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Source s of inter-learner variation in the ba construction

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Guest speakers

Gary Barkhuizen is Associate Professor at the University of Auckland (NZ). He has taught English and has been involved in language teacher education in South Africa, the USA and New Zealand. He is currently involved in a number of projects which use a narrative inquiry approach to explore language teaching and learning in various contexts.

Rod Ellis is Professor in the Department of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics, University of Auckland (NZ). He has worked in schools in Spain and Zambia and in universities in the United Kingdom, Japan and the United States. His current research investigates the measurement of explicit and implicit second language knowledge, the relationship of these two types of knowledge to second language proficiency, and the effects of providing instruction in explicit knowledge on the acquisition of implicit knowledge.

Yan Huang is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Auckland (NZ). He has previously taught linguistics at the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford, and the University of Reading, where he was Professor of Theoretical Linguistics. His current research focuses on pragmatics, anaphora, pragmatics-semantics interface, pragmatics-syntax interface, typology and philosophy of language. His books include *The Syntax and Pragmatics of Anaphora* (CUP 1994/2007), *Anaphora: A Cross-linguistic Study* (OUP 2000) and *Pragmatics* (OUP 2007).

Miriam Meyerhoff is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Auckland (NZ). She has held teaching appointments at University of Hawai'i, Cornell, Michigan State University and the University of Edinburgh. Much of her research focuses on variation in syntax and speech acts in situations of language contact, especially in creole languages of the Pacific and Caribbean.

Papers

Sazlina Abdul Jabbar, University of Waikato, NZ — room B, ⊕ 11:00

How Japanese language is taught in Malaysia and New Zealand

Japanese language was introduced in selected Malaysian secondary schools to fulfill the Ministry of Education's vision which is to prepare the young Malaysians generation with multilingual skills for facing the global challenges (Curriculum Development Centre, 2011). However, the development of Japanese language curriculum in Malaysia still seems to be lagging behind other countries, such as New Zealand. Studies done by the Ministry of Education with the help from Japan Foundation Kuala Lumpur had found that the level of Japanese language education in Malaysia had fallen far behind other countries in South East Asia. Therefore, in 2008, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) modified the Japanese curriculum to raise the achievement of Japanese language students. This paper will describe these changes in the Japanese curriculum of Malaysia and will outline preliminary findings concerning how Japanese is taught in New Zealand. These findings will be discussed with relation to literature concerning curriculum development, and plans for future aspects of this study will be outlined.

Adrefiza Adrefiza, University of Canberra, Australia — room C, ⊕ 10:00

Responding to apology: A Study of Australian and Indonesian Speech Act Behaviors

This study compares Australian English (AE) and Bahasa Indonesia (BI) apology responses (ARs) with reference to gender and situation variables. Based on ODCT data from 120 respondents from both communities, a total of 360 responses from three apology situations were audio-recorded and categorized according to Holmes' (1995) broad and Chen and Yang's (2010) specific classifications. The findings show that ARs in both languages are complex and elaborate, embodying various subsidiary speech acts and expressions. They generally show indirectness and reduce face threats towards interlocutors. Regardless of gender and situation, speakers from both communities tend to be accepting, with absolution being the characteristic of their responses. One surprising result is that, in a significant minority of cases, Indonesians are revealed to be more direct and more face threatening than the Australian counterparts. This seems to challenge the stereotype regarding speech behaviour of the Indonesians who are often regarded as more indirect than Australians. In general, there seem to be no noticeable AR gender differences in both communities, but the strategies seem to vary according to the situation. The findings offer pedagogical insights for the teaching of both languages for the sake of intercultural communication.

Mohsen Ansari, University of Waikato, NZ room A, ⊕ 4:00

Anxiety and its Effects on EFL Writers

Anxiety has stimulated particular interest in the field of language acquisition in the last decades. Little research has sought the effects of anxiety on writing, compared to the studies done on communicative skills. This study, however, aims at investigating the possible effects anxiety might have on the writing performance of EFL students. It furthers seeks any meaningful relationship between anxiety as an inhibiting factor and learners' academic achievement, specifically writing production. The study favors two psychometric measurements of anxiety: the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale and the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory. Two groups of Iranian EFL learners who are majoring English at Kerman Azad University will be selected to participate in the experiment. Since writing is a major course for these learners which is offered as part of their curriculum, this can provide the required opportunity for both the researcher and the subjects to study the skill so as to unveil the relationship between anxiety and writing improvement. Pre- and post-writing tests will be implemented to determine the participants' level at the beginning of their writing course and correlate it with the results of the post-test. The standard test of anxiety will also be administered at the beginning of the course. Then the result of the anxiety test is correlated with the post-test. Any progress in writing can be scaled with the level of their anxiety. The study can bear certain implications specifically for the language teachers who have always been facing hindering factors which stand on the way of learners' improvement.

Vaclav Brezina, University of Auckland, NZ room C, ⊕ 11:00

"And people are certainly interested I think": Paradoxes of certainty in spoken university discourse

Spoken academic discourse is an important medium for sharing knowledge. However, it was not until recently that it received more systematic attention in linguistic literature (cf. Swales 2006). While there have been numerous studies done on various lexical and grammatical features of academic speech (e.g. Biber 2004, 2006; Simpson & Mendis 2003) as well as on genre and disciplinary variation (e.g. Swales & Burke 2003, Poos & Simpson 2002), no work has so far been done on conflicting certainty signals, which frequently occur in academic speech. The present paper focuses on the discussion of apparent paradoxes in expressions of certainty and uncertainty in spoken university discourse such as the combination of a high-degree certainty marker certainly and a low-degree certainty marker I think in the title of this presentation. The research is based on ADVICe, a small corpus (150,000 tokens) of spoken one-to-one academic interactions between university students and their teachers during advisory sessions, which was compiled at the University of Auckland. The results suggest that due to often conflicting nature of certainty marking, certainty cannot be understood in subjective (psychological) terms as the speaker's certainty or uncertainty about the state of affaires, but rather as an intersubjective certainty, which reflects the operation of two basic principles: the clarity principle and the negative politeness principle.

Arthur Chen, University of Auckland, NZ room D, ⊕ 10:00

Conditional Constructions in the Manchu Language

This paper investigates the conditional constructions in Manchu, now a minority language in Northeast China, which used to enjoy the official status of national language during the Qing Dynasty (1644 – 1911). Conditionality is a very important notion and a fundamental aspect of human reasoning and is extensively studied in the field of logic, philosophy and linguistics. A study of the conditional constructions in Manchu will add to the knowledge of conditionality in general, especially that of conditionality in natural language. On the other hand, Manchu, a Southern Tungusic language, is also considered to be a member of a larger (and hypothetical) Altaic Family, which subsumes Turkish, Mongolian, or even Korean as well as Japanese. Therefore, the research conducted on the conditional constructions in Manchu can not only shed light on the characteristics of Manchu per se, but also contribute to the understanding of the Altaic languages. This paper reviews existing research on conditionality in various fields and defines the concept of "conditional constructions" based on prototypes rather than sufficient-and-necessary criteria. This research adopts as data source written materials of varied types dating to the Qing Dynasty and classifies conditional constructions according to morpho-syntax and semantics respectively. In doing so, this paper investigates morphological and syntactic patterns of conditionals in Manchu and their pertinence to the interpretation of conditionals. It also explores the motivation behind the surface forms from the perspective of cognitive linguistics.

John Eidswick, Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan room A, ⊕ 2:30

Interest and Prior Knowledge in L2 Reading Comprehension

The influence of interest on learning is well-established in educational psychology, but little interest research has been conducted in the field of second language (L2) learning. This study examined interest and an associated factor, prior knowledge, in relation to reading comprehension. Intermediate-level sophomore students in an English program at a private university in Japan (N=23) rated their interest in and knowledge of 11 topics. Correlations between interest and prior knowledge were significant only for topics related to famous individuals. Participants read expository texts about selections from the topic list with high interest-high prior knowledge (HH), high interest-low prior knowledge (HL), and low interest-low prior knowledge (LL), then took multiple choice comprehension tests. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures revealed significant differences between scores for the HH text and those of the HL and LL texts. Implications of correlations and test score differences are discussed, and suggestions for future research are offered.

Lindsay Ferrara, Macquarie University, Australia room D, ⊕ 11:30

Exploring the role of fingerspelling in Auslan health-related conversations

Deaf bilinguals in Australia have two languages they can use to express concepts related to physical and mental health: Auslan (Australian Sign Language) and English. However, deaf bilinguals cannot simply borrow spoken English words when they are signing in Auslan, because of their deafness and because Auslan is a signed (and not a spoken) language. Fingerspelling, or, the spelling out of English words on the hands, is an example of one of strategy developed by signers to express English in Auslan. Using a Cognitive Grammar approach, the use of fingerspelling among two groups of five deaf, native Auslan signers conversing on topics related to health is investigated here. More specifically, this presentation reports on the ways fingerspelled English health terms are integrated into surrounding Auslan discourse, leading to a discussion of how Deaf Australians use conventional and non-conventional signs to construct meaning. Participants in my study produce 190 fingerspellings related to health. Preliminary findings suggest that these 'borrowed' health terms serve a variety of functions. One function is that they may work to further specify the semantic structure of more general Auslan signs. For example, one participant produced the Auslan sign for 'forget' and followed this by the fingerspelled word 'dementia,' effectively constructing a more technical sense for the sign 'forget.' Other functions relate to the elaboration of a predication's semantic structure, highlighting the important role these fingerspelled words have in Auslan discourse.

Tom Finlayson, University of Auckland, NZ room D, ⊕ 2:30

Diachronic change in political news interviews: The contest for control of information

This paper summarises findings in my MA dissertation, about aggressiveness and evasion in radio news interviews, which point to further research. My data, largely post-2000, evidenced many more constraining moves by interviews than in parallel older data from the UK and USA. The disparity possibly reflects diachronic change in the language of questioning, and this leads to my PhD research proposal. I will examine the language of radio news interview questions and answers in New Zealand over a forty-year period– in effect, to try and determine how information flow is contested in this site of political discourse. Recent work on epistemic modality (Heritage & Raymond, 2005) and work on epistemic, evidential and evaluative predicates in emergent syntax (Thompson, 2002) will inform analysis of questioning techniques and evasive answering, in effect, the contest for control of information flow. Leading researchers, Clayman and Heritage (2002), have studied the development of US presidential interviews since the 1950s, but there appears little or no equivalent work on one-to-one quotidian political discourse produced in breakfast radio throughout Western democracies. I believe this will be the first CA study to do this. The University of Auckland is superbly resourced for this study through the Chapman Archive. Comprising some 46,000 hours of broadcast data it is a unique record of the spoken discourse of public affairs in New Zealand. The archive has recently started the exhaustive task of digitising fragile old tapes, starting on my target data. Opportunities will abound for cross-disciplinary studies based on the archive.

Mark Wain Frear, AUT University, NZ room C, ⊕ 4:00

The effects of cognitive task complexity on written output

Cognitive task complexity and its effect on written output is an area that has not been researched in any great depth. To date, studies on how pressuring cognitive resources (memory, attention, and reasoning) affect written performance (Kuiken & Vedder, 2005, 2008) appear to show partial support for The Cognition Hypothesis (Robinson, 2001, 2005) over the more widely accepted Limited Attentional Capacity Model (Skehan, 1998; Skehan & Foster 1999, 2001). This study focuses on increasing the cognitive complexity of written tasks (operationalized as increases in the number of elements of a task and reasoning demands (Brown et al, 1984) in conjunction with changes in planning time. This study seeks to ascertain what, if any, affect these elements have on the lexical and syntactic complexity of written output. Data will be collected from one hundred, undergraduate, adult ESL learners of upper intermediate level. Cognitive task complexity will be measured by (a) checking for clause depth in both error free and error inclusive T-units, and (b) mean segmental type- token ratio (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2004). The results of this study have yet to be analyzed. It is hoped that the results of this study will contribute to a number of issues: 1. How cognitive complexity affects cognitive resources during the writing process thus contributing to the debate relating to The Cognition Hypothesis and The Limited Attentional Capacity Model. 2. The need to design classroom tasks based on research.

Xitao Fu, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ room D, ⊕ 3:30

The Metonymic Nature of Embodied Cognition

In cognitive linguistics, metonymy is unanimously viewed as a cognitive process/model ubiquitously underlying various language levels such as lexical, morphological, syntactical, pragmatic aspects (e.g. Barcelona, 2000; Barcelona, 2002, 2005; Cuyckens et al., 2003; Dirven & Pörings, 2002; Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Langacker, 2000; Panther & Radden, 1999; Panther & Thornburg, 2003; Radden, 2005; Radden & Panther, 2004; Ruiz de Mendoza & Campo, 2002). Metonymy is also observed motivating other media representations than linguistic activities such as films, TVs, pictures, signs. Given its status as a cognitive mechanism (e.g. Dévényi, 1996; Green, 2005), a question arises: what empowers this process? It seems this question is almost left as untouched in cognitive linguistics. However, the embodied cognition theory on which cognitive linguistics is grounded offers a theoretical framework for unraveling the problem. By examining what counts as metonymy and through reviewing aspects of embodied cognition, especially researches on perception, concept formation, conceptual development, memory, image schemas from cognitive psychology, developmental psychology and neuroscience, this research argues that metonymy is a natural cognitive ability which attentively picks up some element in a patterned experience to mean other element(s) or the experience or vice versa depending on functional factors, and that this cognitive feature dominates our embodied cognition.

Dana Gablasova, University of Auckland, NZ room A, ⊕ 9:00

What makes a good definition? Defining through L1 and L2

As we progress through our lives we continue to learn new words. This happens as we learn new information about the world. This is especially the case in education where students acquire new knowledge of their fields. This study is concerned with learning new (technical) words in academic context. It aims to explore the differences between students learning new specialised vocabulary through the medium of their L1 and those learning through L2. As thousands of students across the globe receive education in their L2 it is important to improve our understanding of how these students' learning is similar to or different from students learning monolingually. In the present study, 72 Slovak high-school students, intermediate to advanced users of English, were given two academic-type texts in which words new to them appeared and were explained: one half of the students received the texts in Slovak (their L1), the other half in English (L2). In the test that followed (and was repeated one week later), students were asked to provide definitions of the new words that appeared in the texts. The definitions elicited from the students were then analysed and compared. In the presentation, the differences found between the two groups of students will be explored. Implications for bilingual education will also be discussed.

Xiaoping (Sherri) Gao, University of Auckland, NZ Room C, ⊕ 3:30

Sources of inter-learner variation in the ba construction in the interlanguge of L2 Chinese

Variability in interlanguage has received growing attention in SLA. However, the variation and its sources in the interlanguage of L2 Chinese remain under-researched. This study investigated sources of inter-learner variation in the use of the ba construction (BC) by English and Korean speaking learners of L2 Chinese. A total of 110 adult learners were examined both in New Zealand and in China, with 22 native speakers of Chinese as control. A battery of three tasks (i.e., an oral production task prompted by video clips, an oral imitation task, and an untimed grammaticality judgement task conducted orally) was used to elicit two types of the ba construction (BC1 and BC2). The accuracy of the use of BC was examined in terms of two measures: oral scores (i.e., the average of the oral production and oral imitation scores) and metalinguistic scores (i.e., the average of the judgment and correction scores).The statistical analysis showed that the number of years of study, setting, first language, and starting age were the sources of the inter-learner variation. In addition, self-rated proficiency significantly correlated with both oral and metalinguistic scores of BC, whereas gender had no effect on the accurate use of BC. The findings are discussed in terms of the effects of these sources on oral and metalinguistic competencies. This study suggests that multiple sources account for the variation in BC, and that the effects of these sources differ somewhat in terms of the learners' oral and metalinguistic competencies.

Haolei Hu, University of Auckland, NZ room A, ⊕ 3:30

Attention to Form in Web-based Tasks - Work-in-Progress

Focus on Form (FonF), occurs during meaning-oriented interaction and elicits learners' reflection on linguistic form, thus facilitating more target-like L2 production. The emergence of Web2.0 may provide new opportunities for FonF during Web-based interaction and collaborative writing, hence a new arena for second language learning. Based on Long (1996)'s Interaction Hypothesis (or Interactionist Hypothesis), this study investigates how intermediate-high L2 learners draw their attention to linguistic form when engaging in meaning-oriented Web-based collaborative tasks. It attempts to describe the interaction patterns where linguistic form is attended via digital observation of the interaction and collaboration process. The research intends to find out the patterns of FonF sequence and characteristics of Focus on Form Episode (FFE) as well as the relationship between FonF and target-like use of those attended forms in learners' output. Three types of tasks (dictogloss, jigsaw, narrative) are to be employed. Whether there are differences in the occurrence of FonF across these tasks are to be investigated too. Findings from this research are expected to contribute to SLA research in the Web context by describing how FonF occurs in the Web-based interaction and collaboration and developing a descriptive framework, which is a lack in literature. Methodologically, the employment of screen-capturing programme to record the interaction and collaboration process elicits a substantial amount of unique data which have rarely been taken into account in previous research in CMC and FonF study. It will display how new method of data collection ends in different findings and results.

Cendrine Jarraud-Leblanc, UoA/UNC, New Caledonia/NZ room D, ⊕ 9:00

The Evolution of Written Bislama

Vanuatu, an independent nation of the South Pacific since 1980, is one of the linguistically richest countries in the world with about 1OO indigenous languages, French or/and English for some, and its national language, Bislama. This English-based creole has been used orally for a long time but it is getting more and more important in its written form today. My study concentrates on the evolution of the written language over the last forty years or so and its potential anglicisation. It also examines the place of Bislama in the official educational system of Vanuatu. Indeed, because of a complex colonial heritage, the language is given no official status in education where French and English are the two languages of instruction. At a time when Vanuatu is adopting a new linguistic policy, the choices made in terms of medium of instruction will be crucial for the future of Vanuatu.

Hyeseung Jeong, Waikato University, NZ room B, ⊕ 4:00

Acquisitional processes of discourse competence for doing the literature review

The literature review (LR) in a PhD thesis connects one's research with others' work and situates the study within a particular academic field (Ridley, 2008). Being able to compose a well-crafted literature review is an essential competence required of a PhD student. In relation to PhD students who are non-native speakers of English (English NNS) doing the LR, there have been a few research studies (see Swales, 200l). Similarly, previous research on the developmental processes of the competences of English NNS PhD students for doing the LR is even rarer rare not only in the NZ context but elsewhere. This paper introduces the conceptual and methodological frameworks for a PhD research project aiming to investigate the acquisitional processes of English NNS PhD students' competence, specifically in relation to their mastery of the genre of the LR. It is attempted to conceptualise the LR as an academic genre and the competence for doing the LR as discourse competence. The notion of knowledge construction through academic discourses and cognitive processes is also one of the central conceptual frameworks for the present study at two different dimensions. At one aspect, it is assumed as the way of discourse competence acquisition, reflecting upon the fundamental 'co-constructive' (Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2005), and interactive nature of discourse through which meaning is negotiated (Widdowson, 2007). More overall, it is the methodological perspective that the research itself is constructed, through the interactive cooperation between the participants and researcher, as well as through the researcher's own thought processes.

Qi Li, University of Auckland, NZ room B, ⊕ 9:00

Changes in the motivation of Chinese ESL learners

This qualitative study investigated changes in the motivation of Chinese learners of English over a three month period of residence in New Zealand. The participants consisted of 11 Chinese ESL learners, who were tertiary students and taking general or academic English courses in New Zealand. At the beginning of the investigation, they had just arrived in New Zealand and were asked to keep a diary of their English learning for a period of three months. The instruments were learner diaries and follow-up interviews. Their diary entries were collected once a week. 7 diarists used Chinese to write all their diary entries, and 4 diarists wrote their diary entries in a mixture of Chinese and English. During this three month period, 4 diarists were interviewed once in order to clarify certain items in their diary entries. Data were analyzed by following the typical sequence of a qualitative analysis: coding for themes – looking for patterns – making interpretations – building theory (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). The results revealed individual changes and general patterns of change in the motivation of the Chinese ESL learners. According to the similarities and differences in their motivational changes, five types of learners were identified based on Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System. Three types of learners were able to maintain or increase their overall motivation; they were the more motivated learners. Another two types of learners were not able to maintain their overall motivation. In fact, their motivation decreased over the three months; they were the less motivated learners.

George Major, Macquarie University, Australia room C, ⊕ 9:30

Clarification in Auslan/English interpreter-mediated medical interaction

This presentation will report on my PhD study of Auslan (Australian Sign Language)/English medical interpreting, which is nearing completion. Within an interactional sociolinguistic framework, I have collected and analysed two authentic interpreter-mediated general practice consultations. In this presentation I give an overview of my study, and focus on participants' use of clarification strategies. Interpreters in the medical setting frequently need to clarify information that is missed or not understood (Metzger 2005, Napier et al 2006), and interpreting students are taught that this is important. Until now, however, little research has been available that shows exactly how this is done in real life medical interaction. Using transcribed excerpts, I present a preliminary analysis of clarification strategies in my data. Interpreters, doctors, and patients were found to use a variety of strategies to clarify information, from single word/sign requests through to more lengthy and co-constructed sequences. I also propose applications of this research to both signed and spoken language interpreter education.

Judith McKeon, De Montfort University, UK room C, ⊕ 11:30

Age and Migration: language issues related to older economic migrants

Migration is usually linked to young people but seven percent of all migrants are over the age of 45 and, with estimates of approximately one million Poles in the UK, seventy thousand could be older migrants. This is a neglected age group and virtually no studies have been carried out on the impact migration may have had on their lives. Language is a particular issue as Eastern Europeans of this age have not had the same exposure to the English language as younger people have. The investigation has been carried out through oral histories which determine how migration fits into their life stories. Initial results show that older migrants do not have the confidence, money nor the motivation to participate in existing language classes. They have strategies for communication which involve using their children to speak English on their behalf and working only in Polish speaking environments. At home they watch Polish television and speak only Polish. Social activities are often limited to attending the Polish church or, for the women, window shopping. Unless efforts are made to engage with this specific age group, they may become more isolated and eventually more of a burden on the state. As the majority of these older migrants are likely to remain in the UK, their lack of language skills indicate there will be limited opportunities for them to fulfil their potential in the future.

Nadia Mifka-Profozic, University of Auckland, NZ room A, ⊕ 11:30

Effectiveness of Oral Corrective Feedback

This paper addresses the issue of oral corrective feedback in a foreign language classroom. The paper presents the results of a research investigating the effects of two oral CF strategies: recasts and requests for clarification. The language structures under investigation are two French past tenses, the passé composé (perfect) and the imparfait (imperfect). These two tenses have been documented in SLA research as some of the most difficult language structures to acquire for L2 learners of French. The research was carried out with three intact classes of French FL in two secondary schools in Auckland, involving 52 participants who, on average, had 500 hours of French foreign language instruction. A quasi-experimental design with the pre-test, treatment, immediate post-test and a delayed post-test was employed, including both oral and written production. Oral corrective feedback was provided in the form of recasts in one class and requests for clarification in the other class, during the execution of three communicative tasks. The participants in the third class did not receive any treatment, so this class served as a control group. The treatment tasks and the tests were picture-based, narrative and focused (designed to elicit the use of the target structures). The relative effectiveness of the two CF strategies was examined in relation to the students' repair of their errors. Based on the current research, the paper will attempt to discuss some of the problems that arose in this classroom-based experimental study. Possible ways of dealing with such problems will be presented.

Tatsuya Nakata, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ room A, ⊕ 9:30

The effect of the block size on second language vocabulary learning

The present study examines the effect of block size on L2 vocabulary learning. Block size refers to the number of cards to be included in a flash card stack. For instance, suppose we have 20 words to study. Would it be more effective to learn all 20 words in a stack at one time or would it be more effective to divide them into smaller decks? Previous studies on block size are limited in that the block size and spacing are confounded. More specifically, in previous studies, a small block size was always associated with massed learning, whereas a large block size was associated with spaced learning. The confounding of block size and spacing is problematic because spaced learning yields significantly higher retention than massed learning. The present study attempts to isolate the effects of the block size and spacing. In this study, 95 Japanese university students studied 20 English-Japanese word pairs in three conditions: block sizes of 4, 10 and 20 words. Unlike previous studies, the three conditions were matched in average spacing. Vocabulary learning was measured by immediate and one-week delayed posttests. Results of the experiment indicate that although the block size 4 condition may lead to better performance during the treatment than the other two conditions, there may be little difference in posttest scores among the three. The findings seem to imply that as long as spacing is controlled, block size may have little effect on L2 vocabulary learning.

Michelle Genevieve Natolo, Griffith University, Australia room B, ⊕ 11:30

Student-driven grammar games in the second language classroom

When it comes to language instruction, the words "grammar learning" and "boring" often walk hand-in-hand. Traditional grammar teaching and learning fails to engage students in active and lifelong learning. There is a need for more learner-centred approaches that aid students to learn grammar in a second language or foreign language classroom in a more engaging and enjoyable way. Student-driven grammar learning games represent a promising alternative which engages students in active grammar learning. Little is known about how student-driven grammar learning games can be used as a pedagogical tool in the classroom. This paper provides an early insight based on a research study that examined the impact that the use of a game-based grammar learning approach had on the grammar learning experience of tertiary students learning Spanish in Australia.

Judy Miang Koon Ng, University of Waikato, NZ room B, ⊕ 2:30

Use of questionnaires in data collection: Lessons learnt by a beginner researcher

Despite an extensive literature reviewing the use of questionnaires as a data collection method, few writers highlight the problems faced by researchers or suggest solutions to overcome such problems. This paper reports some of the challenges faced when using a questionnaire during some preliminary data collection which was a part of a larger study. The techniques used to solve the difficulties faced in using questionnaires will be discussed in the second section and finally selected findings of the questionnaire will be detailed. The study, which was conducted in a private university in Malaysia, sought to investigate lecturers' and students' beliefs about the value of feedback on students' written work. As a first step, questionnaires were distributed to the lecturers in this university to obtain some relevant background professional information, to identify potential volunteers who, after completing the questionnaire, would be willing to take part in later stages of the project and to investigate their attitudes about the value of feedback on their students' written work and the extent to which the lecturers' practices converged with their self-reported beliefs. The aims of the questionnaires were achieved in this study, but it was not implemented as it is usually recommended in the literature due mainly to particular contextual and socio-cultural factors. In short, it was found that the researcher needs to be flexible and conscious of local sensitivities.

Viet Gia Nguyen, University of Waikato, NZ room B, ⊕ 10:00

Investigating teachers' beliefs via lesson planning sessions

Teachers' co-construction has been recorded in various action research and professional development activities, such as teacher study groups (Clair, 1998), and reflective team teaching (Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 1998). However, few researchers have suggested using this type of activity for data collection for research purposes, particularly in the area of teachers' beliefs. Most of the co-constructive tools used to explore teachers' thinking include discussions (on a particular topic) and focus groups. This paper presents another tool for investigating teachers' beliefs – group lesson planning. The idea of using this tool rooted from the belief that rich data could be obtained by asking groups of teachers to plan their own lessons. Group lesson planning was one method of data collection in a multi-method research project. Specifically, participant teachers, who taught English at the same level in a high school in Vietnam, got together and planned a lesson that they would teach the following week. Their discussions were audio-recorded. This paper will attempt to focus on the use of this method. However, samples of data and initial findings will be presented to illustrate the tool. Implications and suggestions will also be put forward, but any further usefulness and limitations of this tool will be opened for discussion.

Michael P. H. Rodgers, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ room A, ⊕ 10:00

Incidental Vocabulary Learning Through Watching Television

The potential for English language learners to incidentally learn vocabulary from video viewing has been documented in previous research. Studies have generally used short videos (Markham, 1999) or involved videos designed for language learning (Huang & Eskey, 1999-2000). The potential for vocabulary learning from viewing television dramas intended for a native speaking English audience has been proposed (Webb & Rodgers, 2009), but has not been fully researched. This study looks at the vocabulary gains of 187 Japanese first or second year university students who watched ten 42-minute episodes of an American television program. The participants completed vocabulary tests at different levels of sensitivity (tough and sensitive (Nation & Webb, 2010)) pre- and post-viewing. These tests were based on 60 word families that occurred five or more times (ranging from five to 54 occurrences) and were low frequency words (found in the 3000 BNC word lists and beyond). Participants learned an average 6.4 words (23.0% relative gain) on the tough vocabulary test and 6.8 words (29.8% relative gain) on the sensitive test. There was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group with regards to vocabulary gain on the tough, $t(258) = 2.89$, $p = .005$, and the sensitive test, $t(258) = 3.20$, $p < .001$. The tested items were learned by an average of 19.8 people (31.4% relative gain) on the tough test and 21.0 people (37.7% relative gain) on the sensitive test. There was a small significant correlation ($r(58) = .295$, $p < .05$) between the test items' frequency of occurrence and their relative gain on the tough test.

Yosuke Sasao , Victoria University of Wellington, NZ room A, ⊕ 11:00

Developing and validating a standardised word part test

It has been generally agreed that word part knowledge plays an important role in second language (L2) vocabulary learning. Research has shown that knowledge of word parts is related to the size of vocabulary knowledge and facilitates vocabulary learning. For example, if one knows the meanings of the English word "happy" and the affix "un-," it should be easy to learn the meaning of the word "unhappy." However, little is known as to how word part knowledge develops partly due to lack of measurement tools for L2 learners' overall knowledge of word parts. The present research aims to create and validate a standardised word part test. In so doing, 118 affixes were selected based on frequency data in the British National Corpus. The test was written in multiple-choice format and involved three sections: recognition, meaning, and function. It was administered to 440 Japanese learners of English as an L2 with various levels of proficiency. Rasch analysis was performed to detect misfit items which need rewriting. This empirical research is expected to offer suggestions for determining the level of difficulty in learning word parts. The validated word part test will also provide learners with diagnostic information as to which word parts could be learned in order to go beyond the present level and be more proficient in vocabulary learning. The present presentation will report on the procedure for developing and validating the word part test.

Mohammadtaghi Shahnazari, University of Auckland, NZ room A, ⊕ 2:00

The role of working memory in second language reading comprehension

A good body of research suggests that working memory (WM) plays an important role in first language acquisition (e.g., Atkins & Baddeley, 1998; Daneman, 1991; Daneman & Green, 1986; Juffs, 2004). More specifically, some studies suggested that there is a significant relationship between working memory capacity and L1 reading comprehension (e.g., Daneman & Carpenter, 1980; Just & Carpenter, 1992; Waters & Caplan, 1996b). L2 research on WM is also emerging as an area of concern. A few L2 studies suggest that WM capacity may play an important role in L2 reading comprehension (Chun & Payne, 2004; Harrington & Sawyer, 1992; Lesser, 2007; Walter, 2004). However, little is known about the role WM plays in the process of second language acquisition in general, and reading comprehension in particular. Furthermore, most of the studies conducted to date are based on only one reading and one WM measure. 56 L1 Persian EFL learners at low proficiency level from a private language school in Iran participated in this study. They completed a battery of reading and working memory measures. Memory measures included phonological short-term memory, math span and reading span tests. Reading measures included a close, short answer (SA) and L1 recall tests. Multiple regression analysis was applied to determine whether there are any significant relationships between WM capacity and reading measures. Results of this study indicated a significant relationship between WM capacity (as measured by RST & MST) and reading ability (as measured by cloze, SA, and L1 recall tests). This presentation will also focus on directions for further study on the role of WM and reading comprehension.

Natsuko Shintani, University of Auckland, NZ room C, ⊕ 2:00

Incidental L2 acquisition of grammatical structures by young Japanese classroom learners

This experimental study investigated the incidental acquisition of plural –s and copula be by young Japanese classroom learners under two instructional conditions. Incidental acquisition was operationalized as the acquisition of linguistic features when learners' attention was directly focused on other items and when they did not expect to be tested on the incidental features (Hulstijn, 2003). Forty-five children aged 6 with no experience of leaning L2 were divided into three groups: comprehension-based (CB), production-based (PB) and control groups. Each group received 4.5 hrs of instruction. The instructional materials were devised to teach the learners sets of lexical items, which comprised the overt focus of the instruction. The materials also exposed the learners incidentally to multiple exemplars of the two structures. Acquisition of plural -s was measured by means of a comprehension-based test, the Wug test and a Same-or-Different task. Acquisition of copula be was measured by means of a Tell-and-Do task and a picture description test. These instruments were administered as a pretest, immediate posttest and delayed posttest. Results showed that the CB group could comprehend plural –s but, with the exception of a few learners, produced neither plural –s nor copula be in obligatory contexts. The PB group could neither comprehend plural –s nor produce either structure. These results are discussed in terms of receptive and productive acquisition, the difference between CB and PB, and the kinds of tests used to measure acquisition.

Darcy Sperlich, University of Auckland, NZ room D, ⊕ 11:00

Binding in Interlanguage: How English and Korean learners of Chinese view 'ziji'

This paper presents results from an experimental study into anaphoric reference by learners of Chinese. Specifically, there were two language groups studied, being English and Korean. They were further divided into two proficiency groups, intermediate and advanced. The participants were given two computer tests to complete, one being an Interpretative Judgment Test, and the other a Truth-value Sentence Judgment Test. These tests tested their understanding of the Chinese Long-distant anaphor 'ziji', which can take local or long distant referents. The reference of 'ziji' was tested in a neutral, pragmatically biased, and a pragmatically + semantically biased environment. It was hypothesized that the language and proficiency factors of the groups would interact with each other to produce differing results for each group. More specifically, the Korean group should outperform the English group due to Korean being a more 'pragmatic' language, whereas English is a more 'syntactic' language – being further from Chinese which is also a 'pragmatic' language. Preliminary results appear to confirm the above hypotheses, that there is indeed a difference between how the two participant language groups approach Chinese anaphora. Through these observations of how their interlanguage performs, greater credence is given to Huang's (2000) idea that languages can be separated along syntactic/pragmatic lines, and further our understanding about the division of labour between syntax and pragmatics in anaphoric reference.

Kishwer Sultana, University of Auckland, NZ room D, ⊕ 2:00

Globalization and Pakistani Advertising: Emergence of Hybrid Discourse

The present paper focuses on linguistic hybridity and multimodality as impacts of globalization as evidenced in Pakistani digital advertisements. Linguistic hybridity in digital advertising refers to mixing Pakistani English and Urdu languages in various ways. The postmodern world is undergoing social changes at all levels, including linguistic. These social changes include 'governance of new capitalist societies, hybridity or the blurring of social boundaries, shifts in space and time associated with globalization and hegemonic struggles' (Fairclough 2003; cf. Kress 2000a). Therefore, we need new theories of meaning and representation to account for linguistic hybridity and textual complexity as part of new social formations and identities. My research on digital advertising, exemplified by the website of the Pakistani newspaper Daily Express, analyses the linguistic productivity of cross-language writing. The model of analysis combines critical discourse analysis CDA (Fairclough 2003) with functional grammar (Halliday 1985). The paper is based on my current Ph.D research, and linguistic analysis is carried out at syntactic and discursive levels. The results of the analysis show how, in linguistic and cultural globalization, a hybrid 'Englicized' Urdu is constructed by mixing languages, genres, and discourse practices.

Sri Wahyuni, University of Canberra, Australia room B, ⊕ 3:30

Learning Strategies for Speaking Skills of Indonesian EFL Tertiary Students

Learning Strategies for Speaking Skills of Indonesian EFL Tertiary Students across L2 Proficiency and Gender: A Case Study This study investigates the use of learning strategies for speaking skills by Indonesian EFL tertiary students across L2 proficiency and gender at Gajayana University of Malang. It focuses on what and how strategies are used; and why they are used in that way using Oxford's strategy classification system (Oxford, 1990). It is a single-case study carried out using a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods by employing questionnaire surveys, proficiency test, interviews, and speaking learning diaries for the data collection. The data include questionnaires (N = 65), proficiency test scores (N = 65), speaking scores (N = 20), interviews (N = 20), and speaking learning diaries (N = 80). This paper focuses on the qualitative results obtained from the interviews and diaries analysed using meaning condensation approach (Kvale, 1996). The findings show that the students used a wide range of strategies with cognitive strategies as the most favoured and memory strategies as the least favoured strategies. They used the strategies consciously, confidently/unconfidently, actively/casually, creatively, and/or willingly. They used the strategies in this way because of the usefulness, pleasure, simplicity, and/or affective factors of the strategies.

Hay Yiu Yau, AUT University, NZ room B, ⊕ 9:30

Language Teacher Motivation

Research on the motivation of teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) has been scarce and fragmented. This study aims to bridge the gap in the research by investigating the motivation of ESL teachers employed in private English language schools and other state tertiary institutions in New Zealand. The study sought to understand, first, the key motivational factors involved, and second, what measures can be adopted by both teachers and the institutions to sustain and nurture teacher motivation. Informed by self-determination theory, namely the categories of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Dörnyei, 2001), the study employed a mixed-method approach. Data were collected through the implementation of 72 questionnaires, supplemented by seven journals and three semi-structured interviews. Utilizing descriptive analysis, the study found that intrinsic motives were probably more important than extrinsic motives in affecting teaching motivation. Lack of work autonomy and job security were also identified as key de-motivating factors. In general, ESL teachers asked, amongst others, for more professional training and more respect from management. The study makes a number of recommendations that offer both ESL teachers and school management a means of creating a better working environment, and ultimately facilitate better outcomes for English language students. (198 words)

Kanyu Yeh, National Chengchi University, Taiwan room D, ⊕ 9:30

The use of ranhou 'then' in Mandarin-speaking children's narrative

Since ranhou 'then' in Mandarin can now function as a discourse marker, the purpose of the study is to investigate how Mandarin-speaking children use ranhou 'then' to achieve temporal coherence in narrative and what other functions of ranhou would also appear in their story-telling. The subjects were twenty five- and nine-year-old children. Eight different functions of ranhou were coded according to previous studies. The results showed that the frequency of ranhou in Mandarin-speaking children's narrative decreased with age. Besides, almost all 5-year-olds could use at least two functions of ranhou. Nearly half of them used more than two meanings. Most of the 9-year-olds could used three meanings when telling story. The most salient use of ranhou in children's narrative, as predicted, was to mark temporal relations between events. Besides this conventional use, most of the 5-year-olds also used ranhou to add new information. Many 9-year-olds could use ranhou to mark consequences. Other meanings, such as speech planning, appeared relatively less. The portion of temporal ranhou decreased with age while the additive and consequential uses increased. Children used the temporal ranhou to connect events related to global structure to show their focuses of the storyline. They used the additive ranhou to develop local structure of the story and make their story more elaborate. The result suggested that five-year-old children started to understand the multifunction of ranhou both as a connective and a discourse marker. Moreover, it also indicated a developmental difference among Mandarin-speaking children's use of the multifunction of ranhou.

Runhan Zhang, University of Auckland, NZ room C, ⊕ 2:30

The relationship between L2 knowledge and general L2 proficiency in an EFL context

This study investigated the relationship between the L2 knowledge and general L2 proficiency of Chinese university English majors and also the relationships between individual learner factors and learning outcomes. 92 third year undergraduate students in a Chinese university completed a battery of tests - an Oral Elicitation Test (EIT), a Timed Grammaticality Judgment Test TGJT), an Untimed Grammaticality Judgement Test (UGJT) and a Metalinguistic Knowledge Test (MKT). A measure of the overall English proficiency was also obtained. An exploratory factor analysis lent support to Ellis's (2005) claim that L2 knowledge is best characterised in terms of two factors. However, the factors identified differed from those in his study. Ellis' study distinguished implicit knowledge (EIT and TGJT) and explicit knowledge (UGJT and MKT). This study supported a distinction between 'oral production' (EIT) and a 'metalinguistic knowledge' (TGJT, TGJT and MKT). The difference may reflect the different populations sampled in the two studies. A multiple regression analysis showed that the 'oral production/metalinguistc knowledge' model predicted general L2 proficiency. The EI Test was the best predictor of. The study also examined the relationship between individual learner factors (i.e. learner beliefs, motivation, anxiety and language analytic ability) and test performance. It found a number of statistically significant correlations with both the test scores and the measure of general proficiency but on the whole these were weak. No relationship was found between personal variables (e.g. age, starting age of learning English, instruction received before they entered into university) and general L2 proficiency.

Julie (Jingzhi) Zhu, University of Auckland, NZ room B, ⊕ 2:00

The Effect of Musical Aptitude in Perceiving and Producing Mandarin Tones

Learning the tones of Mandarin is much more difficult than learning the phonetic sounds. Numbers of studies have found that speakers of a non-tonal language who are learning Mandarin as a foreign language have difficulty in perceiving and producing tones (Klein, Zatorre, Mikner & Zhao, 2001; Lee, Tao & Bond 2008; Wang 2003; Wang, Sereno, Jongman & Hirsch, 2003a). In order to tackle this problem and therefore improve Mandarin learners' learning effect, many researchers have attempted to detect the sources of the difficulty. Different factors have been found to contribute to the difficulty, including the unique tonal pattern, L1 (the first language) impact, lack of tonal experience, hemispheric impact, tone sandhi feature, misleading teaching pedagogy, age of L2 (the second language) exposure and foreign language anxiety as well as gender issues. However, little research has thus far been conducted on another potential factor affecting a learner's perception and production of Mandarin tones: learners' musical aptitude. Results from this small body of research have been inconsistent. Therefore, my main research question is 'Is there a significant correlation between Mandarin learners' musical aptitude and their tonal perception and production?'. The goal of this thesis is to examine if Mandarin learners with high-musical aptitude perform better than those with low-musical aptitude, and what effect Mandarin learners' music aptitude would play in processing and producing lexical tones, by conducting a music aptitude test and two lexical tone tests. As my research is at an initial stage, this is a report on the literature review and my research framework.

Posters

Mohamed Abushafa, De Montfort University, UK — Poster

The use of non-native English speakers teaching English in Higher Education in Libya

Since 2005, when the Libyan government expanded their scholarship programme to enable university staff to study at PhD level in foreign universities, there has been an increased interest in the learning of English . The staff recruited to teach English in the universities have come mainly from Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Despite the English programmes, Libyan students pursuing their studies in English speaking countries have to spend considerable time in a language school as their language skills are not at university entry level. A series of face-to-face interviews are being carried out in Libyan universities with teachers, students and management in order to define the problem. The initial investigations highlight the perception that the non-native teachers of English are from a different culture, have no rapport with their students, do not communicate well, and are not able to prepare their students for the level of English required. There are a number of issues arising from the investigation and these are not necessarily all related to the teaching staff. The low level of English language achievement may also be attributed to training, curriculum, or approaches but the challenge may be in changing student perceptions of the value of non-native speakers of English.

Mazura Anuar, University of Waikato, NZ — Poster

Negotiating human research ethics clearance for a research involving medical students, staff and patients at a New Zealand hospital

The title of the research study is 'Language anxiety: A study of difficulties faced by international medical students for whom English is an additional language during clinical practice in a New Zealand university'. The research method involves conducting interviews with student-doctors, medical and language lecturers and also patients. It also involves observations of consultations between the student-doctors and their patients. In order to gain access to research participants especially the patient-participants, ethics applications had to be submitted to the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee as well as the District Health Board Ethics Committee for approval. This poster presentation shows a diagram of my experiences in the process of obtaining approval from both committees which enabled me to proceed with my data collection stage.

Vaclav Brezina, University of Auckland, NZ — Poster

Are you sure? Certainty and knowledge negotiation in academia

Expressing certainty and uncertainty (epistemic stance) in language is a very complex matter as epistemic stance can be either explicitly marked (Biber 2006, Kärkkäinen 2007, Simon-Vandenbergen & Aijmer 2007) or merely implied by the pragmatics of the speech act (Holmes 1984). By indicating our epistemic stance, we simultaneously evaluate a proposition, position ourselves and align with the hearer(s) (Du Bois 2007). The present research draws on theoretical and methodological approaches from the fields of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and corpus linguistics. It combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies of language analysis and inquires into the ways in which certainty and uncertainty (epistemic stance) are communicated in spoken academic discourse. The university represents an environment in which people from various backgrounds come together share knowledge. The analysis of the interactions thus enables us to understand the dynamics of knowledge negotiation and the role different social variables play in this process. In contrast to previous studies, which focused mainly on (a few) selected epistemic forms and their use across various contexts (form-to-function approach), the present study follows a function-to-form approach, analysing the dynamics of epistemic choices in the academic context. The results suggest that certainty and uncertainty should not be understood in subjective (psychological) terms as the speaker's (un)certainty about the state of affaires, but rather as an intersubjective certainty and uncertainty, which reflect the process of knowledge co-construction in dialogue.

Robert Michael Easterbrook, University of Canberra, Australia — Poster

Vocabulary learning strategies and beliefs about language and language learning

Vocabulary learning strategies and beliefs about language and language learning This study explores the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) and strategy use of Chinese English Majors (CEM) in China and their beliefs about language and language learning (BALLL). This dual-focused study obtained data on these phenomena including the so-called Chinese Culture of Learning (CCL), specifically, as well as vocabulary levels upon entry to university, using a multi-purpose questionnaire. Eighty nine Chinese undergraduates provided data affirming VLS use, BALLL, CCL, and certain vocabulary levels. Initial findings indicate that Chinese undergraduates not only use VLS regularly to try to achieve educational goals but also hold beliefs about language and language learning which may potentially constrain strategy choice and learning. Initial findings suggest beliefs are not distinctly Chinese but a mixture of Chinese beliefs and those of other culture (e.g. Westernized). Any influence of beliefs on strategy choice was not empirically explored in this study but was inferred from the data. The vocabulary levels test also supports the contention that Chinese undergraduates do not possess as large a vocabulary range upon entry to university as the literature suggests. The findings heighten awareness of VLS use and BALLL and the potential interaction between them among Chinese English Majors in China in an undergraduate context. It also furthers understanding of how English vocabulary is gained in China in a tertiary context by Chinese students of English.

Bao Hoang, Griffith University, Australia Poster

A study on the patterns of pragmatic transference in the Vietnamese language

Language contact, bilingualism and contact-induced language change have created controversial issues among linguists when more and more people of different languages and cultures around the world come into contact. There have been studies on the phenomena of language change including code switching and transference in different language dyads (Clyne, 2003), especially in multi-lingual societies like Australia, The United States of America and Canada. However, there is insufficient research into the Vietnamese language used in Australia and its changes in terms of pragmatic transference in speech acts. This study, therefore, investigates the patterns of pragmatic transference in spoken Vietnamese used by the Vietnamese second generation speakers in Australia who are English-Vietnamese bilingual.The basic provisional argument of this thesis is that although Bettoni (1981)mentioned the category of pragmatic transference in her framework, little was discussed and found in her English-Italian corpus. Others studies like Beebe et al.(1990), Ikoma & Shimura (1994)investigated the patterns of pragmatic transference, but their subjects were all ESL learners. These patterns of pragmatic transference include patterns of indirectness vs. directness, and wrong usage of address forms. The study will document the changes and explore the causes of these changes. The findings will help to fill the gap in the study of language change in the linguistic field as a whole, particularly the Vietnamese language of the English-Vietnamese bilinguals.

Cendrine Jarraud-Leblanc, UoA/UNC, New Caledonia/New Zealand Poster

The Evolution of Written Bislama

The republic of Vanuatu, situated in the South Pacific region, is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. Indeed, it has about a hundred vernacular languages still spoken, as well as a creole, Bislama, the only national language, also one of the official languages along with French and English. My study investigates the evolution of written Bislama, as well as its place in Vanuatu's official educational system.

Ajmal Khan, University of Auckland, NZ Poster

A study of the language attitudes and language use of English-medium school students in North-West Pakistan

The overall aim of this study is to offer a grounded and holistic view of language attitudes and language use patterns of English, Urdu and Pashtu among students of English-medium schools in north-west Pakistan. According to Fishman's (1991) RLS (reversing language shift) model educational institutions are one of the key domains that can trigger either a shift from or maintenance of the native language. Similarly, Baker (2006) argues that attitude towards a language may be important in revitalization and revival as well as decay and death of that language. Two English-medium schools are the cases and contexts for this study which employs a mixed-methods design through a compressed time mode ethnography (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004). Students completed a questionnaire, participated in focus-groups interviews as well as individual interviews. Teachers of English were interviewed and their classes observed. Perceptions of parents of the students about the three languages and about language policy of schools were also sought through semi-structured interviews. The evidence will establish whether the three languages operate in a stable multilingual environment or an environment of subtractive bilingualism where the preference and use of dominant language(s) may cause a shift from and ultimate loss of the weaker language. I will begin my presentation with an overview of my PhD project, briefly covering its theoretical background, research design, research context and participants. The focus will shift to a discussion of findings from just one data source; i.e. the parents interviews

Rachel Nai Fern Lee, University of Auckland, NZ Poster

Crawling for Water in the Desert: Engaging Students with Writing in Singapore

The poster features a study on students' attitude towards school-based writing in two Singapore secondary schools. The study hinges on the sociocultural perspectives to second language writing (Englert, Mariage, & Dunsmore, 2006) and argues that investigations of the individual learner must situate him or her within the larger sociocultural context in order to explain their success, or lack of, in writing achievement. To that end, the tenets of the sociocultural perspectives to writing provides a basis for looking into how positions and legitimacy can be provided for low achievers to be better engaged with writing at school. Using a mixed methodology, the quantitative and qualitative data reveals that the conceptualization of writing by the teachers resulted in a sense of disconnectedness for the students from their experience outside of school, which seemed to have deprived them of the opportunity to find a 'personal voice' in school-based writing. Often, there was a gap between teachers' expectations of writing according to exam-specified requirements and the students' actual performance, so much so that teaching them writing was likened to crawling for water in the desert. The findings therefore point to a need to re-examine the limited range of pedagogy used in teaching writing which has been effective for those who already speak English well but not for those who don't.

Stephanie Charleen Natolo, Griffith University, Australia Poster

Language maintenance among Spanish-speaking immigrants in Australia

Language is undoubtedly the most salient determinant of ethnic identity. Individuals may encounter difficultly when claiming identification within a specific ethnolinguistic group if the linguistic factor is absent. Lamentably, language is one of the first elements of immigrant culture that vanishes over generations. The significance of language maintenance results in maintaining solidarity and integration in the ethnic group, which is vital for the formation of ethnic communities. This research addresses a number of aspects regarding language maintenance among Spanish-speaking immigrants in Australia. This study focuses on the importance of maintaining the Spanish language, identity negotiation as a consequence of language change, and the strategies employed for the preservation of the Spanish language to younger generations.

Laura Thompson, University of Auckland, NZ Poster

Who hears what? Perception of prosodic prominence in Māori and English

This study is part of a PhD project aimed at investigating Māori prosody, looking at where prominences are perceived, what acoustic cues are causing this perception, and evaluation of possible change over time. A web-based survey was constructed, in which participants listened to six English and six Māori sentences read by four different L1 Māori speakers, then marked the syllables in each sentence that 'stood out' to them. There were 27 participants in the survey. In previous analysis (Thompson, et al. 2010a,b), results showed that overall, participants were consistent in identifying prominent syllables, and these correlate with existing stress rules. In all sentences, at least one syllable had between 60 - 100% agreement. The present analysis focuses on factors affecting listener agreement about location of prominences. Participant responses were examined according to four criteria (gender, age group, ethnic group identification and self-rating of Māori proficiency) to see whether any of these factors affected agreement. The result was that gender, age group and identification with an ethnic group do not appear to have any effect. The results for English and Māori sentences were very similar. Where there are small differences between groups, these are probably caused by proficiency level, since self-rating of Māori proficiency does appear to have some effect on agreement. 'High' proficiency Māori speakers have much greater agreement on prominence in Māori sentences. These results reinforce the importance of native speaker involvement in perception tasks. Further investigation with participants of varying degrees of Māori proficiency should bear this out.