



Editorial

This December's issue of *e-FLT* (Volume 9, Number 2) offers readers seven full articles and three book reviews. The increased number of articles *e-FLT* publishes in each issue results from the vastly higher volume of submissions it receives on a regular basis. This is, in turn, a clear indicator of a much keener interest in foreign language education research – and possibly also of the institutional pressure on academics and scholars worldwide to “publish or perish.” Regardless of whether this interest is driven by scholarly intent, career pressure or a mixture of both, it will invariably promote greater scientific inquiry, and lead to significant insights for further research and the language teaching practice.

This issue opens with an article by Thomas Lockley, Rob Hirschel and Adam Slobodniuk, who sought to ascertain – by means of a survey conducted at five universities – to what extent reforms introduced by the Japanese Ministry of Education since 2003 have been successful in transforming Japanese high school English language instruction and enhancing students' ability to communicate in English.

Takayoshi Fujiwara, in the second article, presents the findings of a study which investigated the language learning beliefs of Thai university learners of Chinese and Japanese, who – as Asians learning Asian foreign languages – constitute in his opinion one of the least explored target groups in language learning research. Fujiwara sought to establish if both groups of subjects held different beliefs and if their past learning experiences had influenced their beliefs.

In the third article, Hui-Chun Yang examines if and how Taiwanese undergraduates' foreign language anxiety is related to acculturation, motivation and sociodemographic variables. Her study uncovers that the following factors are predictors of her subjects' level of anxiety: 1) preservation (one of three components in Schumann's theories of acculturation); 2) ideal L2 self (one of two aspects of Dörnyei's L2 motivational self-system); 3) time spent by subjects practicing English comprehension; and 4) subjects' perceptions of their own English proficiency.

As Web 2.0 social networking sites become more pervasive in daily life, language teachers and language learning researchers are increasingly focusing their attention on how these can be harnessed for educational purposes. The use of Facebook as a means of facilitating EFL learners' discussions of grammar and writing was the subject of investigation in the study reported by Thanawan Suthiwartnarueput and Panchalee Wasanasomsithi in the fourth article. They concluded that the Facebook discussions helped to improve the participants' grammar knowledge and writing ability, as documented by their gains in a post-test, and that the participants reported positive attitudes towards the use of Facebook as a learning tool.

In the fifth article, Yong Lang, Lin Wang, Lianxia Shen and Yinying Wang explain how the *zh* sound in Chinese represents a particular challenge for students of Hispanic origin in the United States. They implemented an integrated approach consisting of ‘mouthercise,’ a flash animation, and a set of class practice and performance drills to teach this sound. Evaluation results, achieved through a pre-test/post-test procedure and a satisfaction questionnaire, show that the participants in the project significantly improved their pronunciation of this sound and showed high levels of satisfaction with the new approach.

The sixth article, contributed by Nugrahenny T. Zacharias, explores Indonesian pre-service EFL teachers' identities as multilingual English users (MEU) through the use of response journals. The analysis of the qualitative data collected by Zacharias seems to suggest that many of the Indonesian EFL teachers in her study negotiated their MEU identities based on a core identity derived from their assumed L1 culture.

Handoyo Puji Widodo, in the last full article of this issue, describes a micro-interactional study on the use of complaint letters as an authentic source of input to support task-based English lan-

guage learning. He presents empirical evidence to show that a discussion based on authentic complaint letters led the three participants of his study to engage in communicative tasks personally and meaningfully.

In the first of three book reviews in this issue, Masayoshi Ogino introduces readers to Satomi Kawaguchi's 2010 book, "Learning Japanese as a Second Language: A Processability Perspective," which presents Pienemann's Processability Theory as a means to understand the systematic acquisition of Japanese as L2.

The second review, written by Brett Reynolds, takes a critical look at the "Oxford Modern English Grammar," published in 2011, and compares it with other standard reference grammars. He also discusses if and how English language teachers will find this new reference book useful for their practice.

Finally, Jingquan Li, writing in Chinese, reviews Hugh Douglas Adamson's 2009 volume titled "Interlanguage Variation in Theoretical and Pedagogical Perspective." This volume contains nine chapters authored or co-authored by Adamson, which, in Li's opinion, helped to define the field of interlanguage variation in the last four decades.

We hope you will find the seven articles and three reviews in the current issue to be interesting, insightful and relevant to your own research and practice. Once again, we would like to thank you for your support of our journal and also to acknowledge the considerable efforts of our International Advisory Board, our expert reviewers as well as the many authors who contribute their papers to our journal.

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Editor-in-Chief