

Editorial

We warmly welcome you to our first issue of *The Journal of Creative Practices in Language Learning and Teaching* (CPLT).

The journal, CPLT was born as a project of the Department of Research and Industrial Linkages of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah. The aim of the journal is to provide a venue for scholars, researchers, academicians, language instructors and students to publish their work online regarding creative practices in language learning and teaching. By sharing their research, work and experience with others from different language backgrounds, we hope that the authors' work will become more accessible to readers worldwide.

It has taken quite some time in making CPLT a reality. We are grateful to many who have expended effort and support to make the idea of publishing this online journal come to fruition. In particular, we, the Editorial Board, would like to express our gratitude to the following parties in making the birth of the first issue of CPLT a reality: the university, the international advisory board, the editorial board, and colleagues on the special task committee. Last but certainly not least, our sincere thanks to the authors who were willing to submit their work to this first issue, and the invaluable help from the content reviewers, and the language reviewers for editing and formatting the manuscripts.

What is creative practices in language learning and teaching? For us, we view creative as the synonym of try, change, invent, innovate or new. As such, we refer to creative practices in language learning and teaching as any efforts to encourage creative learning and innovative teaching which involve (i) change, (2) development, (3) improvement or (4) novelty (De Lano, Riley, & Crookes., 1994). Any work involving changes, development, improvement or novelty to promote creative learning skills and abilities and active learner-centred learning approaches in the language learning class are included in the scope of the journal. Creative practices or innovation usually takes place in pedagogies, learning activities, assessments, teacher training, ICT and digital media, and curricula (Cachia, Ferrari, Ala-Mutka, & Punie, 2010). For example, to change the traditional assessment practices to assessments through presentations, group work, peer feedback and portfolios; to teach students creative writing and reading; to supplement the traditional lecture type of teaching with ICT; to train the language instructors to become reflective practitioners, are some of the examples of creative practices. In short, creative practices in language learning and teaching are the effort or endeavour to make creative processes and collaborative ways of learning and teaching more explicit.

There are five articles published in issue one. In the first article, Yoke Lin Loh identified errors when paraphrasing so that preventive measures such as effective pedagogic strategies and learning activities can be devised and conducted to reduce these errors. The results revealed errors at three levels, namely linguistics (grammar, syntax, and lexis), conventions (writing and paraphrasing), and semantics (content of message). In order to facilitate learners in honing their skills in paraphrasing, she proposed two pedagogical strategies with the hope that by implementing these strategies, ESL learners will be confident in using their own words to paraphrase academic texts with minimal errors.

Hazlina Abdul Halim and her co-researchers, in the second article present their study which was based on Dornyei and Scott's (1997) model of communication strategy, aimed to determine and categorize the type of Malaysian non-native speakers' communication strategies (CS) in learning French with regard to speaking skills. The overall findings indicated that among the most frequently used communication strategies were the use of literal translation (26.4%), the use of all-purpose words (18.4%), topic abandonment (12.8%) and foreignizing from English (8.8%). The findings have resulted in a framework for foreign language instruction and materials design. It also suggested that further intensive research should be conducted to design and develop a communication strategies instruction framework which would lead to the development of a comprehensive framework for the incorporation of communication strategies in foreign language learning instruction, materials and tasks for Malaysian learners.

In the third article, Siu-lun Lee and Yongyin Chen reported the effectiveness of collaborative language tasks in classrooms teaching Cantonese as a second language in Hong Kong. Classroom observation, questionnaires and interviews were used to look at learners' views about using collaborative tasks in language classrooms. Questionnaire and interview results show that students have positive views about collaborative tasks. Classroom observation data shows that students have made use of communication strategies. Bahador Sadeghi and Roya Safari examined the effects of two types of production modes (written and oral output) on the productive English vocabulary knowledge in article four. The results indicated that two types of production tasks played positive roles in improving the productive vocabulary knowledge of the learners. As a result, they recommended applying output tasks to the syllabus, text book designers and teachers.

Learning by means of mobile devices is becoming more popular nowadays. Efforts are being made in all academic disciplines, including foreign language teaching and learning to provide learning opportunities anywhere and anytime. Teow Ghee Tan and his co-researchers, in article five, report the attempt of a Mandarin as a foreign language class which utilized Web 2.0 tools to create a flexible learning environment which could also be used to encourage mobile learning. The development of Mandarin learning podcasts to be used as a supplementary tool in learning Mandarin is explained in detail in this article. The findings showed that the use of podcasts as a learning tool was beneficial and podcast-based learning can be implemented as one of the creative ways to teach or learn a foreign language.

CPLT welcomes manuscripts regarding creative practices in language learning and teaching. We look forward to your contributions to the journal in the future. Issue two and subsequent issues are open for submissions throughout the year.

Teow Ghee Tan and Chui Chui Ho

REFERENCES

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