

## The Editor's Message:

*Sawatdee krup,*

I'm the new editor for the Journal, taking over for Dr. Sunanta Bell, who's now happily settling down with her family in the UK. In fact, this issue celebrates the English Department's first international conference entitled "Voices in ELT" (June 10-11, 2011) by including several papers that were presented at the event.

Further, I'm pleased to say that we've made a few major changes to the Journal. First, we have twelve articles, as compared to five in the last issue, and nine are research based. Each author's profile is put at the end of the article. Also, there are some other interesting columns: Inspirational Poems and Stories, and a book review. Second, the editorial board and reviewer team have been enlarged, with 16 experts from Thammasat and 27 from other institutions, both in Thailand and abroad. I'm glad so many well-known applied linguists have lent a hand. Third, due to the size of the volume, we have had to resort to A4 size paper. An undergrad from Ubon Ratchathani University Tanong Raksasiri has done the design for the covers.

The twelve articles included in this volume have undergone rigorous review. We start with a pair of papers on ELT and education in general. Then, we move on to a research paper on teaching vocabulary and four papers on teaching reading. Next is a group of three papers on teaching writing, one on culture and the last on corpora and ELT.

Leading off, **Jodi Crandall** (University of Maryland, Baltimore County), the plenary speaker at our June ELT conference, draws on her vast experience to talk about ELT teacher professional development. Her speech included the changing views of professional development and its models, and some new professional development approaches: Lesson Study, Reflective Inquiry, and Study Circle or Professional Learning Community—while incorporating methods from other disciplines such as math and science. Also taking a macro view of education in Thailand, **Richard Watson Todd**, of King Mongkut University of Technology Thonburi, examines the Educational Ministry's views on ELT in Thailand. He analyzes several published documents to arrive at some positive and some not-so-positive conclusions, but proposes steps to remedy the situation. The research of **Suphawit Pookcharoen** (Thammasat University) goes to the heart of language learning—vocabulary—especially as it applies to Thai students. Based on questionnaires and student interviews, he discovers and critiques a host of strategies perceived as useful but not necessarily in frequent use. Next, we have **Bundit Anuyahong's** use of graphic organizers in English reading lessons for first-year engineering students at Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology. He offers a simple lesson plan and materials based on graphic organizers. **Melada Sudajit-apa**, of Thammasat University, deals with undergraduate students' use of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies. She suggests that reading teachers explain both types of strategies to both high- and low-achievers, and that readers should be allowed to use a combination of strategies when reading. In the sixth paper, **Usuma Chuenchompoo** (also from Thammasat University) shows how writing a summary from an outline can improve undergraduate reading ability. She suggests writing a summary from an outline.

Next, some KMUTT professors show how short stories can be used to improve engineering students' critical thinking skills, raising awareness of the importance of literature for science students. Using Bloom's timeless taxonomy, authors **Thanis Bunsom, Sompatu Vungthong and Wareesiri Singhasiri** have students form a book club to discuss ten short stories, revealing, among other

things, that literature may yield more than one interpretation. **Wen-hsien Yang** (National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality & Tourism, Taiwan) takes a new approach to teaching English for Hospitality and Tourism to undergraduate Taiwanese students. Using Word-Smith 5.0, he derives a list of keywords from authentic tourist brochures, hoping to instill accuracy and authenticity in the students' ESP writing. Next, Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics at KMUTT **Montarat Rungruangthum** interviews a small group of applied linguistics doctoral students about their anxiety, and how they coped with it, when writing their first assignment in English. Her respondents say their main problems were with organizing thoughts and presenting ideas. Most dealt with their anxiety by stopping writing or reading more about it ("Focusing strategies").

In a process-oriented study, **Supong Tangkiengsirisin** (Thammasat University) explores how first-year MA students deal with their teachers' written feedback. He categorizes this feedback as surface-level, clarification-level, and content-level. He finds out that direct feedback, or the teacher's corrections, seems to be the most effective. Next, **Han Hui** (Zhejiang Agricultural and Forestry University, China) examines the beliefs of a large group of secondary-school Chinese teachers on the importance of culture in ELT. Unfortunately, despite the number of teachers who see the value of teaching culture, little time is actually allotted to it as compared to grammar and other "practical" aspects of communication.

In the last paper of this issue, plenary speaker **Wirote Aroonmanakun** (Chulalongkorn University) describes how ELT teachers can benefit from corpora—via concordancing programs (e.g. AntConc) and online websites (e.g. BNC)—and other innovations like blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Skype and smart phones. Drawing on his computational linguistics and electrical engineering backgrounds, he describes activities that enhance students' knowledge of collocation, synonyms, translation and culture—stressing edutainment. In describing the small amount of research done in this area, he advocates more research on corpora in ELT. Lastly, he ends with a thoughtful reminder: Instead of complaining about students being inattentive, teachers should try to adjust to the rapidly changing technologies, something with which the new generation are more familiar—so as not to let themselves be the main obstacle in the system!

In **Inspirational Stories**, we have a story beautifully written by Jerry McFarland, a retired school supervisor of Student Services, in Fredericton, Canada. In **Book Reviews**, Thomas Hoy reviews Stephen Conlon's (2009) book *Chaos in the Classroom*.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the reviewers and language editors who have worked hard to improve all the papers. My thanks also go to the editorial board which has done all the clerical work.

Now, without further ado, please enjoy the reading, krup! *apisak*.....

*PS: Any comments/suggestions/complaints—please direct them to me at [apisakubu@yahoo.co.th](mailto:apisakubu@yahoo.co.th).*