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The impact of English as a global language: policy and planning in Greater China
David Nunan
The University of Hong Kong

Abstract
This study investigates the impact on educational policies and practices in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and of the emergence of English as a global language. Data were collected through multiple sources, including questionnaire, interview and documentary analysis. The study generates a number of observations and conclusions, and sets out a number of principles for the more effective teaching of English in this part of the world.

The representative nature of a sample: The Hong Kong Pilot Benchmark Assessment (English) exercise
David Coniam and Peter Falvey
The Chinese University of Hong Kong and The University of Hong Kong

Abstract
The context for this paper is the English language benchmarking initiative in Hong Kong – a Government move to establish, initially, minimum standards of language ability for teachers in secondary schools. This paper examines the sample of test takers that participated in the piloting of the assessment instruments for the benchmark test – Pilot Benchmark Assessment (English), or PBAE. After some initial background to the rationale and purpose of the Hong Kong benchmarking initiative, the paper outlines the large-scale pilot study (the PBAE) which was conducted to field–test the prototype benchmark assessment instruments and to gauge English language teachers’ reactions to the different test types. The discussion in the paper links results from the questionnaire which test takers filled in upon completion of the battery of tests with test takers’ test scores. A central issue in the paper involves a comparison of willing volunteers with unwilling nonvolunteers. These two groups of test takers are compared in terms of their reactions to the benchmark test types and the differences between their test scores. While willing volunteers view the test types more favourably than do the unwilling nonvolunteers, both groups score comparably on the different test types, suggesting that the PBAE constitutes a valid representation of the larger cohort of secondary English language teachers in Hong Kong.
The use of language corpora in the teaching of English

Tony T.N. Hung
Hong Kong Baptist University

Abstract
While corpus linguistics has firmly established itself as an essential tool for linguistic research, it has yet to win converts from the ranks of language teachers as an invaluable resource in language teaching. Specially written for teachers of English with little background or interest in linguistics, the paper is an introduction to the ways in which English corpora (such as the Bank of English) can be used in checking and updating the teachers’ own understanding of the state of the language as it is actually used today, in designing language-learning tasks, and in raising the learners’ consciousness to the differences between their interlanguage grammars and standard English grammar.

The language of sexual harassment

Laurence Goldstein
The University of Hong Kong

Abstract
The revisionary approach to defining ‘sexual harassment’, adopted, inter alia, by certain feminist philosophers of law, sets aside, for philosophical or political reasons, traditional definitions of the phrase and seeks to defend and secure a revised definition. For the revisionist, the aim is to identify a range of behaviour – typically wider than is connoted by the phrase as it is currently used in laws and regulations – that is sexual and offensive, and to effect social change by extending beyond present bounds what is to count as punishable under the description ‘sexual harassment’. One interesting species of sexual harassment is verbal abuse. Ever since J.L. Austin’s How to do Things with Words, we have become vividly aware that language may be used to perform acts, illocutionary and perlocutionary, and presumably sexual harassment is one such act – something that can be done by using certain language with certain intentions under certain conditions. Can we make clear what language, what intentions and what conditions are such as to render a certain speech act or speech episode sexually harassing? If so, then this would be a contribution to the construction of practical guidelines on sexual harassment that could be implemented in academic and other institutions.
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Abstracts

Destabilized identities and cosmopolitanism across language and cultural borders: two case studies
David Block
Institute of Education, University of London

Abstract
This paper is situated in the relatively new tradition of using L2 learning stories to explore the relationship between language and identity. Specifically, it focuses on the cases of two adults from Japan and Taiwan who have developed cosmopolitan language and cultural identities during their lifetimes. In both cases, cosmopolitan identities arose from critical experiences, that is, periods of time during which prolonged contact with an L2 and a new and different cultural setting caused the irreversible destabilization of the two individuals’ senses of self. The detailed examination of these two cases makes possible a better understanding of some of the interrelationships between linguistic, cultural and geographical border crossings and identity.

Helping learners come of age: learner autonomy in a Caribbean context
Beverly-Anne Carter
University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

Abstract
This paper explores the conceptions of foreign language learning of a group of 28 university students. The data were drawn from journals kept by the learners during their first year in the undergraduate French programme at the local university. The paper looks at the metaphors used by the learners in their autobiographical accounts of their language learning and suggests that the omnipresent metaphors of language learning as seduction, and the teacher as lover or spouse reflect a certain conception of teacher and learner roles. This paper argues that these learners will need to broaden their frame of reference about appropriate teaching and learning roles. Failure to do so could limit their growth as advanced language learners. Moreover, they would be
severely hampered in the face of a pedagogical innovation which seeks to promote learner autonomy and lifelong learning. The paper also addresses the issue of teachers who wish to help students come of age as language learners. It suggests that they too must broaden their understanding of their role in facilitating learning. They will need to accept the paradox that helping learners to assume more responsibility for their learning initially implies more, not less responsibility, on their part.

“A tough hill to climb alone” – Welsh learners speak

Lynda Pritchard Newcombe
Cardiff University

Abstract
There has been a phenomenal increase in the number of adults learning Welsh over the last 40 years, students originating from within Wales and outside, but only a limited number of students who enrol on courses progress to fluency and become integrated in a Welsh speaking community. It has been argued that this could be due to the use of out-dated methodologies in the classroom and that the implementation of more innovative approaches could decrease the drop out rate. This paper argues from experiential data that at least as many of the barriers learners face arise outside the classroom. This phenomenon is not unique to Wales and lesser-used languages as autobiographical accounts from elsewhere testify. The paper demonstrates the urgent need for research into the little penetrated area of Welsh learners’ experiences so that strategies can be developed to assist learners to practise and use the target language. The main barriers discussed are learners’ anxiety and lack of confidence, the failure of native speakers to provide practice and their tendency to switch to English.

Language policy and learning experience in China: Six case histories

Agnes Lam
University of Hong Kong

Abstract
Since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, three main language policies have been implemented. Firstly, Chinese was standardized with the simplification of the Chinese script and the propagation of Putonghua. Secondly, the codification of minority languages in China was carried out. Thirdly, in terms of foreign language enhancement, Russian was initially promoted but soon after 1957, English was identified as the most important foreign language in China. The only remission to this emphasis was during part of the Cultural Revolution. As a result of these policies, learners educated at different times have had different experiences. In this paper, the learning experiences of six learners differing in language background and age are presented. By and large, the individual learning histories reflect the policy changes in terms of general directions.

Commander and serviceman – the story of Kim

Julia Chen
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Abstract
This is the story of Kim, a year one higher diploma student in a university in Hong Kong who failed his matriculation English examination last year. He wanted to enter a degree programme, so he had to retake that examination, but his failure last year and dislike for the language made resiting the ‘extremely difficult’ examination stressful for him. After weeks of sleeplessness and indulgence in gambling, he sought help from the university’s one-to-one Writing Assistance Programme (WAP). With the help of WAP teachers, he began to develop learning strategies that he had never thought of before. As the examination approached, sleeplessness returned and nightmares haunted him. This time, he was determined to face it as a different man. The story is told by the WAP co-ordinator, who held conferences with Kim numerous times. Taking data from Kim’s notes of his language learning experiences, written records of each writing conference, the co-ordinator’s written recollections and those of another WAP teacher, as well as informal correspondence between Kim and his teachers, this story reveals the struggles of a typical Hong Kong student and how he adopted new learning strategies with which he finally learned how to learn English.
The interaction of motivation, perception, and environment: One EFL learner’s experience

Hye-Yeon Lim  
*University of Texas at Austin*

**Abstract**
This paper discusses a Korean learner’s struggle to achieve English language proficiency over a 20-year period using an autobiographical approach. It concentrates on the issues of individual motivation and social learning environments and examines the interactions between this learner’s motivation and affect, self-confidence, and environment. The effect of this interaction on shaping English learning is also examined. The discussion of individual motivation and its relationship to social perceptions and values is expanded using both a socio-educational model in second language acquisition and attribution theory in educational/social psychology. The learning experiences in formal, self-instructional, and natural learning environments are also examined. Mastery of a foreign/second language seems to be an outcome of the interaction between individual motivation and educational environment embedded in a socio-cultural context. The paper suggests some practical implications for students and teachers; discusses how to foster perceptions that enhance foreign language learning while incorporating learners’ situated perceptions in their culture; and notes several possible ways to increase motivation.

Learning English in different linguistic and socio-cultural contexts

He An E  
*Hong Kong Institute of Education*

**Abstract**
This is an autobiographical account of the writer’s long-term learning experiences of English in different linguistic and socio-cultural contexts. The personal account is divided into six parts: a teenage EFL learner before and during the Cultural Revolution when English was taken as a weapon for political struggle in China; a self-learner who worked on an assembly-line in a tractor factory, and picked up English only to kill time in a materially and culturally scarce environment; an adult-learner who finally got the chance to study English at a Chinese university under China’s open-door policy; a university lecturer learning how to use English in teaching while teaching; a post-graduate student trying to survive in Australia, where English is the first language for living and studying; a teacher educator in Hong Kong who continues learning to meet the challenges of academic work. Learning about the language preoccupies the first three stages, and learning to use the language dominates the last three stages. This personal account indicates a close relationship between communication needs and learning strategies adopted in different socio-cultural contexts.

Auto-communal language learning of Mandarin Chinese and Samoan: A chronicle and comparison

T. Pascal Brown  
*UNITEC Institute of Technology, Auckland*

**Abstract**
This paper is an autobiographic analysis comparing the learning of Mandarin Chinese over fifteen years and Samoan over a period of twenty using an auto-communal model of learning. I define auto-communal as self-instruction within a local community where creating encounters and making up conversations for the sake of language practice became the central learning method. I trace several language learning phases with the two languages and compare how well they worked with each language. The phases can be summarised as a listening phase, a practice phase where my vocabulary and confidence increased rapidly, and a corrective phase where I worked on my accuracy. As I had become a very competent speaker of Samoan, I used exactly the same techniques in my learning of Mandarin Chinese, but was not as successful a language learner. The paper outlines my language learning style and critiques the ‘auto-communal’ methods used, highlighting the ways that have been the most successful. I compare my two language learning experiences and discuss reasons that my fluency in Mandarin Chinese is still behind my Samoan. I give suggestions as to how I would learn the languages if I had my time again and reflect on my experience in relation to literature on self-direction and autonomy.

Swiss cheese syndrome: Knowing myself as a learner and teacher

Keiko Sakui  
*University of Auckland*

**Abstract**
This paper explores the relationship between the author’s own English learning and teaching experiences. Self-study has been an emerging method of inquiry in the field of teacher education in order to better understand ourselves as teachers. This study employs this method in the form of narratives to illuminate how our learning experiences influence beliefs and practices in our language teaching. The author is a native speaker of Japanese and an advanced user of English, who is currently teaching English at a Japanese university as well as enrolled in a doctoral programme in New Zealand. The data are drawn from various sources to address the complexity of the learning-teaching relationship. The main data derive from journal entries the
author kept for a period of six months during the academic year of 1999. The other data drawn from her learning history include epiphanies in her learning and life experiences. These qualitative data were examined to identify recurring and salient themes. The results reveal conflicts between her own competencies and limitations as a language user and non-native speaker teacher, using the metaphor of Swiss cheese to characterize her experience. Her key principles of language pedagogy, originating from the reflection on her learning and teaching are explored. The article also addresses the epistemological and political aspects of what it is to know about ourselves.

Teachers’ conversation with partial autobiographies

Naoko Aoki
Osaka University
with Hokuto Sunami, Xiaobo Li and Manami Kinoshita

Abstract
Teachers’ life experience is known to influence their teaching and some teacher educators have claimed that teacher education should focus on student teachers’ autobiography (Knowles & Cole with Presswood, 1994). Sharing autobiographical information in a teacher education classroom is not free of problems, however. Everyone has some stories which they are not ready to tell or which they can only tell to certain people. The degree of self-disclosure one can venture without feeling uncomfortable also differs from person to person. Inviting teachers to tell or write their full autobiography is ethically questionable unless they do it on voluntary basis. In this paper I shall report on a teachers’ conversation group (Clark, 2001a) which I organized as a course in a Japanese as a second language teacher education programme. In this course students wrote a story of their teaching or learning experience and we discussed themes that were found in each story. After explaining the rationale for choosing this format, I shall quote part of the story which one student wrote and two stories told by other students in the conversation on a theme in the written story. Finally I shall situate these two stories in the history of those students’ professional development and show that voluntary telling of partial autobiographies can be a safe and powerful alternative to writing full autobiography.