

## Editorial

Welcome to the most recent issue of *Applied Research on English Language* that completes two years of publication. Since the publication of the first issue, *Applied Research on English Language* has been receiving submissions from around the globe. In this respect, I would like to put on record, one more time, my profound gratitude to the Editorial Board Members and also to the referees who went out of their way to provide us with constructive feedback.

In this issue, the first article by Naoko Taguchi examines the effects of individual difference factors on changing pragmatic abilities among L2 learners of English. Her participants were 48 Japanese EFL students in an English-medium university in Japan who completed a pragmatic speaking test that assessed their ability to produce two speech acts: requests and opinions, in high- and low-imposition situations. Speech acts were evaluated for appropriateness and fluency. The results of the study reveals significant effects of individual factors on pragmatic change, but the effects appeared differently between appropriateness and fluency.

The next study belongs to Thomas Payne and is a qualitative study. The author investigates the uses of *be* in Contemporary English. Based on the study, one easy claim and one more difficult claim are proposed. The easy claim is that the traditional distinction between *be* as a lexical verb and *be* as an auxiliary is faulty. The harder claim is that there is a syntactic distinction between lexical-*be* and auxiliary-*be*, but that distinction does not coincide with the copular vs. non-copular usages. Rather, the syntactic distinction between lexical and auxiliary *be* has an entirely different, semantic motivation based on stativity vs.

activity. In this connection, the author challenges a major assumption of traditional grammar – namely that every English sentence requires a lexical verb. As the author argues, the proposals in the paper bridge the gap between theoretical and applied linguistics and have the potential to simplify significantly the conceptualization, teaching and learning of English grammar.

The third study by Marefat and Mohammadzadeh is a genre analysis of literature research article abstracts. The authors analyzed 90 English and Persian abstracts written in the field of literature based on the IMRD (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion) and CARS (Create A Research Space) models. The results demonstrated that literature RA writers generally focus on Introduction and Results, neglect Method and Discussion, and do not mention the niche in previous related work. Further to this, the study shows that literature abstracts generally matched CARS more than IMRD. Next, the authors show that abstracts written by Persian native speakers have minor deviations from both the Persian and the international norms.

Roohani, Rahimi and Alikhani's study focuses on the effects of captioning on L2 listening comprehension and vocabulary learning. To these ends, the authors designed a computer software program and asked 200 EFL learners (100 high-intermediate and 100 low-intermediate level students) to participate in their experiment. The participants were randomly divided into four groups: captioned (listening to texts twice with captions), non-captioned (listening to texts twice without captions), first-captioned (listening to texts first with captions and then without captions), and second-captioned (listening to texts first without captions and then with captions) groups. The authors argue that captioned stories are more effective than the non-captioned ones.

Moreover, as the authors argue, caption ordering have no significant effect on L2 listening comprehension.

In the fifth study, Gooniband Shoostari, Jalilifar and Khazaei examine the impact of the application of mobile devices for teaching English vocabulary items to 123 Iranian semi-illiterates (70 female, and 53 male learners; age range 35-55). The authors intended to see if the way of presenting materials and guidelines (formal vs. informal) through cell-phone would have any significant effect(s). The results show that the succinct nature of today's short message service (SMS) texts allows for a more successful application of a more informal style of language in the realm of teaching English to semi-illiterates. The study also shows that annotated materials can help semi-illiterates.

Taleb and Fotovatnia's study sets out to test a basic prediction made by the Revised Hierarchical Model (RHM). The prediction is that at early stages of language acquisition, strong L2-L1 lexical links are formed and these links weaken with increasing proficiency, although they do not disappear even at higher levels of language development. Two groups of highly proficient and two groups of elementary L2 learners were tested on noncognate stimuli with episodic recognition tasks in both forward (L1-L2) and backward (L2-L1) directions. The pattern observed for the elementary L2 learners in both directions was consistent with the prediction of the RHM. The results showed the existence of strong lexical links in the backward direction at the elementary level but no such links were found in the forward direction. Contrary to the predictions of the RHM, however, L2-L1 lexical links were found to be lost at higher levels of proficiency.

Shahnazari-Dorcheh, in the next study, develops and validates an L1 Persian reading span test for measuring working memory of L1 Persian EFL learners. The test is used in a study with 140 participants at three different proficiency levels. The results of an item analysis, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha, display an internal reliability of .844 and .790 for the RST processing and recall scores, respectively. Accordingly, the author suggests that the newly developed test is reliable and can be used to measure working memory capacity in future studies.

As the next study by Adams-Goertel shows, the usefulness of teaching pronunciation in language instruction remains controversial. Though past research suggests that teachers can make little or no difference in improving their students' pronunciation, current findings suggest that second language pronunciation can improve to be near native-like with the implementation of certain criteria such as the utilization of prosodic elements. With the emphasis on meaningful communication and the understanding that speech production is affected by speech perception, the author argues that there is a need to integrate prosodics with communicative activities.

Finally, Nemati and Azizi describe how a new technique called Draft-Specific Scoring (DSS) was devised in order to use grading as a motivating rather than demotivating device. The technique works in this way: The score the learners receive improves as a result of the improvement in the quality of the revisions they make. The experimental study the authors discuss was an attempt to check the effect of the use of this technique on three measures of fluency, grammatical complexity and accuracy. As reported by Nemati and Azizi, DSS helped learners improve in all these measures while the

control group receiving only error feedback without DSS only improved in fluency.

We thank all the contributors who submitted their articles to *Applied Research on English Language*. Although we had to turn many of these insightful articles down for various academic reasons, we will be looking forward to receiving any future paper they may want to submit to the journal.

Summer has come again and we wish you a wonderful season! We would be glad to receive your comments and suggestions! Our email is: [jare@res.ui.sc.ir](mailto:jare@res.ui.sc.ir).

Warmest regards,  
**Saeed Ketabi (PhD, Editor-in-Chief)**

