



## Editorial

In the second issue of Vol. 8 of *e-FLT*, we present eight articles and a book review, contributed by authors and a reviewer from universities in Asia, Europe, North America and Oceania.

In the first article of this issue, Sayuki Machida reports on the findings of a study which examined the differences in the performance of skilled and unskilled readers in reading an expository text. She found that skilled readers perform better in both recall and comprehension, and that their reading comprehension processes approximate those of native speakers’.

The second article, contributed by Ya-Fen Lo, presents a study which investigated the reading-to-write process of effective and less effective writers of English as a foreign language, and their written products. Through the analysis of think-aloud and retrospective interview data as well as the participants’ written texts, Lo came to the conclusion that effective writers use more and a greater variety of strategies, which are indicative of a higher quality in their writings.

In the third article, Michael D. Hubert studied the relationship between speaking and writing, but could not find any statistically significant evidence to support the belief that the integration of dialogue activities in the writing classroom would have a positive impact on learners’ writing. He came to the result that neither talking about writing nor talking while writing had any measurable effects on the quality of students’ writing.

Shanthi Nadarajan, in the fourth article of this issue, shares with readers the findings of a study which looked at the relationship between instruction on the use of academic words in writing, the subsequent use of such words by students, and teachers’ evaluation of these writings. She concludes that students can be taught to use academic words in their writing products and that teachers grade those texts with a higher percentage of such words better.

In the fifth article, Chih-hui Chang presents a profile of the language learning strategy use of learners of English, Japanese, German and French in Taiwan. She established that the high level of strategy use documented in her study can be attributed primarily to the learners’ fondness of the respective target languages.

The study described in the sixth article, authored by Colin Sage, focuses on learners’ beliefs. Sage collected qualitative data from students’ writings about their beliefs as well as quantitative data from a questionnaire based on their writings. The analysis of the data has uncovered potentially important beliefs that are not included in Horwitz’ Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory, which has been widely used in many previous studies on the same topic.

In the seventh article, Souba Rethinasamy and Kee Man Chuah focus on the predictive validity of a standardised English language proficiency test, the Malaysian University English Test, for the purpose of placing students in English language courses in Malaysian universities. While the authors have found evidence to support the predictive validity of MUET, they nevertheless recommend some fine-tuning of the current placement practice based on this test.

Linda Kwok, in the last full-length article of this issue, reports on the implementation of an e-portfolio system at a university in Hong Kong for learners of English to help them develop specific language skills as well as their independent learning ability. While the author’s study failed to reveal any statistically significant relationship between the use of the e-portfolios and students’ performance, the system does seem to hold some promise for self-paced independent learning, if some adjustments can be made to the system and the course curriculum.

In the only book review of this issue, Priscillia Li Eng Pui takes a critical look at the book “Exploring Learner Language”, written by Elaine Tarone and Bonnie Swierzbin, for the purpose of second and foreign language teacher education and development. Overall, she finds that the book has delivered on its promise to reconcile second language acquisition theory with the language teaching practice, and recommends it as much needed resource for language teacher education.

To conclude this editorial, allow me – on behalf of the Editorial Board – to thank all our readers, contributors, reviewers and members of the International Advisory Board for their continued support, and to convey to them our best wishes for the coming festive season.

Wai Meng Chan  
Editor-in-Chief