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TESL Reporter

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Note from the Editor

Dear Readers,

I would like to write a brief preface to the first article in this issue. The *TESL Reporter* has been in print for 45 years now, and it is one of the oldest and longest publishing journals in the field of TESOL. The following article is a tribute to one of the founding editors of the *TESL Reporter*, Alice Pack. The tribute was given as a lecture on campus at Brigham Young University – Hawaii by a former editor of the *TESL Reporter*, Dr. Lynn Henrichsen.

As you will see from reading the article, Alice Pack was a special lady who exemplified hard work and dedication. She entered the ESL field late in her life but managed to leave an indelible impact on it. Her story is inspiring. My hope is that we will become better teachers and ESL professionals through learning more about this special lady.

Mark Wolfersberger
TESL Reporter Editor

Alice C. Pack: An Exemplary Life Worth Memorializing

From the 2011 Alice Pack Lecture given at Brigham Young University–Hawaii

Lynn Henrichsen
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

I am grateful for the honor of delivering the inaugural Alice C. Pack Lecture and the opportunity to introduce you to Alice Chandler Pack on the 100th anniversary of her birth. I came to know Alice well as we worked together extensively over a period of 11 years. In that period, she influenced my life and career greatly. A few of you older folks—faculty members here today—were acquainted with Alice, either as her students or her colleagues. Like you, I had the privilege of associating with this great woman on a personal and professional basis. Unlike you, however, I did not meet Alice here in Laie. My first meetings with her took place on the island of Tutuila in American Samoa, where, in 1976, I was working for the Department of Education. That same year, Alice came to Pago Pago as part of a Brigham Young University–Hawaii bachelor's degree program in Samoa for Samoan schoolteachers and principals who did not yet have college degrees. Of course, Alice's reputation preceded her to Samoa, so when she arrived, I asked her to speak at a meeting of our local American Samoa TESOL organization. She agreed, and that was the beginning of a long and productive professional relationship. In many ways she became a professional mentor and "mother" to me. In Samoa, where my family and I lived far from our family on the mainland, she even served as a surrogate grandmother to my baby daughter Cristina, who eventually graduated from BYU–Hawaii and never forgot the little stuffed dog that Alice knit and gave to her on one of her trips to Samoa.

Most people who knew Alice were impressed by one or more of the following characteristics: energetic, hard working, practical, dedicated, enthusiastic, and productive. Through my contacts with Alice in Samoa and later in Hawaii, I learned that her reputation was based on reality. In fact, there was nothing artificial or pretentious about Alice.

In my lecture today, I hope to touch on each of those characteristics. First, however, I need to provide a little biographical background information on Alice and her parents. Alice's father, Ernest William Chandler, was not a university-educated academic. He grew up in rural southern Colorado in the United States, working in the mines and on the railroad. Like many in those days, his large family was extremely poor, yet they were also generous, and Ernest himself was filled with ambition.

Alice's mother, Helene Elise Margarete Luck, was an immigrant to the United States. Born and raised a Lutheran in Germany, Helene first learned of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the sponsor of Brigham Young University–Hawaii) when her mother heard the missionaries singing at a street meeting. Along with her mother, grandmother, sisters, and a brother, Helene quickly converted to the church and soon immigrated to America.

These two, very different individuals—a poor boy from Colorado trying to make it big and an immigrant girl from Germany still learning English—met, fell in love, and married in 1909 in the LDS temple in Salt Lake City, Utah. And then, on April 5, 1911, in Salt Lake City, Utah, Alice Chandler became the second of three daughters born to this union.

The young Chandler family lived a happy, prosperous life. Ernest worked at several occupations, built a nice home in Salt Lake City, and even had a fine horse and surrey. Then, when everything seemed to be going well for them, Ernest awoke one night, smelled smoke, and realized that the house was on fire. He awoke his family and got them outside, but the house and all their material possessions burned to the ground. They were left with nothing but the nightclothes they were wearing. Having no insurance, Ernest was forced to start over from scratch.

He had heard lots of wonderful things about Southern California, and he had just enough money to pay the train fare for his family to get there. So, that's where they went to start over. In those days, California was America's "land of promise," but life there was not easy for new arrivals. The family lived in a run-down hotel for the first week, and if Alice's father had possessed the money for the return fare, they might have returned to Utah. Instead, he went to work driving a Model T Ford "Jitney bus" through the streets of Los Angeles, picking up fares along the way. He later took a job as a milk wagon driver, then started selling insurance, and eventually became a successful realtor. The family lived in a succession of houses in various cities in California, such as Highland Park, Pasadena, Long Beach, and Venice.

Thus, though she had roots in Utah, Colorado, and Germany, Alice grew up in Southern California and was a "California girl" in many ways. She spent as much free time outdoors as possible exploring nature. During summer the family spent vacation months in a rented cottage on the beaches at Venice, Santa Monica, or Long Beach, and Alice learned to swim in the ocean.

Alice was also an excellent student in school and an avid reader. She earned top grades in high school, participated in the photography club, performed in school dramatic productions, and competed on the girls basketball team and the debate team (Figure 1). Her biggest challenge was choosing which courses to take every semester because she wanted to take everything that was offered. She hoped to go to college. During her senior year in high school (1927–28), however, the Great Depression was beginning. Money began to be hard to get, and things got tight financially. She soon realized that higher education would be "impossible financially." Instead of going to college, Alice found some temporary secretarial jobs. She did manage to take a few night classes at the University of Southern California, but her long-anticipated dream of earning a university degree would have to wait a while.

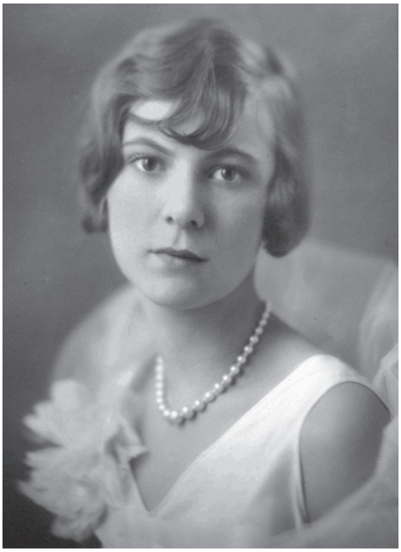


Figure 1. Alice Chandler in high school

During high school, Alice met a young man in her French class, Paul Pack, who had recently moved to California from Kamas, Utah. Although she dated other boys, Alice said that the longer she knew Paul, the more she liked him. This increasing interest developed into lasting love, and after a two-year engagement, in 1930, at age 19, Alice married Paul.

In those days, there was no temple of the LDS church in Los Angeles, so Alice, Paul, and her mother drove to Salt Lake

City to be married in the temple there. It was a grueling two-day, two-night trip. They spent a short September honeymoon camping in the Uinta Mountains; money was tight, and Paul wanted to show Alice his old "stomping grounds." It was also cold in the mountains, so Alice was happy to return to Southern California, where they established their home (Figure 2) and where Paul developed a very successful nursery and landscaping business in Sherman Oaks. While Paul devoted his energies to plants, Alice dedicated herself to raising their family. They had seven children together: Bert, Virginia, David, Paul, Patricia, Barbara, and Dorothy.

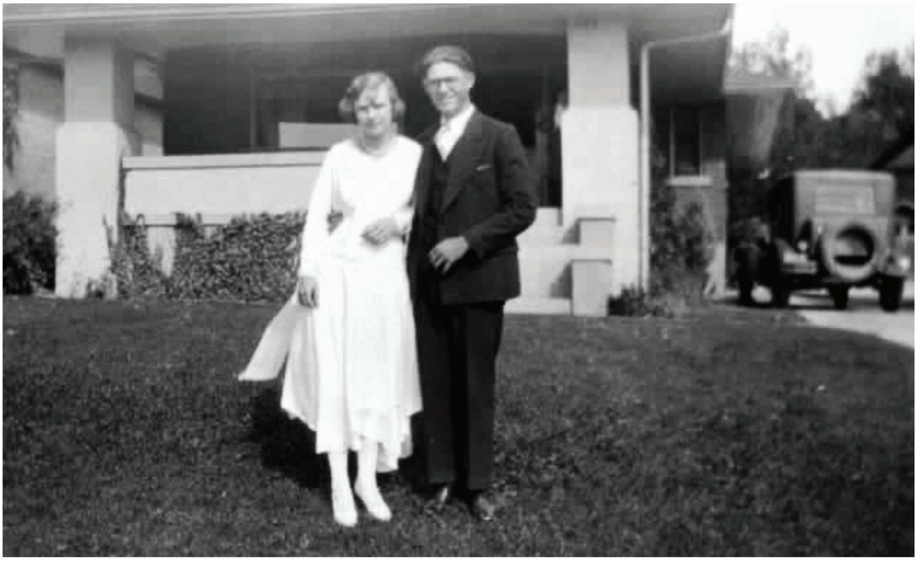


Figure 2. Home in Southern California.

After a wonderful life in California, with their children grown or growing up, Paul and Alice decided to retire in 1955. They settled down in the town of Meridian, Idaho, looking forward to a peaceful retirement and life with their children and grandchildren in a rural environment. Always energetic, Alice kept busy teaching youth seminary classes for the church. Life was good.

Five years after Paul and Alice moved to Idaho, however, their idyllic life and retirement plans were interrupted by a letter from the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, calling Paul to serve as a labor missionary beginning in January of 1961. He was to be in charge of landscaping the new Polynesian Cultural Center, which is adjacent to BYU–Hawaii, in a town called Laie. At that point, I don't think Paul or Alice realized what they were in for, or that they would spend not just two but the next 20 years of their lives in Laie.

As you can see from this picture of campus in those days (Figure 3), the newly constructed Church College of Hawaii campus (the predecessor to Brigham Young University–Hawaii) was much smaller then than it is now. The campus was fairly simple. The plans for the new Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC), in contrast, were ambitious. At that time, however, only some of the PCC villages had been constructed. The ground around the new buildings looked more like a war zone than an inviting tropical paradise. Turning them into attractive, verdant Polynesian paradises became Paul's mission for many years to come. He also helped landscape the new Church College of Hawaii dormitories.

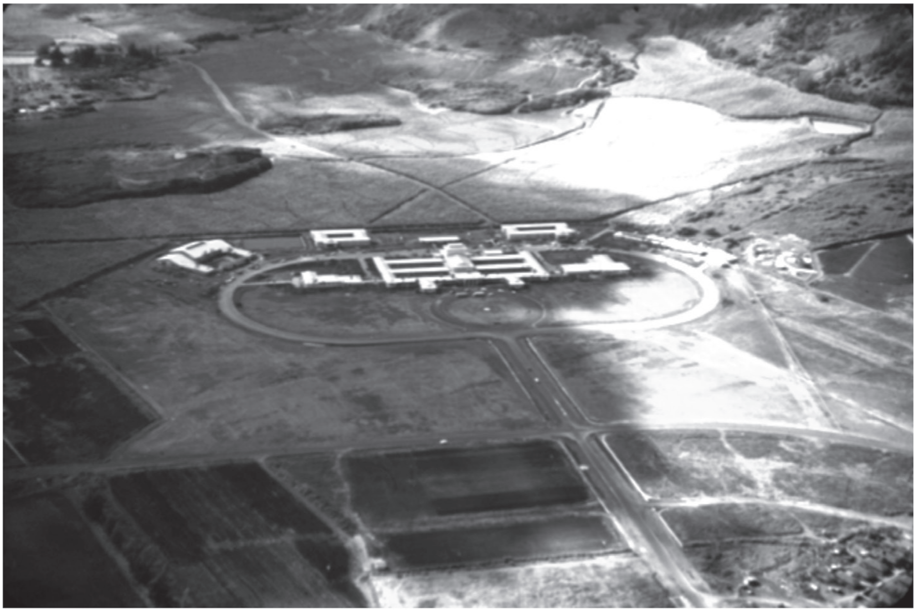


Figure 3. Church College of Hawaii campus in 1960.

Alice was called to serve as well. Using her writing skills, she authored and edited a two-volume set of books on the labor missionary work in Hawaii. Her main work, however, was as a health missionary, working with the Tongan families who were living near Laie. These Polynesian families, working as missionaries, had just finished building the Church College of Hawaii campus and now were starting to work on this new project, the Polynesian Cultural Center.

While caring for and interacting with the Tongan families, and as a result of hearing so many of the Polynesian missionaries and spouses pray and bear their testimonies at church in their native languages, Alice decided to take Tongan language classes at the Church College of Hawaii. Tongan was the only Polynesian language taught at the Church College of Hawaii at that time.

Those classes whetted her appetite, and when her mission was officially over, she decided it was time to obtain that college degree that she had dreamed of so long ago. Her husband obtained work with the Hawaii Temple and with Zion's Securities, and she officially enrolled at the Church College of Hawaii in 1962 as a freshman, at the young age of 53. Some of the students on campus couldn't believe someone so old would think of going to college. She immersed herself in her studies, however, and soon was taking 20 to 24 credit hours of coursework per semester! She graduated two and a half years later, summa cum laude, as valedictorian of her graduating class.

Figure 4. Alice's University of Hawaii graduation photo.

With that success behind her, she became the manager of the Church College of Hawaii bookstore. While working there, she noticed the ESL texts ordered for the English Language Institute (ELI) classes, and this got her interested in the field of teaching English as a second language. She approached Wayne Allison, then head of the English Department on campus, and asked if she could teach in the ELI program if she went and got her MA in TESOL at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He said, "I'll not only hire you, but you can teach now, while you take your coursework." So, Alice enrolled in the MA TESOL program at the University of Hawaii, leaving early in the morning each day to take classes and then rushing back to Laie, so she could teach her ELI courses at the Church College of Hawaii in the afternoons.

The evenings were spent correcting homework and exams. I can't imagine when she ever slept during that year and a half! She later wrote, "I attended four consecutive daily classes at the University of Hawaii from 8:00 a.m. through noon and then raced home to teach four consecutive ESL classes at the Church College of Hawaii. Any spare time was spent studying or preparing lessons. It was a grueling year and a half and I felt fortunate to survive it" (Figure 4).

But her appetite for higher education was still not satisfied. She later went back to school again, and in 1975 Alice received a doctoral degree from Walden University in Florida.

As a Church College of Hawaii faculty member, Alice taught courses not only in the ELI program but also for the newly created BA TESOL program. It was not so sophisticated back then, but the BA TESOL program made news, thanks in large part to an article that Alice's colleague, Bill Conway, wrote about the program that was published in the *TESOL Quarterly*. All of a sudden, the worldwide community of TESOL professionals became aware of the Church College of Hawaii's new BA TESOL program.

At the same time that the BA TESOL program was born, so too was the *TESL Reporter*. Alice and Bill Conway started the journal in 1967 (in their spare time, of course!). Back then there were only a few journals in our field: *Language Learning*, *English Language Teaching Journal,* the *English Language Teaching Forum* (by the U.S. government), and the *TESOL Quarterly* (which also began in 1967). Alice was the assistant editor of the *TESL Reporter* for one year and then took over as the editor in 1968 when Bill left. She edited the journal for 12 years, until 1980, when she retired (and I became editor).

I have my own story about this journal published here at BYU–Hawaii. While I was editor, I once went to Taiwan as a consultant to an English language program there and visited National Taiwan Normal University. While there, I was taken to the university library. They proudly showed me a display of a few journals in our field: *TESOL Quarterly, Modern Language Journal, RELC Journal*. There, right in the middle of them all, they had the *TESL Reporter* on display. I took it off the shelf, opened it up, and showed them my name inside as editor. They were impressed. I also happened to have just published an article in the very issue of the *RELC Journal* they had on display, which I showed them also. They were doubly impressed then. They thought they had a real academic celebrity in their midst. It was my little moment of fame—thanks to the *TESL Reporter*. I should add that what the *TESL Reporter* did for my academic reputation in this instance, it also did for the Church College of Hawaii and Brigham Young University–Hawaii's reputation around the world for many years. Academics in many nations became aware of this campus through the *TESL Reporter*, which eventually was sent to thousands of subscribers in over 50 countries.

From its very first issue, the *TESL Reporter* focused on practical teaching methods, effective lessons, and so on. But in addition to that, it also publicized the campus and the campus programs. So, when the new BA TESOL degree was announced in 1967, it was publicized in the *TESL Reporter*. This undergraduate program was the first of its type (in the United States at least) and recognized what some people still don't realize today—that teaching English to foreign students requires special training. Later, the BA TESOL program was revised, and the new teacher-education curriculum was also published in the *TESL Reporter*. When distinguished academics visited the BYU–Hawaii campus, the *TESL Reporter* also published articles about them. For instance, when Arthur Henry King, a world-famous leader in the field of English language teaching, a former leader of the British Council, and then a professor at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah (a sister campus to Brigham Young University–Hawaii), came to campus, a photograph of him in his bowler hat graced the front cover of the *TESL Reporter*. In all these ways, the *TESL Reporter* made waves in the profession and also helped build Laie's reputation as a mecca in the world of TESOL. Reading these articles, people naturally thought, "Laie is the place to go—a place to connect and learn about TESOL."

News about campus programs was one thing, but coming up with scholarly articles to print was another story. You don't just announce a new journal and suddenly have a copy to print. In the early stages, Alice herself had to write a lot of the articles that appeared in the *TESL Reporter*. Some of these articles were based on papers she wrote for her classes at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Besides producing and editing the content of the journal, Alice also produced the camera-ready copy to be delivered to the printers. Making this task even more challenging was the fact that, in those days, there were no personal computers and no computer-based desktop publishing options. It was a very different process, starting with a Fuller Typositor, into which you had to type every line of text twice and then push a button, and the machine would justify the text and (after emitting a chemical smell and making whooshing sounds) produce a little strip of photographic paper with a column of justified type set. The result looked much better than what a typewriter could produce, but it was a pain to work with. Then you had to cut and trim the strip of typeset text, wax it on the back with hot wax, and paste it up on a master sheet of grid paper while working at a light table. Headers, footers, page numbers, and so on all had to be typeset separately and pasted in by hand. A special room on the CCH campus was the *TESL Reporter* room with the light table. In short, producing the *TESL Reporter* was a labor-intensive task requiring not just academic knowledge but specialized technical skills. Because of her previous experiences (e.g., editing and producing the labor missionary books), Alice had the right combination of skills and could do the job. If she hadn't, the *TESL Reporter* probably would have ceased publication. Once the final, camera-ready copy was complete, film negatives had to be shot and masked properly with orange paper and liquid Rubylith applied with a small paintbrush. Finally, it was time to go to press. Issues of the *TESL Reporter* were sometimes printed on campus at CCH and sometimes at a commercial press in Honolulu. All that is now history and the only thing that's left from those days is this pair of rusty scissors (Figure 5), which is one of my heirlooms from when I was here. I still have and still use them. These were the scissors that Alice and I used to cut out the paper when laying out the *TESL Reporter*. Now it's all done electronically. We "cut and paste" with a mouse. If you had told us back then that we would be cutting and pasting with a mouse in the future, we would have said, "What on earth are you talking about? We might have cockroaches in the *TESL Reporter* production room, but we certainly don't have mice!"

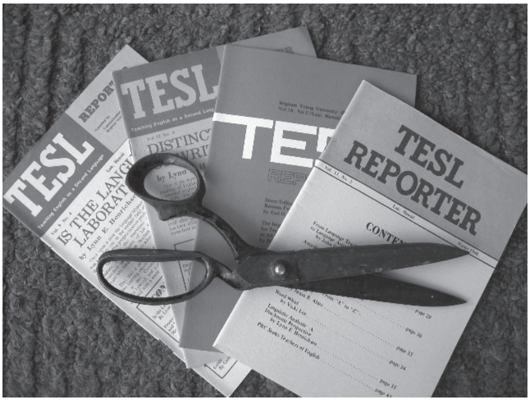


Figure 5. TESL Reporter production scissors.

Alice was not content with the success of the *TESL Reporter*; she published other things too. Her dissertation turned into a series of three books in the Dyad Learning

Program, which were published by Newbury House, a leader in the field in those days. The books were really popular and also very innovative because they had the tutor book and the student book all in one volume. If you ever examined them, you would think they were printed wrong because of their unique design. When using them, the tutoring student worked from the front while the learning student worked from the back, but upside down. This design allowed students to pair up and teach or test each other. It was very successful for helping students learn English verbs, pronouns, and especially prepositions.

At the University of Hawaii, Alice worked with Professor Gerald Dykstra, and she wrote one volume in his popular book series *Guided Composition: Guided® Free*. Alice also wrote a book titled *Learning to Type in English as a Second Language*. So, she published five books in a time when not too many BYU–Hawaii faculty published books at all. Then, she and I got together, and we published two more books before she retired, bringing the total to seven.

Alice's last two books started out as handouts for English 105, a basic writing class for local as well as international students preparing for freshman composition. Though we had a textbook, we still had to supplement it with a lot of exercises on extra handouts. Pretty soon the handouts turned into a packet. Eventually, the packet became quite thick and self-sufficient, so we decided to throw out the textbook. Then we thought, "Why don't we turn our packet into a book?" So we worked on it some more. Every evening at 5 o'clock when the official workday ended, we would start working on our book and continue for another hour or so. We created more exercises and added explanations and examples, and pretty soon we had it polished up. It ended up being two books—*Sentence Construction* and *Sentence Combination*—which were published by Newbury House Publishers and stayed in print for over 20 years. Over the years these two books sold 50,000 copies all around the world.

Now, I feel a bit selfish telling you this, but I will. I received my half of the royalties for the two books and put the money in the bank so I could make a down payment on a house someday. In contrast, altruistic Alice took her half of the royalties and gave them to BYU–Hawaii, and that was the beginning of the Alice Pack Scholarship Fund for BYU–Hawaii students majoring in TESOL. Alice was dedicated to scholarly work, but more important, she was most dedicated to helping her students. She loved the school, and she loved her students who came here. She worked her heart out for them.

Alice's influence for good was not limited to this campus, of course. In the international field of TESOL, people began to recognize her hard work. She presented at many national and international conferences and was called upon to conduct workshops for various institutions and organizations, like the Peace Corps.

Here on campus, she was also recognized. In 1981, she received the BYU–Hawaii Alumni Distinguished Service Award. In 1977, just before I came, she was nominated by her peers to deliver the David O. McKay Lecture, an honor given to distinguished faculty at BYU–Hawaii. Her lecture was titled, "Man and God's Gift of Language." As she began that lecture, she said, "As I stand here this morning and look over this group of students and colleagues, I'd like to preface this lecture with a few words of appreciation for the many opportunities and blessings, the great enrichment, this school has brought into my life. Because of this institution, the education I dreamed of in my youth has become a reality."

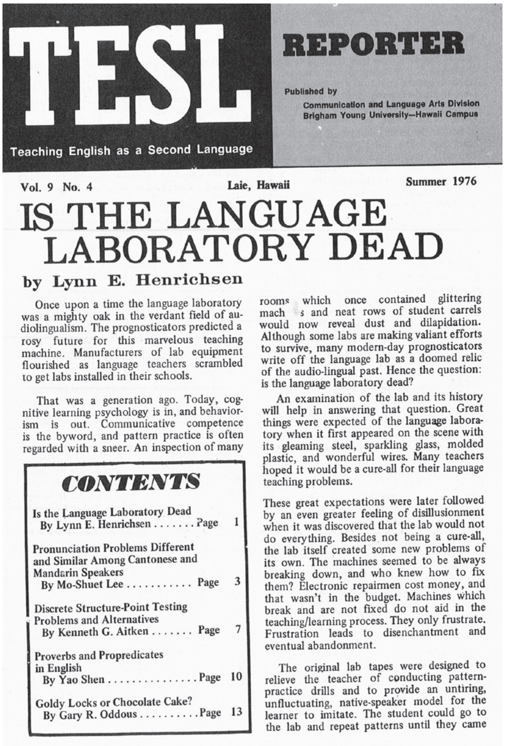
Those few words explain why she gave the money she made from her textbooks and other sources to BYU–Hawaii—so that the same reality could take place for many of the students here at BYU–Hawaii. She knew what it was like to not have money, to not be able to go to school. So, she worked her heart out, and she gave a lot of the money she earned to this school so that the dreams of the students here at this school could come true.

In 1981, at the age of 70, Alice retired, we thought, to Oceanside, California. But then she started working as a consultant to the United States International University. She was never one to rest for very long. As a consultant or sometimes just as a tourist, she traveled to Spain, the Grand Canyon, Israel, Florida, and India. In addition, she took her *Dyad* books and turned them into a computer software program, and again, she gave the royalties from that program to BYU–Hawaii. As her husband's health deteriorated, she devoted herself to caring for him, and she left TESOL matters in the hands of the new generation—like me.

I owe a lot to Alice Pack. She helped me get my career going. My first professional article was published in the *TESL Reporter*. I've since published 60 different articles, but my first one was in the *TESL Reporter*, thanks to her. She also helped me get my first long-term university job. I taught for a brief time at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, and then I worked for the Department of Education in American Samoa. I was there when I met Alice. She was in

Samoa with a program BYU–Hawaii had for Samoan schoolteachers, and we became acquainted. In fact, I helped her teach a course. One day she said, "We have an opening at BYU–Hawaii. It's a one-year contract, in the place of a Spanish/TESOL teacher who is going on leave." Well, I got the one-year appointment, but it lasted longer than expected. The other professor never came back, and I stayed 15 years. During that time, Alice and I gave many conference presentations together, and we wrote those books I just told you about. She eventually passed the *TESL Reporter* and the scissors on to me, and she inspired me to get my doctoral degree. I thought, "Well, if she can do it, maybe I can too," and I earned my doctorate at the University of Hawaii the way she earned her master's degree—commuting back and forth while teaching at BYU–Hawaii.

Let me say a little more about my first publication. This story might inspire some of you. I stopped in Laie on the way to Samoa, but I don't think I met Alice on that occasion. I did, however, meet some people here, and they said, "We've got these back issues of the *TESL Reporter* just taking up space in the closet; take a few." So I got copies of some back issues and kept them on my desk when I got to Samoa. Every morning when I got up, I would read an article. They were interesting, practical, and useful—just my kind of stuff. Some were better than others; some not so good. That made me think, "If these guys can get their ideas published, maybe I can also." So I rolled out a humble manuscript based on my experience in Oklahoma running a language



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IS THE LANGUAGE LABORATORY DEAD

by Lynn E. Henrichsen

Once upon a time the language laboratory was a mighty oak in the verdant field of audiolingualism. The prognosticators predicted a rosy future for this marvelous teaching machine. Manufacturers of lab equipment flourished as language teachers scrambled to get labs installed in their schools.

That was a generation ago. Today, cognitive learning psychology is in, and behaviorism is out. Communicative competence is the byword, and pattern practice is often regarded with a sneer. An inspection of many rooms which once contained glittering machines and neat rows of student carrels would now reveal dust and dilapidation. Although some labs are making valiant efforts to survive, many modern-day prognosticators write off the language lab as a doomed relic of the audio-lingual past. Hence the question: is the language laboratory dead?

An examination of the lab and its history will help in answering that question. Great things were expected of the language laboratory when it first appeared on the scene with its gleaming steel, sparkling glass, molded plastic, and wonderful wires. Many teachers hoped it would be a cure-all for their language teaching problems.

These great expectations were later followed by an even greater feeling of disillusionment when it was discovered that the lab would not do everything. Besides not being a cure-all, the lab itself created some new problems of its own. The machines seemed to be always breaking down, and who knew how to fix them? Electronic repairmen cost money, and that wasn't in the budget. Machines which break and are not fixed do not aid in the teaching/learning process. They only frustrate. Frustration leads to disenchantment and eventual abandonment.

The original lab tapes were designed to relieve the teacher of conducting pattern-practice drills and to provide an untiring, unfluctuating, native-speaker model for the learner to imitate. The student could go to the lab and repeat patterns until they came

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Figure 6. TESL Reporter front page with my article.

laboratory and sent it off. A couple of months later, there I was in print, front and center on the first page of the *TESL Reporter* (Figure 6), and I rejoiced, “I am a published author!” That was just the first of, like I said, many other publications, but that first one was noteworthy because it was the first, and Alice was the one who made it happen for me.

Alice also gave me a great example of hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm. I’m now getting older myself and thinking that someday soon (in 5 years, 10 years, 20 years) I’m going to retire. When I think about that, I get sad because it sounds like my professional life will end. Then I think of Alice. Her more famous life *began* when she retired. Maybe my life will just begin at retirement if I follow Alice’s example of dedication and enthusiasm.

Besides being dedicated and successful in her professional life, Alice lived a broader life that was healthy and well balanced. She engaged in artistic activities that benefited her emotionally, church activities that increased her spiritual power, and physical activities that preserved her strength. She also developed strong international perspectives and family relationships. I want to talk about each of these points in a little detail.

Believe it or not, while she was doing everything else, Alice took art classes—drawing, watercolor, and oil painting. At 4 o’clock some afternoons, she would just leave her work on her desk, run out the door, and sit in one of the inner courtyards and sketch or paint with the BYU–Hawaii students enrolled in art classes. A lot of Alice’s artwork had Hawaiian themes or portrayed seascapes. She loved the ocean, and a lot of her sketches were done in Samoa, where we met. Even after she *really* retired and moved to Oceanside, California, she continued to draw and paint. For several years, she sent us Christmas cards with a personal watercolor painting on the cover of each card.

Alice also knitted (almost constantly, just to keep her hands busy) and also did quilting. She made beautiful Hawaiian quilts. Do you realize how much work it is to make a Hawaiian quilt? She also made early American-style quilts for her family. She just never stopped—even in her “retirement.”

Alice also enjoyed and magnified her various church responsibilities. While I was working with her, she taught Sunday School classes for many years, and she also worked in the temple. If it wasn’t her day for art class, it might be her day for the temple. On those days, she’d get up at 4:00 p.m., leave everything on her desk, and run out the door to the temple, where she would work for six or seven more hours.

Alice was wise enough to take care of herself physically. She loved to go swimming. She and her husband lived on Laie Point, and she would go down the little stairway to Clissold's Beach and go swimming in the evening in the ocean. When she moved to Oceanside, California, she would go swimming in the ocean there. I'm told that she also took aerobics classes—at age 89!

As I mentioned earlier, besides interacting with all the international students on campus, Alice also traveled to many different countries around the world. She seemed to have been to nearly every island group in the South Pacific, and she also went to India, the Middle East, and Europe.

Finally, I should point out that she was always dedicated to her family. When her children were young, Alice sacrificed her school and career ambitions to raise them. They gave her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren in her older years. When she retired from BYU–Hawaii, she had 45 grandchildren and 72 great-grandchildren! Some of the lucky ones got to visit her here in Hawaii. Others visited her in California after she retired. Of course, during those years, Alice also dedicated herself to caring for her husband as his health declined. And on top of all this, she also took care of her mother, who lived to the ripe old age of 103!

After she retired, Alice did come back to BYU–Hawaii a couple of times. The first time she came back was in 1981, when she received the BYU–Hawaii Distinguished Alumni Service Award in honor of "her noteworthy career achievements and community and church service." Dr. Eric Shumway, then vice president for academics at BYU–Hawaii, called her "really an amazing woman." Truer words were never spoken.

Alice came back to BYU–Hawaii again in the year 2000 as a BYU–Hawaii distinguished alumna representing the English Language Teaching and Learning Department at the invitation of her former student—and a former *TESL Reporter* editor—department chair Mark James. That was her last trip to Hawaii.

In sum, Alice C. Pack was a super woman, right? Alas, she was also a mere mortal. She didn't live forever. She passed away at the young age of 92 on June 4, 2002. She's been gone now for over eight years, but you got to know her a little bit today.

At the end of the movie based on James Michener's novel *Hawaii*, Reverend Abner Hale's final words were, "In this place [Hawaii] I have known God, and Jerusha Bromley [his wife], and Ruth Malama Kanakoa (the Ali'i Nui); and beyond that a man has no need of friends." To paraphrase again, in my final words to you today, I would like to say, "In this place [BYU–Hawaii] I had the privilege of working with and learning a great deal from Alice Chandler Pack. She was a true and wonderful friend—to me and to this institution!" Thank you for letting me come back to Laie and introduce her to you!

About the Author

Lynn Henrichsen is a TESOL professor in the Linguistics and English Language Department at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He began his university-teaching career at BYU–Hawaii in 1977, where he worked closely with Alice C. Pack. In the years since then, he has taught, conducted research, and spoken at conferences in many countries; he has published numerous books and articles; and he has received awards of various kinds. When invited to deliver the first annual Alice Pack Lecture at BYU–H, however, he considered this opportunity to pay tribute to his former mentor and colleague one of his greatest professional honors.

Motivation in Chinese University EFL Learners in Varying Learning Contexts

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Introduction

Spearheaded by social psychologist Robert Gardner (Gardner, 1983, 1985, 2002; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991, 1992, 1993; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995), motivation research has gained wide popularity in both second language (SL) and foreign language (FL) contexts. SL/FL researchers and theorists have long realized that motivation is a great contributor to the learning of a SL/FL (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Liu, 2007; Noels, 2002; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995; Ushioda, 2006, 2007, 2008; Vandergrift, 2005). Learners high in integrative motivation tend to learn better than those low in integrative motivation. Meanwhile, motivation interacts with such variables as language aptitude, proficiency, second language learning situation, and language anxiety to have an impact on SL/FL learning. Mainly adopting a quantitative approach, the present research sought to investigate motivation and its effect on students' performance in English in three different university EFL contexts in mainland China.

Literature Review

Gardner and his colleagues claimed that motivation involves three components—"attitudes toward learning the second language, desire to learn the language, and effort expended in learning the language" (Gardner, Lalonde, & Pierson, 1983, p. 2). Thanks to their efforts, integrative motivation and instrumental motivation have become two fundamental concepts in motivation research (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Kouritzin, Piquemal, & Renaud, 2009). Integrative motivation reflects the learner's willingness or desire to be like representative members of the target language community and is often held to be a superior support for language learning (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Instrumental motivation involves more functional reasons for learning a language, such as getting a better job or a promotion, and pertains to the potential pragmatic gains of L2 proficiency (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). To measure learners' L2 learning motivation, Gardner (1985) developed the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which has resulted in numerous studies on SL/FL learning motivation, revealing that motivation enhances SL/FL acquisition and that learners ranking high on integrative motivation work harder and learn faster than those who are low on integrative motivation (Clèment, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Gao, Zhao, Cheng, & Zhou, 2003a, 2003b, 2004; Gardner, 1985, 2002; Gardner, Lalonde, & Pierson, 1983; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991, 1993; Hao, Liu, & Hao, 2004; Lai, 2000; Liu & Huang, 2011; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995; Wen, 2001; Yang, Liu, & Wu, 2010).

As empirical studies on SL/FL motivation blossom, it has been found that integrative and instrumental orientations are not opposite ends of a continuum (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994; Huang & Wen, 2005; Qin & Wen, 2002; Ushioda, 1996). Instead, they are positively related and both are affectively loaded goals that can sustain learning. They both may be enhanced by improved L2 proficiency and higher achievement in the target language (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994, 2001; Dörnyei & Clèment, 2002; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Ushioda, 1996, 2006, 2007, 2008; Wesely, 2009).

Research results imply that one cannot simply assume cross-cultural pervasiveness of the integrative and instrumental orientations. L2 learning goals can break up into different orientation clusters, the definitions of which vary depending upon the sociocultural setting in which the data are gathered. For example, success with the language itself can lead to enhanced motivation. Thus, new motivation clusters, which are all considered specific types of orientations for learning the target language, have been identified, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, orientations for travel, and intellectual ability (Clèment et al., 1994; Kouritzin et al., 2009; Noels, Clèment, & Pelletier, 2001; Noels, 2002; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Wen, 2001).

For example, Belmechri and Hummel (1998) explored the emergence of orientations and their relation to motivation in a predominantly monolingual context. Based on the questionnaires distributed to 93 high school students, they found that the students' orientations were travel, understanding school, friendship, understanding English in general, and career opportunities, and that career orientations and understanding English emerged as most important to ESL learning in the context. They also found that the participants didn't show an integrative orientation for learning ESL and that various orientations functioned as predictors of motivation. Gao et al.'s (2003a, 2003b, 2004) extensive research involved 2,278 participants from 30 Chinese universities who answered a battery of self-developed questionnaires and identified seven motivation types: intrinsic interest, immediate achievement, learning situation, going abroad, social responsibility, individual development, and information medium, which were grouped into three categories—instrumental, cultural, and situational. English majors were found to score significantly higher on cultural motivation and some instrumental motivations than non-English majors; they also scored higher on intrinsic interest than majors of natural sciences, higher on social responsibility than majors of natural and social sciences, and higher on individual development and information medium than social science majors. When evaluating EFL learners, more proficient EFL learners reported significantly more intrinsic interest, and less proficient EFL learners were significantly more driven by immediate achievement. Based on the findings, the researchers suggested that native-culture orientation be incorporated to the traditional motivation framework. Kouritzin et al.'s (2009) study of over 6,000 university students in Canada, Japan, and France revealed that learners in the first two countries exhibited primarily instrumental and integrative motivation respectively, while learners from Japan displayed a social capital motivation.

Students in SL and FL contexts may learn a target language for different reasons, even while sharing some similar learning orientations. Unlike SL learners, learners in FL contexts often do not have the sufficient experience with the target-language community in order to have developed attitudes for or against it. This suggests that affective predispositions toward the target language community are unlikely to explain a great proportion of the variance in FL attainment (Dörnyei, 1994, 2001). Hence, it is imperative to conduct motivation studies in different FL learning contexts in order to highlight motivation patterns and the role of motivation in FL learning.

The present research aimed to examine the English learning motivation patterns of Chinese undergraduate non-English majors in varying learning contexts. The following research questions are of particular interest:

1. What is the general pattern of motivation in Chinese university EFL learners in varying learning contexts?
2. What are the specific causes for the students' motivation to learn English?
3. How is the students' English learning motivation related to their performance in English?

Research Design

The present research utilized a mixed method to investigate English learning motivation in EFL learning contexts and its impact on students' performance in English at the tertiary level in mainland China.

Research Context

Targeting first-year undergraduate non-English majors, the present research was situated in three EFL teaching and learning contexts in Beijing: Tsinghua University (TU), Beijing Forestry University (BFU), and China University of Petroleum (CUP). The first two lie in the center of Beijing while the last is located in a suburb. Although all are top universities in China, the mode of English teaching and learning in these universities is quite different. TU is more competence-oriented while BFU and CUP are more exam-oriented. The exam orientation is due to the constraint that non-English majors at BFU and CUP must pass band 4 of the College English Test[1] in order to graduate with a BA or BS degree. However, non-English majors at TU are exempt from the College English Test; nevertheless, they have to pass a school-based English proficiency and exit test, the Tsinghua English Proficiency Test 1, to be granted a BA or BS degree. Another difference is that students of TU, the top university in mainland China and the most prestigious of the three, enjoy the best English learning environment. For example, they have more opportunities to access and use English with native and non-native speakers, more qualified English education instructors, and more native English–speaking teachers.

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[1] The College English Test is a nation-wide English proficiency test that is a must for undergraduate non-English majors to be granted a degree. For more information on the College English Test in China, see Sun and Henrichsen (2011).

A common factor is that all first-year non-English majors at these three universities have to take the same Beijing English placement test upon entering the university. The test, consisting of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and cloze, aimed to measure students' English proficiency and place them into different band groups. Nevertheless, only students at TU and CUP are actually divided into different band groups (usually bands 1–3, with band 1 representing the lowest English proficiency level and band 3 the highest level) according to their scores on the test when the present study was conducted. Most students are placed in the band 2 group (intermediate level).

Participants

The data for the study were collected in two phases. In phase 1, one intact class from each band group at each university was required to write two reflective journal entries. In phase 2, a large-scale survey was conducted at the three universities. Thus, the participants in these two phases were different.

Instruments

In this study, data were collected by way of reflective journal entries and a survey, as detailed below.

Reflective Journals

Data about personal and affective variables in language learning and data collected from reflective journals have been used in many research studies and constitute a useful source of information about the students' experiences with language learning (Bailey, 1983; Liu, 2009). Following this tradition, one intact class representing each band level from the three universities in the present study were asked to write two journal entries to reflect and comment on their English learning experiences. For each journal entry, writing prompts were provided, which covered three topics: 1) whether the student was motivated to learn English, 2) the student's specific reasons for learning English, and 3) the impact of motivation on the student's learning of English. In addition to the topics suggested, the learner could write about other aspects related to his or her language learning experiences. In case the students had difficulty understanding the instructions in English, the instructions were also given in Chinese.

Survey

The 26-item English Learning Motivation Scale (ELMS) was developed with reference to Vandergrift's (2005) and Noels et al.'s (2001) foreign language learning motivation survey. To suit the present research, items about interest in and attitude toward the target language were deleted, whereas items about instrumental and integrative motivation were maintained and, in some cases, modified. At the same time, items peculiar to Chinese EFL learning were added such as learning English for certificates and high marks in exams. The final modified version of the ELMS scale used in this research included 26 items and was intended to measure three dimensions of students' English learning motivation: 1) general English-learning motivation (ELM) with 2 items, 2) instrumental motivation (InsM) with 12 items, and 3) integrative motivation (IntM) also with 12 items. All the items were placed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with values of 1 to 5 assigned to each descriptor respectively. The survey achieved a reliability of .886 in the present study.

Course Grades

Students' final course grades were obtained at the end of the term as a global measure of performance in English.

Procedure

The study was conducted during the first term of an academic year, which lasted from 14 to 18 weeks for freshmen depending on which university they were in. After having obtained approval from the administration, the teachers, and their students at each university, the researcher randomly selected one intact class from each band group at TU and CUP, and one intact class from BFU with both teacher and student permission for collecting reflective journal entries. Considering the fact that the majority of the freshmen needed time to become accustomed to university life and the new teaching and learning modes at university, they were asked to write the reflective journal entries during the tenth and eleventh weeks of the semester. The course teachers described the requirements of journal writing and distributed to the students the topics for each entry in both Chinese and English a week beforehand. By the end of the twelfth week, all the journal entries had been collected. After that, all the journal entries were read and commented on by the researchers. Then, they were photocopied and returned to the students.

The survey was distributed to 29 intact classes, including the classes required to write reflective journal entries, at the three universities during a normal teaching class in the fifteenth week. The students were asked to complete the survey in five minutes. 1,431 questionnaires were collected, of which 1,203 were valid for statistical analysis. The others were discarded due to incompleteness or absence of the students on the day.

Phase One: Journal Respondents

Altogether, six intact classes at the three universities participated in journal writing: 3 TU classes, 1 BFU class, and 2 CUP classes. Among 95 TU journal participants, 34 were band 1 students, 33 were band 2, and 28 were band 3. Of the 83 CUP journal correspondents, 41 were band 2 learners, and 42 were band 3. It should be noted that since the BFU did not adopt any bench system in English teaching, only one class was randomly selected for journal writing. It is also worth noting that these students, in addition to writing reflective journals, answered the battery of questionnaires as well. However, since not all of them completed the survey or finished the two journal entries, the numbers of journal and survey participants and the actual numbers of students in these classes are different. Table 1 records only the real number of journal writers from each band group at each university.

Table 1. Journal Respondents

	Band 1		Band 2		Band 3		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
TU	28	6	28	5	24	4	95
BFU			18 male and 19 female				37
CUP	0	0	35	6	32	10	83
Total			165 male and 50 female				215

The average age of the journal participants was 18.3, and they majored in various areas such as Chinese literature, chemistry, civil engineering, business management, international politics, and medicine. It must be noted that though all three universities were science- and technology-oriented, BFU oriented more toward humanities disciplines. Thus more women were admitted to BFU while more men went to TU and CUP. And the sample of the present study simply represented the true student population of each institution in terms of English proficiency level (band group) and gender ratio.

Phase Two: Survey Respondents

In the second phase, a survey was distributed to approximately 1,500 first-year students at different English proficiency levels at the three universities from various disciplines, such as computer science, architecture, management, and Chinese. Out of 1,431 collected questionnaires, 1,203 were found valid. The others were discarded because of incompleteness. The distribution of participants across gender, band levels, and universities is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Survey Respondents

	TU			**BFU**			**CUP**			**Total**		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Band 1	93	20	113	116	211	327	0	0	0			
Band 2	150	55	205				216	73	289			
Band 3	93	40	133				96	40	136			
Total	336	115	451	116	211	327	312	113	425	764	439	1203

Note. M = male, F = female, T = total

Among the 1203 respondents, 451 respondents came from TU, 113 of which were band 1 students, 205 were band 2 students, and 133 were band 3 students. There were 327 participants from BFU. And 425 respondents came from CUP, among whom 289 were band 2 students and 136 were band 3 students. More students from the band 2 group at both TU and CUP were selected for the study because they represented the first-year students at both universities in terms of number, population diversity, English proficiency, major diversity, and gender difference.

With an age range from 16 to 25 and an average age of 18.7, the majority of the survey respondents started to learn English formally from junior high school.

Data Analysis

To identify the students' motivation patterns in different learning contexts, the ELMS was computed in terms of mean, standard deviation, median, mode, and score range. Then, one-way ANOVA (Duncan's) was conducted to explore the difference in motivation among students from varying learning contexts. Finally, correlational analyses were run to explore the correlation between motivation and students' performance in English.

The reflective journal entries were subjected to thematic content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002), with recurring themes identified, which were then integrated into the discussion of survey results. The primary purpose in the present study was to identify whether the students had motivation to learn English, what motivated them to learn the language, and the impact of motivation on their performance in English.

Results and Discussion

In order to know the general pattern of the students' English learning motivation in various EFL contexts, statistical analyses of the ELMS and its three subscales were computed. Some questions on the ELMS were negatively worded requiring the researcher to invert the values assigned to different responses. For example, on a negatively worded item, an answer of "strongly disagree" was normally assigned a value of 1. However, on a negatively worded item, this value was inverted to a 5. Similarly, a value of 2 was inverted to a 4 on negatively worded items. Thus, the total score of the ELMS revealed the respondent's motivation to learn English. The higher the score, the more motivated the participant was to learn the language.

A total score of more than 104 on the ELMS implies the respondent is highly motivated to learn English. A total score of 78 to 104 signifies moderate motivation, and a total score below 78 indicates little to no motivation. A total score of more than 8 on the 2-item ELM indicates high motivation, a total score of 6 to 8 suggests moderate motivation, and a score below 6 means little to no motivation. A total score of more than 48 on the 12-item InsM implies that a respondent is strongly instrumentally motivated to learn English, a total score of 36 to 48 represents moderate instrumental motivation, and a score of less than 36 signifies little to no instrumental motivation. A total score of more than 48 on the 12-item IntM implies that a respondent is strongly integratively motivated to learn English, a total score of 36 to 48 represents moderate integrative motivation, and a score below 36 signifies little to no integrative motivation. It holds true for all the three subscales that the higher the score the more motivated the respondent was to learn English integratively or instrumentally. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of the ELMS and Its Subsections

Scale	Mean and Standard Deviation	TU (*n*=451)	BFU (*n*=327)	CUP (*n*=425)	Total (*n*=1203)
ELM	*M*	7.9	7.7	7.9	7.8
	SD	1.7	1.9	1.7	1.8
InsM	*M*	36.4	38.9	39.0	38.0
	SD	6.1	5.9	5.6	5.6
IntM	*M*	35.8	36.5	36.2	36.1
	SD	6.8	7.2	7.5	7.2
ELMS	*M*	80.1	83.1	83.0	81.9
	SD	10.3	11.4	10.6	10.8

Overall Pattern

As presented in Table 3, participants from all three universities had ELMS means above the scale midpoint of 78. This implies that the participants from each university were moderately or highly motivated to learn the language. This finding is consistent with numerous other studies (Hao et al., 2004; Huang & Wen, 2005; Liu, 2007; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995; Ushioda, 2006; Wen, 2001; Yang et al., 2010). This finding was not surprising in that, as the world is becoming more and more globalized, the Chinese people have had increasingly more opportunities to communicate with the world, whose international language is often English.

The subsections of the survey showed a similar perspective to the overall pattern. The ELM mean was 7.9. Because 8 was the highest score possible for this section, this suggests that the participants had moderate or strong motivation to learn English. Likewise, the mean of 39.0 on the InsM section of the survey was above the scale midpoint of 36 suggesting that the students were moderately to strongly instrumentally motivated. This too is typical of other studies in FL situations (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Lamb, 2004; Liu, 2007, 2009; Yang et al., 2010). The mean of the IntM was 36.2. This was just above the scale midpoint of 36 and suggested that the students were moderately integratively motivated. This finding was similar to Lamb's (2004) study but different from Liu's (2007).

The frequencies and percentages of responses to items 1 to 13 reveal that the students were highly instrumentally motivated to learn English. They reported being motivated to learn the language for various instrumental reasons such as personal development (86.1%); future careers (72.0%); improving English abilities in four basic skills (70.5%); higher education (68.4%); and going abroad (58.8%), all similar to what was found in Liu's (2009) study.

When it comes to integrative reasons, most students attributed their motivation to learn English to such reasons as wanting to be a person who can speak English (65.6%); wanting to speak more than one language (65.3%); the satisfaction of finding out new things (47.2%); and the good feeling of doing better in class (42%). At the same time, they were less motivated to learn English for such reasons such as satisfaction of doing difficult exercises in English (56.7%); the excitement of hearing someone speaking English (52.8%); feeling guilty (51.6%); and the excitement of speaking English (47.3%). These reasons suggest that the students' integrative motivation was more concerned with their school performance than their liking of the target language.

These findings are generally supported by the result of the reflective journal data. Of the 215 journal participants, 192 (89%) reported that they were generally motivated to learn English, while only 14 (7%) reflected that they had no motivation to learn English. Some of the reasons given for a lack of motivation were (1) no interest in English, (2) no pressure to learn, (3) limited need to use the language, and (4) the difficulty of learning new English words and texts.

Institutional Patterns

A closer comparison of the statistics in Table 3 reveals that TU students had the lowest mean scores on all the scales except the ELM. It appears that the TU respondents had the lowest overall motivation to learn English. They were also the least motivated to learn the language both instrumentally and integratively. This might be because English education had become an integral part of quality education rather than a language requirement at TU. For almost all disciplines at TU, it had long become a tradition to search for and study resources in English in addition to those in their mother tongue. As such, the TU students might have considered English a part of their daily study, and thus were not externally motivated to learn the language.

Looking again at Table 3, the BFU students had the highest mean scores on the ELMS and the IntM, while the CUP students achieved the highest mean scores on the ELM and the InsM. The BFU students had the highest overall motivation and were the most integratively motivated to learn English. The CUP learners were the most instrumentally motivated. Although their universities are less prestigious than TU, CUP and BFU still regarded English education as a language requirement of university education, and most of their students learned English primarily to pass CET-4, a national English exam (see Sun & Henrichsen, 2011). It is important to note that there were many more female students in the BFU sample. This might partially contribute to the highest motivation demonstrated by this sample in the present study because, as evidenced in a number of existing studies (Lamb, 2004; Liu, 2009; Yang et al., 2011), female students tend to be more motivated to learn English than their male peers.

The survey responses from the three universities did not fluctuate much except for items 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 24—learning English for a good job, more money, high marks, school requirement, certificates, and the good feeling of doing better than expected. While BFU and CUP students generally agreed with these items, many TU learners disagreed. As students of the top university in mainland China, TU students have always been the most competitive in the market—whether to look for a job, to start a career, or to continue with their higher education both within and outside the country. This might partly explain the difference between the TU students and the CUP and BFU students on these reasons for learning English.

These findings suggest that the TU students, enjoying the best English learning environment, might be the least motivated to learn English both instrumentally and integratively, and those who had poorer English learning facilities were more motivated either instrumentally or integratively. And some of the differences were statistically significant, as indicated by the ANOVA results reported in Table 4. The TU participants significantly differed from their BFU and CUP counterparts on the ELMS and the InsM, whereas no significant differences were found on other scales. This finding was surprising because, generally speaking, learners who are better at a foreign language are more motivated to learn that language (Belmechri & Hummel, 1998; Clèment et al., 1994; Dörnyei, 1994; 2001; Hao et al., 2004; Oxford & Shearin, 1994), but the case was just the opposite in the present research.

Table 4. ANOVA Results of the ELMS and Its Subscales

			University (Mean) TU=451; BFU=327; CUP=425			
Measures	F	P	TU	BFU	CUP	Location of sig. difference (a=.05)
ELMS	10.73*	.000	80.08	83.07	83.01	TU & BFU; TU & CUP
ELIM	1.47	.231	7.85	7.67	7.88	/
InsM	26.00*	.000	36.42	38.92	38.97	TU & BFU; TU & CUP
IntM	.85	.426	35.80	36.48	36.17	/

* = statistically significant

This result could be attributed to the fact that the TU students were exempt from the national CET-4 while both the BFU and CUP students had to pass the exam to obtain degree certificates on time, which resulted in the different policies and styles of English education adopted by the three universities, as described earlier. With an aim of enhancing students' overall competence in English, a more student-oriented teaching style and a more autonomous learning style prevailed at TU. Without the pressure of passing CET-4, the TU students might have a less strong motivation to learn English, yet they could also learn the language more for personal interests. By contrast, the BFU and CUP students had to pass CET-4 in order to graduate on time. Thus, the teaching and learning of English in these two universities were more exam oriented, which partially explained why these two samples were more motivated to learn the language. This might also explain why the TU students were the least instrumentally motivated to learn English. The fact that the TU learners generally had more and better exposure to English and that they had a brighter future after graduation could also partially account for the finding. Further, this finding might also be expounded by the fact that the TU learners, already quite proficient in English, had more difficulty making greater noticeable progress, which was easier for their less proficient CUP and BFU peers. In addition, they often had a heavier study load for their major, which usually forced them to spend less time on English. Furthermore, having more girl students in the sample might partly account for why the BFU students were the most motivated to learn English, as discussed earlier. Nevertheless, all these explanations need to be confirmed in future research.

Reasons for Students' Motivation to Learn English

As previously discussed, the majority of the participants were motivated to learn English, but for varying purposes, as listed in Table 5.

As noted in Table 5, the common reasons for students in the three university samples to be motivated to learn English were to find a good or better job, to go abroad, to pursue further study, to pass exams, to improve English, and to communicate with foreigners. Shared motivations also included English being useful and important and the student being interested in English. The TU and CUP learners were motivated also because they wanted to learn more things from English books and to communicate with others more easily. Desire to speak English fluently motivated both the BFU and CUP participants to learn the language.

In addition to these common motivations, each sample had some specific ones as well. For example, the TU participants were motivated to learn English because the language, to them, was beautiful and learning the language was fun. They also admired those who spoke the language well and thus thought they would feel proud if they could speak it fluently as well. By learning English well, they might be able to change their present situation and have more and better opportunities.

Table 5. Reasons for Students' Motivation to Learn English (Source: Journal)

TU (95)	BFU (37)	CUP (83)
• To find a good/better job • To improve English • To go abroad • To get more knowledge from English books • To pass the TEPT 1 • English being useful • English being not so hard now • To become a postgraduate • Admire those who can speak well • To talk with foreigners • To change the present situation • To feel very proud • English being important • Being interested in English • English being a beautiful language • To have more better	• To find a better/good job • To go abroad • To pass CET-4 • Being interested in English • To communicate with foreigners • To become graduate students • English being a requirement for computer majors • To listen to English • To speak good English • To understand the difference between dreams and reality • For a beautiful future • American movies being funny • Teachers being interesting and not stiff • Realizing what has been learned is limited • To enjoy the new learning environment • To learn more for graduation • To see English movies • To play computer games • To improve English	• To find a better/good job • Interest in English • English being useful • English being important • Desire to speak English fluently • To learn more things from English books • To pass examinations • To communicate with others better • To go abroad • To be happy in English class • To improve English • To do as teachers said • To be better than friends • To communicate with foreigners • For further study

The BFU students were motivated because, in their eyes, English and English movies were interesting. They also wanted to play computer games, to enjoy the new learning environment, and to understand the differences between dreams and reality. The CUP learners were motivated to learn English because their teachers told them to study it hard. Meanwhile, they wanted to be happy in English class and be better than their friends.

Generally speaking, each sample was motivated to learn English both integratively and instrumentally. And the TU participants seemed to be more integratively motivated while their CUP peers appeared to be more instrumentally motivated.

Impact of Motivation on Students' Performance in English

When asked to comment on the impact of motivation on their English learning, 142 of 215 (66%) journal respondents reported that having a purpose was conducive to learning English, 31 (14%) believed that motivation did not have any effect on learning English, and 42 (20%) gave no comment (see Table 7). Table 7 also reveals that 60%, 87%, and 75% of the TU, BFU and CUP students respectively held that motivation could be very or a bit helpful to learning English.

Table 6. Impact of Students' Motivation to Learn English (Source: Journal)

	Very helpful	Helpful	A bit helpful	No effect	No comment
TU (95)	6.3%	34.7%	9.5%	18.9%	30.5%
BFU (37)	5.4%	81.1%	0	5.4%	3.2%
CUP (83)	10.8%	57.8%	6%	13.3%	12%
Total (215)	7.9%	51.6%	6.5%	14.4%	19.5%

Comparison of the three samples shows that more BFU (87%) and CUP (75%) participants believed motivation to be a facilitator than did their TU peers (60%), while more TU learners (19%) reflected that motivation could yield no effect on their learning English than did their BFU (5%) and CUP (13%) counterparts.

All these findings were further supported by the results of correlation analyses between the ELMS and the students' performance in English. As noted from Table 6, the overall motivation scale (the ELMS) was significantly positively correlated with the BFU and CUP students' performance in English (*r* = .17 and .15 respectively, p < .01). The students' motivation to learn English (ELM) was significantly correlated with performance in English across the whole sample with coefficients ranging from .17 to .24 (p < .05). Instrumental motivation (InsM) was significantly inversely related only to the whole sample's performance in English. And integrative motivation (IntM) was significantly positively related across the whole sample and to the TU and the CUP students' performance in English (*r* = .09, .17, and .14 respectively, p < .01).

Table 7. Correlations between ELMS and Performance in English

	Whole sample	TU	BFU	CUP
ELM	.17**	.23**	.22**	.24**
InsM	-.065*	-.03	.05	.03
IntM	.09**	.05	.17**	.14**
ELMS	.05	.06	.17**	.15**

Note. ** = p < .01; * = p < .05

Conclusions and Implications

The present study examined Chinese EFL learners' English learning motivation in varying learning contexts and specific reasons for learning English. The following conclusions are derived from this research.

First, the majority of the whole participant sample and each university sample had moderate or even high motivation to learn English and was moderately or even highly instrumentally or integratively motivated to learn the language, as found in studies on similar populations in Chinese EFL learning contexts (Gao et al., 2004; Liu, 2007; Yang et al., 2010). Among the three university samples, the TU students were the least motivated both instrumentally and integratively to learn English; the BFU students had the highest overall motivation and were the most integratively motivated; and the CUP learners were the most instrumentally motivated. And some of the differences were statistically significant. The varying patterns demonstrated by the three different university samples might be accounted for by a number of reasons such as different English learning environment, English teaching style and focus, status of the institution, proficiency, and gender.

Second, the students from the three varying learning contexts self-reported to be motivated to learn English largely for similar reasons such as finding a good or better job, pursuing further study, and passing exams, which might be because they, though from different universities, shared a general Chinese culture and studied within the same educational system. Meanwhile, the specific reasons for each sample differed. For the TU students who were the most proficient in English and generally enjoyed the best English learning environment (e.g., more exposure and access to English and English speakers as well as more opportunities to use the language), external motivation was not an important reason to learn the language. On the contrary, they tended to appreciate the language more and learned it for more integrative reasons such as personal interest and communication with English speaking people, as explained by Gardner and his associates (Gardner, 1985; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). For those CUP and BFU students, who were less proficient in English and did not have the best English learning environment, external motivation still constituted an important reason to learn the language. However, even for these students, the more proficient learners tended to be more integratively motivated as well. As China's economy keeps on flourishing and the communication between China and the world is becoming more and more interactive, the students' motivation to learn English may continue to vary in terms of both pattern and specific reasons, which justifies the need for continued research on this issue.

On the whole, the students in this study were more motivated to learn English for practical reasons even though TU participants, specifically, seemed to learn English more for integrative purposes. And for all students, motivation was indeed significantly correlated with their performance in English.

It may be helpful to share these motivations among students to encourage them to learn the target language for a certain purpose. In this way, motivated students may remain motivated in spite of any difficulty and those without any motivation may thus become motivated through peer pressure. Nevertheless, more importantly, it will be highly useful to increase EFL learners' English learning motivation because it is so closely related to their performance in the target language.

Finally, although the present research recruited a large number of participants at varied English proficiency levels from different EFL learning situations in Beijing, the role of gender and proficiency in motivation was not explored. In addition, since motivation was found to be so closely related to students' performance in English, it is necessary to research various strategies to enhance language learners' motivation to learn a second or foreign language. Furthermore, due to the complexity of teaching and learning, what may work in one case may not work in another. Future research on the actual effectiveness of these strategies in diverse classroom settings would be a welcomed contribution.

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Embracing the Diversity: Learning from EFL Students' Self-Selected Reading and Writing[1]

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Introduction

It has been observed that the use of pre-set textbooks is the basic requirement for L2 learners of English writing. This requirement is from an assumption that EFL students feel incapable of deciding about what they would like to write. Some researchers believed that L2 writers' incapability mainly came from their lack of lexical expressions and grammatical structures (Leki, 1992; Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1983), and a reemphasis on vocabulary memorization and syntactic analysis was a common solution. Other researchers, who emphasized a reading-writing connection, attributed L2 writers' difficulty in writing to their lack of reading experience (Belcher & Hirvela, 2001; Carson & Leki, 1993; Grabe, 2001, 2003; You & Chou, 2004a); consequently, providing the assigned reading became the usual treatment. However, both of these approaches, skill-based instruction and reading-based instruction, are still teacher initiated and teacher as feeder, which makes L2 student writers disown their autonomy in learning. What would happen if L2 student writers had their own choice to select reading and writing themes and topics? Would they know how to self-select their own reading and writing? Would that freedom in decision making motivate them? Would students' preferences be different from the content of pre-set textbooks? Even though some teachers have implemented self-selection of topics for writing instruction, we do not yet know much about the different effects between using pre-set textbooks and students' self-selection.

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[1] Some concepts of this paper were orally presented in AILA 2008 Convention at Essen, Germany, and the trip to Essen for this presentation was funded by National Science Council of Republic of China in Taiwan (97-2914-I-158-004-A1).

This study attempted to explore the effect of self-selection on EFL student writers by comparing the self-selected topics and themes with the content of pre-set textbooks. It is hoped that the analysis will bring new insights to EFL writing educators in their attempts to design writing courses and choose materials for writing instruction.

Literature Review

Self-Selected Topics

The advantages of students' selecting their own topics have been studied and continually confirmed in the L1 context. Shippen, Houchins, Puckett, and Ramsey (2007), in their report on the preferred writing topics of L1 urban and rural middle school students, mentioned that the freedom of topic choice was critical to student engagement and writing production and that the combination of interest and topic knowledge "enhanced lower performing students' written expression" (p. 59). Similarly, Manning (1999) noticed that each of her students had hundreds of topics from his or her own life. When students chose their own topics, their writing "possessed a voice and had rich description because the pieces reflected the prior knowledge of the student" (p. 130). Furthermore, Manning stated that students needed help to successfully figure out their own topics and needed encouragement to build their confidence in writing. To Manning, all students possess good topic ideas and the teachers' responsibility is to help them uncover their hidden topics.

Street (2005), teaching university students, also witnessed the power of self-selection and decided to make a change in his teaching. He said:

> Finally, I decided what mattered most was whether my students could write well, not whether they appreciated my favorite works of literature. So I changed gears and scrapped the literary-analysis approach, instead offering my students the chance to explore topics that interested them. I began to listen more and talk less, asking my students what they knew and cared about. . . . They became my teachers, allowing me a unique glimpse into their lives outside of school. . . . Slowly . . . my students began to write with greater interest and skill. . . . My

> reluctant writers began to see me as a teacher who supported their development as writers while valuing their interests as unique individuals. . . . They inspired me to understand the critical link between identity and writing. (p. 636)

Street's change helped him see his students' potential and possibilities.

However, it has been a controversial issue whether or not to allow L2 students to select their own reading and writing topics. The strongest argument is probably the dialogues between Tony Silva (1997, 1998) and Nathan Jones (1998, 2001). Valuing learner-centered learning, Silva (1997) claimed that students should have the chance to choose their own topics. He stated, "It seems most reasonable and motivating to have students choose their own topics, those in which they have a sincere interest and some intellectual and emotional investment" (p. 362). Furthermore, he believed, from his own experiences, that with their own topics, students would write better texts "that are well informed, skillfully crafted, very persuasive, and incredibly moving" (p. 362).

On the other hand, Nathan Jones (1998) strongly disagreed with Tony Silva's statement about providing students freedom for topic selection. Jones argued that assigning important and comprehensive themes could enhance the teaching and learning of ESL/EFL writing fundamentals. Although he thought some freedom of topic choice might be appropriate, he claimed that too much freedom might be "confusing, annoying, and even debilitating" (p. 340) because some students who were extremely anxious might waste much time searching for a proper topic for their papers. To Jones, students' unlimited freedom on topic selection seemed to be equal to teachers' giving up the responsibility on instruction and guidance. But to Silva (1998), since "students' motivation increases when they are allowed to choose topics that are important to them" (p. 346), the teachers' responsibility should be "facilitating rather than controlling" (Silva, 1997, p. 362).

Self-regulated Learning

Self-regulation is the self-directive process in which learners' own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors transform their mental abilities into academic skills so as to attain their self-set goals. This definition was proposed by Zimmerman (1989) and has been discussed by many researchers (Reeve, Ryan, Deci, & Jang, 2008; Risemberg, 1993; Schunk, 1990; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1998; Zimmerman, 2000, 2002). As Zimmerman, Bonner, and Kovach (1996) have suggested, self-regulated learning leads students to determine their learning objectives, monitor their learning process, and evaluate their gains and progress. In addition, since writing relies largely on the processes of planning and then initiating and sustaining that plan, researchers have placed their emphasis on how self-regulated learning helps learners become engaged readers and writers with abilities such as goal setting, self-control, and self-reflection (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Saddler, 2002; Horner & Shwery, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). According to Paris and Ayres (1994), students have the potential to become reflective and self-regulated learners, and self-selected goals usually strengthen their curiosity and motivation in the learning process. Holec (1981) suggests that students who practice self-regulated learning are responsible for all of the decisions concerned with their learning. Self-selected topics would, therefore, be considered one of those decisions in the learning process.

Studies conducted by Taiwanese researchers show positive outcomes from applying self-regulated learning in various English courses (Lee, 2001; Li, 2006; Shen, 2002; You & Chou, 2002, 2004b). Lee (2001) investigated 23 students from an institute of technology and found that "through autonomous learning, [students] were led to become more intrinsically motivated" (p. 149). The study done by Shen (2002) added that "having students share successful learning strategies could be a part of autonomous learning" (p. 218). Thus, creating the opportunity for self-directed learning and encouraging sharing and interaction among learners can be a way to foster successful learners.

Self-selecting topics is one important element of self-regulated learning. It involves learners understanding their own ability, interests, and beliefs in the possibility of reaching their goals. Though it is indeed well documented that self-regulated learning promotes motivation and learning outcomes, little research directly examines how self-selecting reading and writing topics influences student writers and their writing, and even less focuses on the possibility of using self-selected reading in EFL writing classes. This paper, therefore, investigates the features of EFL student writers' self-selection and discusses the integration of topic self-selection into EFL writing classes.

The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. If given the opportunity, would EFL student writers be capable of selecting their own reading and writing topics?
2. Would students' self-selected topics be different from the content of pre-set textbooks in terms of genres, themes, and the level of proficiency and difficulty?
3. How would this freedom in decision making influence EFL student writers' perspectives of their own learning, especially their reading and writing?

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were EFL students from two private universities in northern Taiwan. All participants completed, between the years 2003 and 2007, a reading and writing project that involved topic self-selection. The total number of participants was 151 and included 25 non-English majors, 72 English majors, and 54 applied foreign languages majors. Most participants were sophomores and a few were juniors. All participants attended sophomore English writing courses, which are usually titled as English Writing (II), Intermediate Level.

Materials

The materials used in this study included students' self-selected reading and writing themes (see Appendix A) and 10 EFL writing textbooks frequently selected for the sophomore English writing class over the past four academic years (2003–2007) across five universities in northern Taiwan. The textbooks mainly focused on paragraph-to-essay writing but a few covered either paragraph or essay writing (see Appendix B).

Students' portfolios were also collected to investigate their perception of self-selection. The completed portfolios contained different types of writing (essays, journals, theme responses), self-selected themes (reading list, articles, responses), sharing and feedback (author-chair drafts, feedback to others' sharing, peer and self-evaluation), and a preface and table of contents.

Procedures

The researcher collected students' self-selected themes and topics from those who completed reading and writing projects that involved self-selection of the theme and made a list of all the themes and topics, from the most frequently chosen ones to the least frequent ones (see Appendix A). The researcher also collected 10 English writing textbooks that were frequently used for Taiwanese university sophomores and made a list of all the themes and topics selected in these writing textbooks (See Appendix C).

In order to investigate the similarities and differences between the two categories, students' self-selected themes and topics and the pre-set textbooks' themes and topics, the researcher compared the top ten frequently chosen themes, genres, and levels of reading difficulty and compared the data across participants' self-selections and the EFL writing textbooks. In addition, the researcher read through each participant's portfolio to see whether the participants integrated their interests and concerns into the themes and topics they selected and to see how they viewed this freedom of choice.

Data Analysis

The data were coded and compared to see the similarities and differences between themes chosen by the participants and those presented in the textbooks. The researcher evaluated the various texts that students read and categorized them into themes. When there was a degree of similarity across two different themes, the researcher would make a decision on whether or not to combine the two categories. All category names for themes came from the students. For example, some students read articles related to technology and created a theme title of "Technology and Science," and other students read articles related to future life in a technology era and created the theme title of "Future Life." On the surface, these two themes appear to belong to different categories, but the articles within the themes discussed a similar issue—technology. Thus, these two themes were placed into the same category, "Technology." However, theme titles like "Literature" and "Classical Masterpieces" appeared similar, but further investigation revealed that the articles under the theme title "Classical Masterpieces" were not literary works but famous speeches.

Therefore, rather than merging “Classical Masterpieces” with “Literature,” the former was combined with the category “Speech.”

Reading texts were categorized into genre type, such as short essay, longer essay, story, news, report, or letters. Since EFL students are usually afraid of and even avoid reading a long text, the criterion for the level of reading difficulty was the total number of words in a text.

The portfolios were also analyzed for students’ reactions to self-selection. The three categories that emerged from the portfolio analysis were (1) the integration of personal interests and concerns into theme selection, (2) students’ view of this freedom of choice, and (3) the influence of this freedom of choice on students’ learning. The Nvivo7 software was used for this qualitative analysis. In addition, the role of teacher as researcher helped provide in-depth observation and understanding of the participants’ self-selections.

Results

More Diverse Themes

Table 1 shows the top 10 themes chosen by students and the top ten themes contained in textbooks. Only 5 themes (technology, business, people, arts/entertainment, and health) overlapped between students’ choices and textbook themes. Among the top 10 themes chosen by students, there were 5 themes (travel, movies, life, culture, and books) that did not appear within the top 10 themes of the frequently used writing textbooks. (For a complete listing of self-selected and textbook themes, see Appendices A and C).

Far Extended Genres

Table 2 indicates that the genres of the reading articles in writing textbooks mainly belonged to short essay. Some of them were letters, advertisements, and biography; others were categorized as news articles, folktales, fables, and poems. However, the self-selected reading articles contained a wider selection of genres. In addition to those genres included in textbooks, there were longer essays, longer book reports, story, novels, song lyrics, movie scripts, speech, and so forth.

Table 1. Top 10 Self-Selected Themes and Pre-set Themes

Ranking	Self-Selected	Preset
1	Books (223, 13.92%)	*Technology (26, 8.81%)
2	*Health (144, 8.60%)	Education (24, 8.14%)
3	Travel (41, 8.42%)	*Business (21, 7.12%)
4	*People (119, 7.11%)	City (20, 6.78%)
5	*Technology (103, 6.15%)	*People (18, 6.10%)
6	Movies (93, 5.56%)	Communication (17, 5.76%)
7	Life (92, 5.50%)	Family (16, 5.42%)
8	Culture (78, 4.66%)	*Arts and Entertainment, Psychology (15, 5.08%)
9	*Business (67, 4%)	Advertisement, *Health (11, 3.73%)
10	*Arts and Entertainment (63, 3.76%)	Jobs (10, 3.39%)

Note. Mark (*) refers to the themes overlapped.

Table 2. Self-selected and Textbook Reading and Writing Genres

Types of Genres	Self-Selected R/W	Pre-set R/W
Short Essay	Yes	Yes
Letters	Yes	Yes
Advertisements	Yes	Yes
Biography	Yes	Yes
News	Yes	Yes/No
Folktales	Yes	Yes/No
Fables	Yes	Yes/No
Poem	Yes	Yes/No
Longer Essays	Yes	No
Longer/Book Reports	Yes	No
Story	Yes	No
Novels	Yes	No
Songs Lyrics	Yes	No
Movie Scripts	Yes	No
Speech	Yes	No

Level of Difficulty

The average length of the reading articles in writing textbooks was 413.67 words per article (see table 3). The shortest one, “Machu Picchu, Peru,” in *College Writing 3*, was 30 words, and the longest one, “Weasel Words,” in *Refining Composition Skills*, was 3,050 words.[2] However, the average length of the self-selected reading articles was 1,124.57 words per article. The shortest one was a 113-word humorous poem and the longest one, containing 16,789 words, was a longer essay titled “College Woe.” It should be noted that the top self-selected theme, book, was not included in this average length calculation.

Table 3. Length of Self-selected and Textbook Readings

	Shortest	Longest	Average
Self-Selected	113	16,789	1,124.57
Pre-set	30	3,050	413.67

Note. Numbers refer to words per article. Books, the top self-selected theme, are not included.

Highly Connected to Personal Interests and Concerns

Students’ portfolios revealed that 136 out of 151 participants (90 percent) integrated their personal interests and concerns into their theme selection. Only 5 out of 151 participants (3 percent) clearly expressed that they chose themes that were convenient. These participants did not think of selecting personally interesting themes, but they would like to try in the future. The rest of the participants, 10 out of 151 (7 percent), did not mention anything related to this integration (see table 4).

Table 4. Integrating Personal Interests and Concerns into Theme Selection

	Yes	No	Not Mentioned	Total
Frequency of Integration	136	5	10	151
Percentage of Integration	90.01%	3.31%	6.62%	100%

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[2] For full citations of these textbooks, see Appendix B.

Discussion

Uncovering Potentials

The most popular assumption that made writing instructors resist student self-selection of reading and writing was that students did not have the ability to make good selections. These opponents believed that EFL student writers lack linguistic proficiency and background knowledge and thus did not know what reading articles or writing topics might be suitable for them. If students were forced to make their own selections, most would be trapped into fake reading or plagiarism (Jones 1998, 2001).

However, this study provided a different view on this issue. Students' self-selected themes revealed their ability to make selections. Although 5 out of the top 10 themes they chose were different from the top 10 themes used in writing textbooks, they did cover many of the popular and interesting themes such as education, city, family, jobs, work, and so on (see Appendix A). If writing instructors consider the pre-set textbook themes as proper themes, there should be no reason to deny the capability for self-selection of EFL student writers, whose self-selected themes had a 50 percent overlap with these textbooks.

The more exciting finding, however, was not this similarity but the differences shown in students' self-selected themes. Students chose hundreds of different themes based on their interests, needs, and curiosity. They made their selections according to their personal concerns rather than randomness. For example, they read articles about health because they or their family suffered from certain diseases (05-Emily; 05-Tim; 06-Dominique; 07-Una)[3]. Alice from the class of 2007 was a good example. She wrote:

> It often takes a long time for me to fall asleep at night, so I want to figure out the reasons. I searched the theme about sleep disorders. Finally, I found some articles from MSN's Health and Fitness center. After I finished the reading, I realized that "sleep" is really profound knowledge. Sleep can affect our memories, hearts, and even the health of our teeth. (07-Alice)

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[3] The coding for students' portfolios is the year and the student's name, e.g. 05-Emily is Emily from the 2005 class.

They read about animals because some of them were interested in raising a pet or needed to know how to take care of a pet (04-Robert; 05-Nicole; 06-Lindy). Robert, in his reading response, mentioned:

> I always want to keep a dog, though I don't have one now. . . . The article "Great activities you can do with your dog" shows me how to play with it so that it will not feel bored. Dogs need a lot of exercises . . . and the article "Golden Retriever Breed Standard" contains many professional information about dogs' breed. After reading it, I can tell the breed of a certain dog! (04-Robert)

They read about natural disasters because they just experienced an earthquake, a typhoon, or a tsunami (04-Eros; 04-Jean; 04-Rachel). Jean wrote:

> I choose this theme, natural disaster, because that recent news on TV all report about the earthquakes. When I saw the news, I couldn't help but [cry]. The earthquake, which occurred in South Asia, has taken away about 5,000 people's lives. Many tourists died when they were taking a trip, and many people lost their beloved families. I couldn't imagine what I would do if I were there. (04-Jean)

The same reasons could be applied for other themes such as technology, travel, cultures, people, and so on. Students' selections reflected their interest in the world around them and their capability to make choices.

As for the top theme selection, books, students exhibited their extreme potential. While many instructors doubted that EFL students would like to read English books, both fiction and nonfiction, these EFL student writers provided a surprising finding: books were the top theme selection. Within the category of books, students mostly made literary selections. Many of them chose Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie* or *Five People You Meet in Heaven*, as well as the best sellers *Who Moved My Cheese*, *Chicken Soup for the Christian Teenage Soul*, or *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Some chose famous children's storybooks like E. B. White's *The Trumpet of the Swan*, and some took a risk to read more advanced novels like *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Color Purple*, *Anne Frank's Diary*, or Philip Pullman's fantasy trilogy *His Dark Materials*. According to the BBC's "Big Read Top 200" and *Time* magazine's "All-Time 100 Novels," those literary works are popular among and suitable for university students in terms of content and linguistic complexity. Students read these novels thoroughly and wrote their summary and responses wholeheartedly. Jo's response to the book *The Color Purple* is one example:

> "It's about life. It's about love. It's about us." These are some of the many lines written about this book. I agree most heartily. I just finished reading this book, a book I feel is a must read for all people. This book has opened my eyes to the outside world in more ways than one. . . . This book is written in letter style. Celie writes to God and her sister Nettie, the two people she trusted the most. . . . I try [to] picture myself in her shoes; an absolute impossibility, yet what happens in this book happens to a lot of people. Celie has a tremendous amount of courage and strength to be able to move forward and never lose faith. I felt speechless after I read this book. There is an enormous amount to be grateful for in this life, especially in our lives. I not only learnt in more detail to be thankful for what I have, but also to cherish every breath and to give freely and willingly. The bad I do unto others will come back tenfold. The good I do, someone, somewhere, will one day notice and be grateful. (05-Jo)

Their writing revealed their understanding of the content, and their sharing with peers helped them think further and more profoundly (04-Leslie; 05-Jenny).

Jones (2001) strongly doubted, saying, "giving students a lot of freedom in selecting paper topics can be counter-productive, as the freedom could lead to confusion and frustration among those who may need more guidance and direction" (p. 8). However, with a close look at EFL student writers' self-selection in this study, no one could deny that EFL student writers do have the potential to make their own choices with reading and writing.

Enhancing Motivation

Though Jones (2001) severely challenged Silva (1997, 1998) for not providing any evidence to prove that freedom of theme selection is a stronger motivator for students, the results in this study indeed show the influence of self-selection on learning motivation. From the diversity of their themes and the extended length of their reading and writing, it suggests that students' motivation was enhanced.

From the perspective of diversity, students' self-chosen themes reflected not only their concerns but also the integration of their interests and learning, and such combination made learning meaningful to students (04-Sandy; 05-Evie). Many of the students mentioned that they had never had such opportunities to integrate their interests into English reading and writing and that they had never recorded their true feelings in English writing class (05-Eve; 05-Jessie; 06-Roanna). Most students felt amazed that they were allowed to select themes without restrictions because they had never had this freedom in their previous learning experiences. One student, Sabrina, mentioned, "If I can combine my interest with my writing project, I will be full of happiness!" Jerry, another student, stated strongly, "I have to write some articles related to my interests; otherwise, it would be non-contents in my articles—people read them, but no ideas flash into their brains." Alice's comments subtly described students' inner desire in learning:

> I always integrate my interest and curiosity into my theme reading project. Whenever I felt interest in some issues, I would want to make thorough investigations. I would look for related articles or information from the Internet or the library. Though it may take time to search, I really enjoyed it. That was because sometimes I could find unexpected and fascinating knowledge during the process. Therefore, I believe that the interest and curiosity could provoke my motivation all the time.

Setting these students free from assigned themes and genres aroused their willingness to try something challenging and thought provoking.

From the perspective of the extended length of their reading and writing, the self-chosen selections were a lot longer and more complex than the pre-set ones. Both reading a long text and writing a long article need patience and passion, which are characteristics of a motivated learner. Without patience, a student would have difficulty reading through a long text. Without passion, a student writer would struggle to stay up all night to compose a long article. If something real does not touch or resonate with them, they would not try with all their might to dig into the reading text or express themselves well in writing.

In brief, as Silva (1998) emphasized, "students' motivation increases when they are allowed to choose topics that are important to them" (p. 346), and that can be applied to both reading and writing. This is supported by Manning, who said, "Students taking responsibility for choosing topics in writing is as important as choosing the books they read" (1999, p. 130).

Empowering Learners

"Choosing a topic is simple for some writers, but a problem for others. This challenge plagues writers of all ages" (Manning, 1999, p. 130), but once they overcome the problem, they definitely grow. As writing educators know, choosing a topic is not an easy task though the freedom uncovers potential and promotes motivation. However, it is the process of overcoming difficulty that empowers students. The act of choosing a theme involves many tasks simultaneously: getting to know oneself, being tolerant about uncertainty, and being appreciative of diversity.

Getting to know oneself may not seem to be an issue for university students, but it actually is, especially when they have seldom tried making a decision by themselves. It was heard often, when students were first provided with choice, that they did not know what to choose and why they had to choose on their own (06-Susie; 06-Jacelyn; 07-Melissa; 07-Nina). They even whined, opposed the freedom, and preferred to revert back assigned topics. They did so not because they had no ability to choose but because they had no chance to practice making a choice. Freire (1998) explained this in a clear way, "No one is first autonomous and then makes a decision. Autonomy is the result of a process involving various and innumerable decisions" (p. 98). Furthermore, Freire suggested that "autonomy is a process of becoming oneself, a process of maturing, of coming to be" (p. 98). Since such maturity does not happen on a given date, it should be worthwhile to prepare a pedagogy of autonomy to stimulate decision making, responsibility, and respect for freedom.

The tolerance of uncertainty is a must in both personal growth and professional development. Students feel anxious in their learning mainly because they expect a concrete answer from an authority figure such as the teacher. Such expectation causes the sense of uncertainty and secretly deprives of their independent thinking. By helping students make their own choice, students regain the chance to practice the critical thinking and to cope with the multiple answers for controversial issues. The freedom they get from writing class benefits them in the extended field of learning.

Students learn to appreciate the diversity in the process of topic selection. Since there is no single assigned topic from the teacher, students start opening their eyes and mind to test all the possibilities (05-Megan; 05-Michelle Wu; 06-Al; 07-Patrice; 07-Lily). Their taste is enlarged and their contact is extended.

With sharing and responding among peers, they exchange ideas and swap themes and topics. They learn from one another and get to know unfamiliar issues and even unfamiliar classmates. The bias they previously held, such as someone not being their type or a certain topic being not interesting, are broken, and they start noticing that the unfamiliar peers and themes might be the secret garden they have never touched. Such taste of appreciation could not be cultivated in the class with assigned topics.

To conclude, the answer to what this study brought to us as English writing educators was the confirmation of EFL student writers' potential and ability to choose their own themes, and by so doing, they would be motivated in learning and be empowered in both personal and professional development. After all, "education is not an affair of 'telling' and being told, but an active and constructive process" (Dewey, 1966, cited in Shor, 1996).

Conclusion

This study showed that EFL students' self-selected reading and writing genres and themes were more diverse and at a higher level of proficiency and difficulty than those of pre-set textbooks. This discovery casts doubt on the assumption that EFL students are incapable and unwilling to select their own topics for reading and writing. It also suggested that cultivating the opportunity for self-regulated learning activates students' potential and strengthens their motivation within the learning process. The findings provide insights for English writing educators, who may, in the future, bravely encourage students to have their own choice when reading and writing. With careful guidelines and sincere support, the application of self-chosen themes can be successfully carried out.

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Appendix A

Table 5. Top 35 Self-selected Themes

Ranking	Theme	Frequency	Percent
1	Books	233	13.92%
2	Health	144	8.60%
3	Travel	141	8.42%
4	People	119	7.11%
5	Technology	103	6.15%
6	Movies	93	5.56%
7	Life	92	5.50%
8	Culture	78	4.66%
9	Business	67	4%
10	Arts and Entertainment	63	3.76%
11	Food	61	3.64%
12	Society	50	2.99%
13	Sport	44	2.63%
14	Politics	44	2.63%
15	News	42	2.51%
16	City	41	2.45%
17	Songs	39	2.33%
18	Environment	39	2.33%
19	History	36	2.15%
20	Fashion	34	2.03%
21	Festivals	34	2.03%
22	Animals	31	1.85%
23	Arts	30	1.79%
24	Education	25	1.49%
25	Family	22	1.31%
26	Relationship	22	1.31%
27	Diet	19	1.14%
28	Discovery	19	1.14%
29	Love and Beloved	19	1.14%

30	Gender Differences	18	1.08%
31	Perfume	17	1.02%
32	Friendship	16	0.96%
33	Speech	16	0.96%
34	Natural Disaster	15	0.90%
35	Marriage	15	0.90%

Appendix B

Table 6. Frequently-used English Writing Textbooks

No.	English Writing Textbooks
1	Ruetten, M. K. 2003. Developing Composition Skills. 2nd ed. Boston: Thomason/Heinle.
2	Smalley, R. L., M. K. Ruetten, and J. R. Kozyrev. 2001. Refining Composition Skills. 5th ed. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
3	Zemach, D. E., and L. A. Rumisek. 2003. College Writing. Oxford: Macmillan.
4	Hartmann, P. 1999. Quest: Reading and Writing in the Academic World, bk. 2. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
5	Nuttal, G. 2006. College Writing 3. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
6	Fellag, L. R. 2002. Write Ahead: Skills for Academic Success 1. White Plains, NY: Pearson.
7	Pavlik, C., and M. K. Segal. 2007. Interactions 2 Writing: Paragraph Development and Introduction to the Essay, Silver ed. New York: McGraw-Hill ESL/ELT.
8	Blanton, L. L. 2001. Composition Practice, bk. 3. 3rd ed. Boston: Thomson/Heinle.
9	Spaventa, L., and M. Spaventa. 2001. Writing to Learn: From Paragraph to Essay. New York: McGraw-Hill.
10	Folse, K. S., A. Muchmore-Vokoun, and E. V. Solomon. 2004. Great Essays. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Appendix C

Table 7. Top 30 Pre-set Themes in Textbooks

Ranking	Pre-set Theme	Frequency	Percent
1	Technology	26	8.81%
2	Education	24	8.14%
3	Business	21	7.12%
4	City	20	6.78%
5	People	18	6.10%
6	Communication	17	5.76%
7	Family	16	5.42%
8	Arts and Entertainment	15	5.08%
9	Psychology	15	5.08%
10	Advertisement	11	3.73%
11	Health	11	3.73%
12	Jobs	10	3.39%
13	The Natural World	9	3.05%
14	College Stress	9	3.05%
15	Sensory Loss	7	2.37%
16	Ancient Mystery	7	2.37%
17	Friendship	7	2.37%
18	Experiences	7	2.37%
19	Personal Reflection	6	2.03%
20	Money	6	2.03%
21	Leisure and recreation	5	1.69%
22	Memorable Events	4	1.36%
23	Academic Achievement	4	1.36%
24	Celebrations	4	1.36%
25	Important Places	3	1.02%
26	Campus	3	1.02%
27	Time	3	1.02%
28	Tastes and Preferences	3	1.02%
29	Essay	3	1.02%
30	Ceremonies	1	0.34%

About the Author

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Tips for Teachers

Building Confidence as a Precursor to Building Fluency

Satoko Watkins, Ferris University, Yokohama, Japan

As part of my student teaching practicum experience, I had the chance to privately tutor a false beginner ESL student. He had taken over six years of required English courses in middle and high school but, as an international student in Honolulu, was essentially still in the “silent period” as a speaker of English, seldom able to respond to his teacher or classmates. The lessons that I designed, with guidance from my practicum supervisor, allowed him to realize how much English he already knew and to build his confidence. Fluency followed. In just twelve weeks, he made dramatic progress.

Some of the strategies that we employed, such as Total Physical Response (TPR), will be familiar to experienced teachers, and I had learned about TPR in my TESOL courses, too. However, until I saw variations of these activities in action with my student, I could not fully understand or appreciate their potential for building confidence and fluency, particularly in settings where a structural approach and high stakes testing dominate. I hope my observations will help other novice teachers like me visualize the potential of employing TPR, wordless picture books, the Language Experience Approach (LEA), shadowing, and games to build confidence and then fluency in their students, too.

Total Physical Response Variations

In a typical Total Physical Response (TPR) lesson, the teacher gives commands such as *stand up, sit down, touch the floor,* and *point to the cloud.* At first, she models the actions so that students can learn from watching her as they listen to her commands. Soon, students can respond without the teacher’s model, and before long, start to give commands of their own. TPR provides students with comprehensible input and an opportunity to actively respond to the target language without pressure to produce it before they feel ready. In a class of young, active language learners, standing and moving about the classroom is a good idea. However, with reluctant adult students or large crowded classes, such TPR commands may not be practicable. I adapted TPR routines using an assortment of small objects that my student and I could manipulate at his desk.

Week 1

I asked him to pick up and put down a few small items. At first, he was very nervous responding to my commands; however, he gradually became familiar with the actions and the language. After some practice, I asked him to mimic me in return. His commands began as one or two words. For example, he pointed to a green circle and said "*Green circle*." Guessing at what he meant, I picked up the green circle.

Week 2

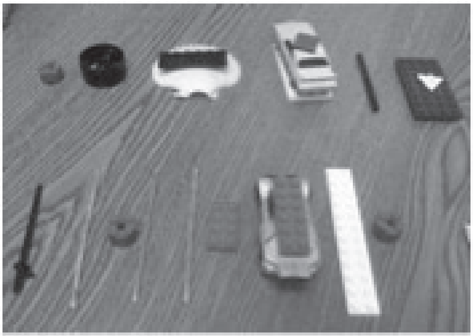
Already he was able to respond to my commands faster and with more confidence. Moreover, when it was his turn to give commands, he began to say, "*Green circle pick up*."

Week 3

I added some new items. He quickly asked me the names for the new objects. I also added "*Can you*" before the commands, saying for example, *"Can you pick up* . . ." and *"Can* you *put down* . . ." He was able to respond to them although he could not yet utilize "*Can you*" phrases in his commands to me.

Weeks 4–6

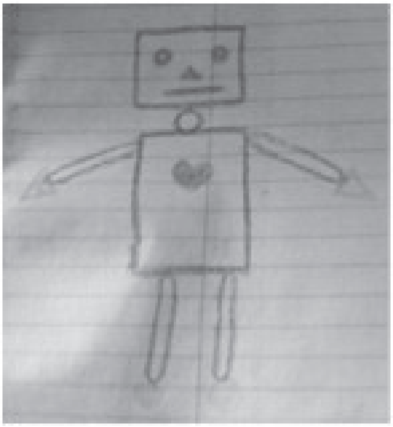
I added more prepositional phrases of location to my commands such as *next to, on top of,* and *under.* He learned to respond to them quickly. When it was his turn to give commands, he gradually started to use the new prepositional phrases as well as *"Can you"* phrases; however, he had difficulty using them in a grammatical way.



For example, he said "*Can you . . . green circle and red square put on*" instead of "*Can you put the green circle on the red square?"* The picture shows an arrangement that I created following my student's commands in Week 6.

Weeks 7–12

For our final TPR activity, we practiced the colors, shapes, and phrases of location using a picture transfer activity. First, we individually drew pictures using the colors, shapes, and objects that we had learned. Next, I told him how to draw my picture with commands such as "*Draw a green circle next to the red square.*" Without looking at my original picture, he drew what he understood from my commands. After some practice, he described his picture to me.



"Reading" a Wordless Picture Book

I showed my student wordless picture books and had him describe what he saw or tell the story he saw in the pictures. This required him to activate English that he already had in a creative way. Being able to do this was a huge confidence builder. It also provided me with diagnostic information about his vocabulary and grammar levels. He started by pointing to the pictures and making one-word utterances such as "*fishing"* or "*art."* By Week 9, he was producing complete sentences such as *"He is drinking water"* and *"He has books."*

At the end of our time together, I asked him for feedback on our materials and routines by rating each one from 1 (not much) to 5 (great) in the categories of Interest, Usefulness, and Difficulty. He rated the wordless books as highly interesting, highly useful, and moderately difficult. However, he expressed a preference for picture search activity books over books with a definite, though wordless, storyline. He found that in activity books, each page stands alone as a task-based exercise, and he had the freedom to choose his point of focus. With wordless story books, he felt less confident about trying to fit his words to the author's story. In the future, I will probably use picture activity books with less proficient students and wordless story books with students who have higher English proficiency or with students who are more confident than this student was. (See Resources for examples of each.)

Language Experience Approach

In the Language Experience Approach (LEA), teachers listen to what students say and write it down for them. Then, students read the story that they have dictated. Since the ideas and words originate with the students, the story is naturally meaningful and comprehensible for them. Moreover, the process of creating the text is student-centered and demonstrates to students that their thoughts and language are valued. In our practice with LEA, particularly at the beginning, I often had to ask my student many questions to elicit a short story. It was somewhat painful for both of us. At the same time, he was generally amazed when he saw his words typed up as a finished sorry, so we continued with the activity. Over time, his growing fluency and sophistication was evident to both of us. More important, he began planning his stories and dictating them to me without my having to prod him with questions. After about ten weeks, he dictated this story:

> *Last Saturday, I went to Koko Marina Shopping Center in Hawaii Kai. It's near my house. It took me 25 minutes by bus. I was not looking for anything particular. I was just walking around. On Sunday, I went to Waikiki Beach with my friend. We surfed again. He did very well, and I did okay. We surfed for three hours, and we were tired.*

Shadowing

In shadowing, students listen to an audio recording or teacher's voice and immediately repeat what they hear. The goal is to focus on and mimic stress and intonation patterns and conversation strategies rather than particular sounds or words. After writing and reading LEA stories for several weeks, I asked him to try shadowing my reading of his stories because I wanted him to focus on the intonation of connected phrases rather than word-by-word reading. He initially had difficulty in shadowing and preferred reproduction or waiting for me to finish a sentence before he repeated it. Gradually, however, he began to shadow me. At first, he was able to pick up only content words, but he became more fluent every week, and in the end, he was able to shadow most function words as well.

Card Games

Games are often used in ESL/EFL classrooms as an effective instructional tool and a means of lowering student anxiety, fostering interaction, and providing an authentic context for language use. My student and I played a simple commercial language learner card game (see Resources) that is a variation of the card game commonly called Go Fish in which players take turns asking each other for particular cards as they try to accumulate matching pairs or sets. The version that we played required my student to ask for pictures of people wearing particular clothes or carrying particular accessories, for example. He was initially confused by *be* verbs and *do* questions and often produced questions such as *"Is she have blue dress?"* However, he improved every week, and at the end of our course, he rated this activity highly in all categories. That is, he considered it useful, interesting, and challenging.

Conclusion

Both my student and I benefitted from using the activities described here. He had fun and developed both confidence and fluency in using his English. I had the opportunity to try using a number of activities that I had learned about as a student but had not seen in use before. I hope other novice teachers will find the following annotated list of resources helpful.

Resources

Anno, M. Anno's Journey. (1997). New York, NY: Putnam & Grosset Group.

Mitsumasa Anno is best known for delightful wordless picture books featuring a traveler on a journey through, for example, Japan, Europe, or the United States. In this book, Anno begins his journey alone, buys a horse, and rides through northern European scenes, experiencing its geography, architecture, and people along the way. The careful "reader" can find mini-stories, visual jokes, and other interesting details in each page. My student found it difficult to tell these stories in his words, but more fluent students will probably enjoy them very much.

Fuchs, M. and Critchley, J. (1986). *Families: 10 card games for language learners*. Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates.

These cards engage language learners in a variety of games similar to the game commonly known as Go Fish. The cards are wordless, so they can be used for any playing in any language.

Hanford, M. (1997). *Where's Waldo now?* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

Where's Waldo and Where's Wally activity books have detailed, colorful illustrations with appealing scenes, famous places, hidden objects, and visual humor. My student began by simply pointing to a scene and describing it with color plus object expressions. Soon, he realized that he knew many verbs that he could use to describe what people were doing. Of course, he enjoyed finding Waldo and his friends, too. Beginners can point and name; intermediate students can describe what they see; advanced students can read the storyline, history, and trivia that appear on each page. Everyone will have fun.

Murphey, T. (2001). Exploring Conversational Shadowing. *Language Teaching Research, 5*(2), 128–155.

This article can provide some important background reading for people who are not familiar with shadowing. Demonstration videos of shadowing techniques are also available on YouTube.

Spot the differences: Art masterpieces mysteries series. (2010). Mineola, NY: Dover.

Spot the Differences books feature two versions of world famous paintings shown side-by-side with the original on the left and a fake on the right. In the margins are short stories about the painter, the painting, or the historic period depicted in the painting. Students with varying levels of English proficiency can use the books in different ways. This series has the added benefit of being great for adults who can enjoy a game-like activity without feeling that it is childish.

About the Author

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Teaching the Concept of Allophones Using Analogies

Alice Yin Wa Chan, City University of Hong Kong

Introduction

ESL and EFL teachers frequently encounter questions about complex points of English that are difficult to answer without overwhelming students with linguistic information that they can neither absorb nor appreciate. For example, students may ask questions when they notice that the pronunciation of the [l] in *laugh* and the [l] in *dull* are not exactly the same or that the four [t] sounds in *Tom pet the little kitten* are different. Teachers with formal training in linguistics might be tempted to address such questions

- by launching into a lecture on allophonic variation and rules of assimilation,
- by explaining that the [l] in *laugh* is a "clear" [l] with the front of the tongue raised whereas the [l] in *dull* is a "dark" [l] with the back of the tongue raised, or
- by trying to help students see features of the articulators using a mirror to see the position of the tongue when pronounced those two words.

Soon, students are overwhelmed with jargon and/or information and may be sorry that they raised the question.

Using Analogies to Explain Complex Notions

Over the years, I have learned to resist the temptation to explain linguistic complexities in technical terms and instead look for concrete analogies that my students are already familiar with as a way to answer some of their language questions. For example, I have found that variations in printed or written letters of the English alphabet serves as a useful analogy for teaching the concept of allophonic variation for answering questions like the ones posed in the introduction above.

All students of English have been exposed to different ways of writing letters of the English alphabet. They know, for example, that whether we write A, a, *a,* a, or ɑ, the letter is still the first letter of the English alphabet. Teachers can ask different students to write the letter *a* on the board. No doubt, students' versions of the letter will vary. Teachers can then draw an analogy between the different ways of writing an English letter and the different ways of pronouncing an English phoneme. The letter is an abstract concept, but the versions that we write or see are the actual realizations of the letter and may vary. Similarly, the phoneme is an abstract concept, yet the versions that we utter or hear are the actual realizations of the phoneme and may vary.

Similarly, we can use analogies to show that phonemes may be modified by their phonetic environment. To do this, I write a few other letters in cursive form on the board, such as:

b c q

Next, I ask different students to add the letter *a,* also in cursive form, to the given letters. Now, we are looking at something like this:

ba ca qa

Then, I ask students to pay attention to how the cursive *a* is connected to the *b, c* and *q* and to identify the modifications made to accommodate the *a* to the previous letters. With some guidance, students are generally able to point out, in one way or another, that the *a* after *b* begins at a higher level than after *c* and *q*. Furthermore, they can see that although both the *a* after *c* and the *a* after *q* begin at a lower level, the connecting line after *q* has a steeper slope than the connecting line after *c.* These differences between the different versions of *a* are inevitable because of the influence of the environments in which they occur, but no matter whether the *a* begins at a higher or lower level, we still identify all the variations as different realizations of the same letter.

The same is true of sounds in the language. The sound /f/ can be pronounced in slightly different ways because of the influence of its environments. Notice, for example, the differences in the articulation of the *f* before a vowel with rounded lips as in *fool* or before a vowel with spread lips as in *feel*. These different versions of /f/ are different realization of the same sound, that is, allophones of the phoneme /f/.

Conclusion

Abstract concepts can be difficult to address, but using concrete analogies, especially those with which learners are already familiar, can make them more teachable. The technique described here has proven highly successful in teaching the notion of allophonic variation in my classes.

About the Author

Alice Yin Wa Chan is Associate Professor of English at City University of Hong Kong. Her teaching interests include contrastive analysis of Chinese and English and English linguistics, particularly phonetics, phonology, and grammar. Her research interests encompass second language acquisition, grammar, phonetics, phonology, and lexicography. Her email address is enalice@cityu.edu.hk.

Using Exchange Diaries with High School Students

Chieko Okada, Doho High School, Nagoya, Japan

English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers understand well the value of having students keep journals as a means of building fluency in the target language. They know about journal-writing variations, ranging from private, personal journals to teacher-student dialog journals. However, the thought of managing, checking, and responding to dozens, and possibly hundreds, of student journals can be overwhelming. As a result, they seldom seriously consider making journal writing part of their English class routine. Recently, however, my colleagues and I have discovered not only the benefits of dialog journals but that implementing a dialog journal writing program does not have to be as difficult a task as we once feared it would be.

I teach English at a private Japanese high school, but I think teachers in many other settings will identify with my students and school. First, our classes are large; it is not unusual to have 40 students in each class. Second, most of my students have weak academic skills, particularly in English. Third, they see no purpose for their required courses in English either at the present or in the future. They tend to think that English is just about memorization and that English classes are boring. About six years ago, my colleagues and I decided that we wanted to counter their impressions of both English language and English classes. We tried making several changes in our routine, but one of our most successful projects, now in its fourth year, has been a form of dialog journal writing that we call "exchange diaries."

The Initial Attempt

We began by asking students to write in a diary once a week as homework for their writing classes. We checked their journals and corrected their mistakes. Some students showed considerable improvement in their writing, but most struggled with the assignment and thought of it as a burden. Over time, many simply stopped writing. After two years of experimentation, we reexamined our goals and procedures and made some changes. We still wanted the assignment to be something that students could learn from as well as enjoy. Ideally, it would be sustained over time and show students the pleasure of communication. However, we realized that we had not taken the time to give students effective instruction or examples for diary writing. In addition, we realized that our careful checking of the journals discouraged both students and teachers. If we continued to correct students' mistakes, they would continue to be demotivated. Of course, teachers found reading and checking the journals to be extremely time consuming. The decision to forego correction made the activity easier on busy teachers and more pleasurable for students. In the end, we decided to use our reconceived exchange diaries as the homework assignment in 12th grade writing classes.

Procedure

Here is how we implement exchange diaries in our classes now.

In the first lesson of the year, we introduce the idea of using exchange diaries as their homework assignment.

Then, we give one notebook to a pair of students and hang a chart on the classroom wall showing their partners and the rules (see below) for using the exchange diaries. A sample chart might look like this:

Student #	Name	Student #	Name
No. 1	Hiroaki Ando	No. 34	Akiko Yamada
No. 2	Takashi Itoh	No. 33	Maki Yamada
No. 3	Yuki Itoh	No. 32	Yuri Miyata

Exchange Diary Partners

We frequently match boys and girls as writing partners. At first, some teachers were afraid that something awkward or wrong could happen, for example, that they might fall in love. After discussing our concerns, however, we decided that it was important for young people to learn how to deal with awkward or uncomfortable situations, within reason of course. We also decided to read the diaries three times during the year just to be sure that the tone and content remained respectful. We pointed out to students that they cannot choose their co-workers in the work place, but rather they have to learn to get good results by cooperating with them. In other words, we asked them to try their best on this assignment just as they would have to do on the job later. In four years, we have not had any serious trouble.

We give the students an example of an introductory diary entry like this one.

April 5, 2010

Dear Takashi,

Hello, my name is Chieko Okada, and I live in Kanie-cho, which is a small town. It is to the west of Nagoya. It takes 40 minutes to come to Doho High School from my house. The train is always crowded. After that, I ride my bike to school. It is tough, but I enjoy school life in Doho. Now we're 3rd year students, so we have to prepare for the next stage in our lives—going to college or finding a job.

I'd like introduce my family. There are 5 people in my family, my grandmother, my parents, my brother and me. Next time, I'm going to tell you a lot about them. I want to know a lot about you.

Anyway I like English very much. What subject do you like best? Let's enjoy this exchange diary.

Good night,
Chieko Okada

The Rules

Here are the rules that we have established for this project, along with a few comments about how they have worked.

Rule 1:

You will write exchange diaries with your partner for one year. We will not change your partner. At first, students are nervous by how long the "assignment" sounds, but gradually they seem to enjoy communicating with each other. Nearly all students have continued writing exchange diaries for the full year.

Rule 2:

Please try to enjoy writing English. Your teacher will not correct your mistakes. We do not correct any mistakes in the diaries although we continue to cover accuracy in our writing lessons. Gradually students' sentences get longer and smoother.

Rule 3:

Now you are 12th graders and you will have to take interview style tests for college and jobs. You need to learn how to express your ideas and listen to others. Keep in mind how this activity will help you prepare for these tasks. Nearly all students do their best because they want to be seen as good partners and because they see how this opportunity for communication applies to their future.

Rule 4:

Please write 10 times or more by the final exam of the first term. Most students not only meet the first semester goal but also continue for the whole academic year. This participation rule is used to assign their homework grade. With fewer than ten entries per term, students' homework grades are lowered somewhat.

Rule 5:

Each diary entry should be at least 80 words. Most students regularly write more than 100 words.

Rule 6:

If you have some trouble, please talk about it first with your partner. If it is impossible for you to resolve, talk to your teacher. Since they are in their last year of high school, it is a good time for them to learn how to negotiate solutions to their problems with each other. They need to learn this skill because they will soon be in the real world. Thus, this assignment is about real life communication, not just about English. In four years, several students have come to me because their partner stopped writing for various reasons. In a few cases, I asked them to write their diaries to me. However, most students have managed to solve their problems by themselves.

Concluding Thoughts

My colleagues and I like this assignment because it takes little time to administer but has a highly positive impact on student motivation and learning. It also has several elements of a successful cooperative learning environment—a need to work together, individual accountability, equal participation, and interaction. Students love getting to know one of their classmates in a special way and having an authentic, communicative experience. They also realize that they can teach and learn from each other.

About the Author

Chieko Okada is a world traveler and part-time teacher. She began her professional life working in a trading company and enjoys using this experience to create meaningful, authentic experiences for her high school English students.

Grammar and Beyond

Review by Rick Nelson
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Grammar and Beyond, Level 1, Student's Book. Randi Reppen. 2012. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9780521142939. $43.75.

Grammar and Beyond, Level 1, Student's Book, Workbook, and Writing Skills Interactive. Randi Reppen, Kerry S. Vrabel, Neta Simpkins Cahill, Hilary Hodge, Elizabeth Iannotti, Robyn Brinks Lockwood, Kathryn O'Dell, and Susan Hills. 2012. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9781139123044. $62.50. (These three components may be purchased separately.)

Grammar and Beyond, Level 1, Class Audio CD. 2012. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9780521143301. $31.25

Grammar and Beyond, Level 1, Teacher Support Resource Book with CD-ROM. Paul Carne, Jenni Currie Santamaria, and Lisa Varandani. 2012. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9781107694316. $31.25.

Grammar and Beyond is a four-text series for ESL students at the following levels:

	Description	TOEFL IBT	CEFF Levels
Level 1	Beginning	20–34	A1–A2
Level 2	Low intermediate to intermediate	35–54	A2–B1
Level 3	High intermediate	55–74	B1–B2
Level 4	Advanced	75–95	B2–C1

This series includes four student texts with accompanying CDs, a teacher resource book with a CD containing PowerPoint presentations and unit tests, and a numerical key to access unit-by-unit teaching helps online. *Grammar and Beyond* could also serve as an excellent base text for grammar and writing courses.

The series presents a theory-to-practice approach with exercises that lead to writing assignments. Using the *Cambridge International Corpus* as an informing source, the authors have prepared lessons that are research based, that identify language features that reflect actual North American usage, that focus on structures used more frequently, that employ vocabulary drawn from the *Academic Word List*, and that note the differences between spoken and written English. The student texts include a section of common student errors, with data drawn from the *Cambridge Learner Corpus,* a database that includes student exam essays written by English language learners. Also included is a workbook with exercises that can be completed in class or as homework. Teachers and students will find each lesson fresh, direct, clear, and carefully sequenced, with familiar grammar topics and no instructional gimmickry.

The texts are graphically beautiful, well researched, well organized, and complete. Their completeness makes them suitable for both classroom and individual study. In their completeness, however, the texts are also *big* (each Student's Book is almost 400 pages). Students may tire of carrying such big books. Similarly, the volume of material presented may make each text a good choice for a long course (perhaps many months or a year) but not for a shorter course. The cost of each text is not inordinately high, especially in light of the amount of material that is included, but where per-copy cost is an important consideration, program directors and teachers may wish to consider a simpler, less all-inclusive series. Still, the authors and the publisher have "done their homework" to produce a unified series that deserves a high recommendation.

About the Reviewer

Rick Nelson is an assistant professor in the Department of English Language Teaching and Learning at BYU–Hawaii and teaches writing and grammar courses to ESL and TESOL students.

Sunshine, Level 3

Review by Aubrey Olsen Bronson
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Sunshine 3: Student's Book. Marta Graciela García Lorea and Elida Beatriz Messina. 2011. Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd. 92 pp. ISBN: 9781859645918. £14.00

Sunshine 3: Activity Book. Marta Graciela García Lorea and Elida Beatriz Messina. 2011. Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd. 79 pp. ISBN: 9781859645925. £8.00

Sunshine 3: Teacher's Resource Pack. Marta Graciela García Lorea and Elida Beatriz Messina. 2011. Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd. ISBN: 9781859646144. £65. 00

Sunshine 3: Big Book. Marta Graciela García Lorea and Elida Beatriz Messina. 2011. Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd. 16 pp. ISBN: 9781859646946. £30. 00

The Sunshine series is designed to help kindergarten students improve their listening and speaking skills in English. Level 3 is the third of three levels in this series. The four components of level 3 include the Student's Book, the Activity Book, the Teacher's Resource Pack, and the Big Book.

The Student's Book is a lively, spiral-bound paperback with colorful pictures on every page. The illustrations introduce the characters for the series: Kim, Tony, Dan, and Jane (the children) and Miss White (the teacher), along with Emma the Elephant, Paul the Parrot, and Vicky the Snail. There are eight units in the *Student's Book* including "My School," "Toys," "Animal World," "Our Families," "Food," "Happy Birthday Party," "Seasons & Clothes," and "In the City." Each unit has eight lessons. At the end of the book, there are finger puppets of Emma, Paul, and Vicky, which can be cut out and used to enhance the lessons. Each Student's Book also includes a copy of the CD *Songs*.

While the Student's Book offers brightly colored illustrations, the pages in the Activity Book are black and white so that children can color the pictures themselves. The activity pages correspond to the units and lessons from the Student's Book and offer opportunities to color, match, count, and trace the items on the page.

The Teacher's Resource Pack has six main components: *Class* and *Songs* CDs, a birthday chart, a height chart, a resource book, and a set of word cards. *Class* contains 83 tracks, providing audio samples for each of the lessons in the Student's Book. The *Songs* features 19 songs and rhymes such as "If You're Happy," "Head and Shoulders," and "Here are Grandma's Glasses." The resource book provides printed lyrics for the tracks on *Songs*. It also offers teaching ideas and guidelines, suggestions for developing classroom routines, and games and crafts. The word cards are 8½" x 11" laminated cards highlighting letters and vocabulary words from the lessons.

The Big Book contains selected pages from the Student's Book in a larger format (18.9» x 26.8»). The Big Book allows teachers to lead the class in whole-group activities for two of the lessons in each unit.

Overall, the series seems well organized and age appropriate for young learners. The components in the series are nicely correlated to each other and provide the type of flexibility that would allow individual teachers to adapt the materials according to their needs.

About the Reviewer

Aubrey Olsen Bronson teaches ESL and TESOL courses at Brigham Young University–Hawaii. Her interests include curriculum development, distance education, and teaching English to young learners.