

Notes from the Editor-in-Chief

This issue of Thailand TESOL Journal brings three articles to you that are of great interest to Thai educators. The first article, by Richard Watson Todd, is entitled “How is English assessed at Thai schools?” The author reports on a survey of hundreds of Thai teachers to ascertain the kinds of assessments they use. Findings indicate that grades are largely based on tests with multiple-choice items still quite popular but that many teachers, particularly those in secondary schools outside of Bangkok are creating and employing formative assessments in their classrooms. Reasons for the continued reliance on tests for grading needs to be further studied.

The second article is “An investigation of the transactional competence of international university students performing task-based communication” by Mike Seeley. This study examined communication strategies employed over a 12-week period by students in five dyads in which one student was Thai and the other was from another Asian country. During this period, various communication strategies were taught to the students. Results showed that while some of the students were able to use some communication strategies in the pre-test, all of the dyads improved in the total number of strategies they used, which indicates that communication strategies can and should be taught explicitly. With respect to specific strategies, expressing confirmation was the most common strategy before and after treatment, but miming was also common.

The final article in this issue is a report of a research project in progress on university instructors’ perceptions of 21st century competencies in their English courses. Specifically, Wattanavorakijkul employed online questionnaires and focus group interviews to investigate whether the faculty felt ready for Thailand 4.0 in terms of their own competencies and in terms of their teaching non-English majors. The results indicate that the teachers are confident in their ability to develop their students’ 21st century skills and that they are providing learning activities that they believe are facilitating this learning. Nonetheless, valid assessments are needed to measure student growth, and teachers need time and opportunities to collaborate with other teachers for their own professional development of 21st century skills and 21st century skill pedagogy.

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue and find it useful in your own teaching, research, or professional development.

Professor Leslie Barratt