Sydney and, indeed, Australia. We especially thank these people for the work involved in doing these reviews. Without them, the *University of Sydney Papers in TESOL* would not be possible.

I also wish to thank my colleague, Aek Phakiti, for the work he did in organising the TESOL research colloquium which resulted in these papers, and for handling the reviews and editing of the Papers. This is a very large task, and you will see, one that he has done outstandingly well.

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Editor's Introduction

In the past decades, developments and advancements in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) research and practice have brought TESOL practitioners into close contact with TESOL trainers and educators as well as with other second language researchers in TESOL related areas. Six central strands in TESOL research that have emerged in the past decades: (1) a wide range of theories explaining individual differences and social factors that are part of or affect second language acquisition (i.e., English as a second or foreign language; see Doughty & Long, 2003; Hinkel, 2005); (2) shifts in the focus from product-oriented teaching to process-oriented teaching, and from a rigid language curriculum and syllabus to a more flexible one (see Kumaravadivelu, 2006); (3) utilization of technology in teaching and learning of English (Fotos & Browne, 2004); (4) close connections between teaching and assessment (Hughes, 2003); (5) ethics and research methodology in both quantitative and qualitative research; and (6) expansions of TESOL qualifications. This volume of University of Sydney Papers in TESOL contains five research articles that reflect these central strands.

Rubaiyat Jahan and Peter Roger discuss issues surrounding the way in which the 'target culture' associated with the language is conceptualised by English language learners in various parts of the world. Jahan and Roger report on a focus group study involving language teachers from five different countries. Utilizing Kachru's (1985, 1992) concentric model of English users, Jahan and Roger find a number of distinctions between the views of participants from so-called 'Outer Circle' countries and those of participants from 'Expanding Circle' countries.

Aek Phakiti discusses the theoretical and pedagogical issues in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) reading comprehension and strategic instruction. Phakiti provides a connection between second language reading strategies and metacognition or strategic competence within a model of human information processing, as well as a connection between research on strategic reading instruction and three plausible models of strategic reading instruction that can enhance ESL/EFL learners' reading proficiency.

Lindy Woodrow examines the predictive validity of the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) test on academic success of postgraduate students in a TESOL program. Woodrow detects weak but statistically significant correlations between overall IELTS bands and grade point average (GPA). Woodrow identifies a number of variables that may potentially influence their academic success which include previous professional experience and previous English language learning experience.

Kieran O'Loughlin examines student learning in a TESOL postgraduate unit of study on second language assessment (as part of in-service teacher education programs). This unit of study includes highly difficult theoretical concepts, such as test validity, reliability and practicality. Through asynchronous on-line forums, O'Loughlin discovers rich insights into how individual students grapple with complex course content of this kind.

Lesley Harbon and Neil England discuss the cultural practice of TESOL higher degree supervision over distance. Harbon and England frame a case study by examining their developing supervisor-student relationship that has eventuated with its own particular characteristics due to its distance mode context. Harbon and England find the influence and effectiveness of distance communication not only on the supervisor-student relationship but also on emerging new notions about TESOL research training.

Thanks to the contributors for producing these insightful and interesting papers. Thanks also to the members of the Editorial Board for their invaluable help in evaluating all the submitted manuscripts.

Aek Phakiti

Editor

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