



Editorial

The papers in this supplement of *e-FLT* are the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Symposium on the Teaching of Asian Languages, which was held on 2–4 December 2010 as part of CLaSIC 2010, the Fourth CLS International Conference, organised by the Centre for Language Studies (CLS) of the National University of Singapore (NUS). Participating in the symposium were academics from the NUS, Australian National University (ANU), La Trobe University, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and University of Hawai'i.

I would first of all like to acknowledge the vision and dedication of Associate Professor Wai Meng Chan and his colleagues at CLS, as without their untiring efforts neither the initial symposium nor this supplement would have been possible. I would also like to thank my colleague on the *e-FLT* Editorial Board, Associate Professor Titima Suthiwan, as well as our guest editors, Dr George Quinn, Adjunct Professor and Visiting Fellow at ANU, and Dr Sunil Kumar Bhatt, Hindi Convenor at CLS, for all their editorial efforts which made this work possible.

The eight papers in this supplement address a wide range of issues which all developed in dialogue with the conference theme of “Individual Characteristics and Subjective Variables in Language Learning.”

In the paper by Shunichi Ishihara, Chiharu Tsurutani and Kimiko Tsukada, the authors present perspectives on the issues of perceptions of pronunciation of Japanese by mother tongue and non-mother tongue speakers, and the implications of this for successful outcomes in learning how to pronounce Japanese.

Carol Hayes' paper investigates the role that digital storytelling can play in the teaching of Japanese and highlights the successes and the challenges encountered in the implementation of this concept at ANU.

Peter Friedlander's paper compares the ways in which the teaching of both Hindi and Japanese in Melbourne incorporates socio-cultural understandings alongside communicative competencies at every step on the way in the teaching of these languages.

The paper contributed by Wai Meng Chan, Seo Won Chi, Kwee Nyet Chin and Chiung Yao Lin looks at individual variables and motivations and how these impact on students' perceptions of podcast-based supplementary learning materials for the Chinese and Korean language programmes at NUS.

Izumi Walker's paper takes a fresh look at the issue of Japanese speech styles, as well as how these are perceived by learners and how long term studies of this issue point to possible pedagogical innovations related to the concept of noticing for Japanese teaching.

George Quinn's paper also looks at speech styles and the use of respectful language forms in the context of the teaching of Javanese at ANU. It also discusses how drama-based instructional techniques can be used to simulate natural language contexts and stimulate learning.

Johanna Wulansari Istanto and Indrianti's paper picks up the podcasting theme and looks at it within the context of the teaching of Indonesian at NUS. It examines how podcasting was able to reinforce learners' experiences and how the implementation of podcasting is of benefit to slower language learners.

Finally, Gia Anh Le Ho's paper presents a close examination of factors which led to high attainment amongst a group of Vietnamese learners at NUS and argues that it is possible to identify a number of factors which make for successful language learners across foreign language learning, in addition to certain factors which are unique to learners of Vietnamese.

In conclusion, two points seem evident in these studies. First, one of the most striking features of these papers is the way that they reflect the complexity of the socio-linguistic cultural contexts encountered in Asian languages. Second, that they demonstrate the methodological and theoretical

perspectives adopted at different institutions to facilitate language learning and how different language programmes take into account the individual characteristics and motivations of language learners.

Peter Friedlander

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