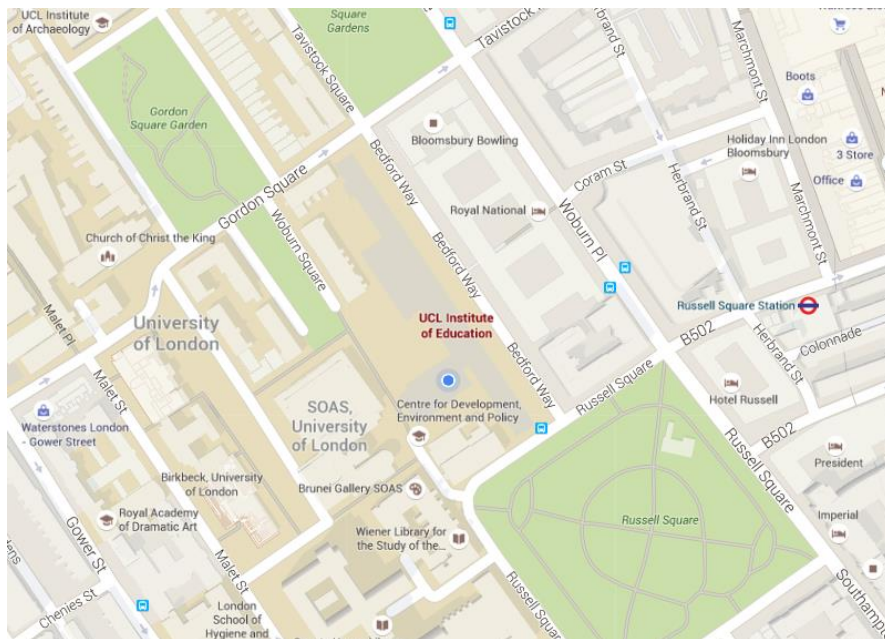


# London Second Language Acquisition Research Forum (L-SLARF): PhD Conference 2023

**Date:** 10.00 am - 4.15 pm, Saturday 11 November, 2023

**Venue:** C3.09, IOE, University College London, 20 Bedford Way,  
London WC1H 0AL



Join online at  
<https://ucl.zoom.us/j/96339228441>

## Programme

<b>10:00 - 10:10</b>	<b>Welcome, introduction and opening remarks</b>
10.10 - 10.45	Tanja Bloss (Kingston University)
	How might learners' experience of assignment feedback be enhanced in a German course at A level in a sixth form college
	Discussant: Froso Argyri
10.45 - 11.20	Alfaf Albakistani (Birkbeck College)
	How skills-based classroom activities shape learners' foreign language enjoyment: A mixed-modelling longitudinal examination
	Discussant: Paul Booth
<b>11.20 - 11:40</b>	<b>Break</b>
11:40 - 12.15	Abrar Alshehri (University of Reading)
	The contribution of second language productive knowledge and processing speed of collocations to oral fluency
	Discussant: Kazuya Saito
12.15 - 12:50	Ahlam Shaluf (University of Reading)
	Effect of task type on multidimensional task engagement and second language vocabulary learning
	Discussant: Eloi Puig Mayenco
<b>12.50 - 14.00</b>	<b>Lunch break</b>
14.00 - 14.35	Xin Rong (University College London)
	Writing performance in computer-mediated collaborative writing: the role of task complexity
	Discussant: Pauline Foster
14.35 - 15.10	Suet-Sin Kristy Cheung (University College London)
	Exploring TBLT practices in Hong Kong senior secondary schools through the framework of Intended Constructive Alignment
	Discussant: Parvaneh Tavakoli
<b>15.10 - 15.30</b>	<b>L-SLARF meeting (for non-student members)</b>

Note: Each paper will be 35 minutes (20 mins presentation and 15 mins for Q&A)

# Abstracts

## **How might learners' experience of assignment feedback be enhanced in a German course at A level in a sixth form college: An outline of the key findings and tentative conclusions**

**Tanja Bloss**

The enquiry for my EdD research project focuses on learning German at A level and the feedback processes involved when learning German at an advanced level. The investigation is a qualitative study to provide a voice to previous students of the course in order to frame students' engagement in the feedback process. The research project seeks to gain insight into what prompts successful processing of feedback to enhance the language learning process.

The research project is a case study of the German A level course at a sixth form college and interviews have been used as data collection methods. Sixth alumni students were interviewed twice. The first interview discussed the students' language learning experience prior to their A level course at the sixth form college and the second interview focused on their experience of German language learning at the college. In the second interview students reflected on feedback they have received on essays they completed as part of the course. There was a particular focus on two grammatical aspects, namely word order and cases, as these aspects tend to cause difficulties during the language learning process. Several aspects play together when applying the grammar rules for both aspects and hence they can cause a barrier to achieving a high accuracy mark on the course. In this presentation I would like to focus on the key findings from the research and draw tentative conclusions.

## **How Skills-based Classroom Activities Shape Learners' Foreign Language Enjoyment: A Mixed-Modelling Longitudinal Examination**

**Alfaf Albakistani**

Existing research on foreign language emotions has focused on the relationship between foreign language enjoyment and various individual and contextual factors (Dewaele, Botes & Greiff, 2021). Classroom activities have been discovered to be of particular importance (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Although researchers have explored the enjoyment of classroom activities (Li, Jiang & Dewaele, 2020), more is needed to know about how classroom activities shape FLE in English as a foreign language (EFL) context. This study examines how the enjoyment of certain skill-based activities changes over time and what factors contribute to its variances within and among foreign language learners. Over nine months, repeated surveys were employed to track the skill-related enjoyment of 160 EFL adolescent learners from three grades in a Saudi secondary school. Five classroom observations, eight stimulated recall interviews, and ten semi-structured interviews were conducted. A repeated analysis of variance results showed significant differences in skill-specific enjoyment on the first occasion. Linear mixed-effects models (LMMs) revealed that only speaking enjoyment increased significantly over time while reading, listening, and writing enjoyment remained stable. Interestingly, intra-individual enjoyment of the four skills increased significantly over time. Moreover, learners' initial levels of the four skill-specific enjoyment varied considerably. Hence, while learners' enjoyment of speaking and listening continued to diverge uniquely, their enjoyment of reading and writing became relatively consistent with the group patterns. At the intra-individual level, collaboration was predictive of speaking enjoyment, creativity predicted speaking and reading enjoyment, whereas control contributed to writing enjoyment. At the inter-learner

level, collaboration significantly contributed to the enjoyment of speaking, listening, and writing, while creativity predicted just speaking enjoyment. Both statistical and thematic findings suggest that certain features of the skill-based activities and other individual and contextual factors positively impact learners' enjoyment. This study adds considerably to future teaching methods in developing classroom activities with positive features that lead to activity enjoyment.

Dewaele, J. M., Botes, E., & Greiff, S. (2021). Sources and effects of Foreign Language Enjoyment, Anxiety and Boredom: A Structural Equation Modelling Approach.

Li, C., Jiang, G., & Dewaele, J. M. (2018). Understanding Chinese high school students' foreign language enjoyment: validation of the Chinese version of the foreign language enjoyment scale. *System*, 76, 183-196.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2014). The two faces of Janus? Anxiety and enjoyment in the foreign language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, IV (2), 237-274

## **The Contribution of Second Language Productive Knowledge and Processing Speed of Collocations to Oral Fluency**

**Abrar Alshehri**

Collocations, such as 'strong coffee' and 'heavy rain', play a crucial role in language processing and use. There is growing evidence to suggest that collocations are processed, perceived, and produced faster than novel pairs (Sonbul, 2015; Wolter & Gyllstad, 2011). This processing advantage can alleviate the pressure on conceptualisation and release speakers' attentional resources needed for formulation and articulation operations, thereby enabling a more fluent performance (Kormos, 2011; Siyanova-Chanturia & Pellicer-Sánchez, 2019; Skehan, 2014). However, limited research has delved into the relationship between L2 learners' processing capacity of collocations and their oral fluency. The present study intends to address this gap by examining whether L2 learners' productive knowledge and processing speed of collocations can predict individual differences in oral fluency in terms of speed, breakdown, repair, and composite fluency. A quantitative predictive correlational design will be employed to examine the relationships between these variables. In pursuit of this, the study will involve seventy L1 Arabic-speaking learners of English, with no prior experience of living in English-speaking countries. An innovative task will be developed to measure English L2 adjective-noun collocations' productive knowledge and their processing speed. Furthermore, the present study extends existing work by examining the role of three features of productive collocational knowledge, including proportion, frequency, and strength of association. Participants' oral fluency, including speed, breakdown, repair, and composite fluency will be measured through a picture narrative task, and their overall proficiency will be assessed using a C-test. The findings are expected to shed light on the role of collocational knowledge in L2 oral fluency and inform both automated assessment tools and instructional strategies aiming to enhance L2 speaking skills. By identifying the linguistic and processing skills that contribute to fluent speech, this study has the potential to enrich the field of second language acquisition, teaching, and assessment.

### **References**

Kormos, J. (2011). Speech production and the Cognition Hypothesis. In P. Robinson (Ed.), *Second language task complexity: Researching the cognition hypothesis of language learning and performance* (Vol. 2, pp. 39–60). John Benjamins .

- Siyanova-Chanturia, A & Pellicer-Sánchez, A. (2019). Formulaic language: Setting the Scene. In A. Siyanova-Chanturia & A. Pellicer-Sánchez (Eds.), *Understanding Formulaic Language* (1 ed., pp. 1-15). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315206615-1>
- Skehan, P. (2014). Limited attentional capacity, second language performance, and task-based pedagogy. In P. Skehan (Ed.), *Processing perspectives on task performance* (pp. 211–260). John Benjamins .
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- Wolter, B., & Gyllstad, H. (2011). Collocational Links in the L2 Mental Lexicon and the Influence of L1 Intralexical Knowledge. *Applied linguistics*, 32(4), 430-449. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amr011>

### **Effect of Task Type on Multidimensional Task Engagement and Second Language Vocabulary Learning**

**Ahlam Shaluf**

In mainstream education, the connection between task engagement and academic achievement has been well-established, underscoring the fundamental role of engaging activities in promoting effective learning (Christenson, Reschly & Wylie, 2012; Axelson & Flick, 2011; Fredericks, Blumenfield & Paris, 2004). However, in the realm of second language learning, there is a distinct lack of empirical investigations delving into the relationship between task engagement and language acquisition. The few studies that have so far examined the relationship between task type and engagement (Garcia-Ponce & Tavakoli, 2022; Xu & Qiu, 2021) have mainly failed to provide an insight into how task type and task engagement interact with L2 learning. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how various task types and multidimensional task engagement—encompassing cognitive, behavioural, social, and emotional aspects—affect the acquisition of new vocabulary items in a group of Libyan EFL learners. Following a pretest-posttest and delayed posttest longitudinal design, this research seeks to unveil the impact of task type on both task engagement and language acquisition. The study specifically aims to examine how engagement, encouraged by various task types, may translate into tangible learning outcomes. While results are yet to be determined, the methodology employed in this study holds the potential to unlock crucial insights into the relationship between task engagement and language learning outcomes. The significance of this study extends beyond academic curiosity, offering valuable insights into the effectiveness of different language learning tasks and their impact on learners' engagement levels and how this engagement can impact lexical language learning outcomes.

### **Writing performance in computer-mediated collaborative writing: the role of task complexity**

**Xin Rong**

Computer-mediated collaborative writing, defined as an activity that requires writers to co-construct a text by means of Web 2.0 platforms, has gained increasing attention over the past decades. To date, however, little is known about the effects of task complexity on writing performance in computer-mediated collaborative writing. This study, inspired by Robinson's (2011) Cognition Hypothesis and Skehan's (2009) Limited Capacity Model, aimed to mitigate this gap. Specifically, it intended to examine the extent to which task complexity influenced linguistic complexity, accuracy, and functional adequacy of the texts composed by learners in computer-mediated collaborative writing tasks.

The participants were 56 Chinese learners of English, who were randomly assigned to 28 pairs. Each pair completed two collaborative writing tasks in a counterbalanced order. The two tasks took the form of reading-to-write tasks and differed in cognitive task complexity. The designed-to-be-less-complex version required participants to summarise one text, while the designed-to-be-more-complex version asked them to synthesise three texts. The resulting texts were analysed in terms of linguistic complexity and accuracy. Additionally, functional adequacy was evaluated according to an analytical rating scale of content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.

Statistical analyses revealed some significant differences in learners' writing performance between the two tasks. In terms of linguistic complexity, the summary task resulted in a decreased use of commonly used words. Furthermore, the texts generated in the summary task demonstrated greater syntactic complexity at the phrasal level. However, texts produced in the two tasks demonstrated comparable accuracy. With regard to analytical scores, increased task complexity yielded significantly lower ratings for content, communicative achievement, organisation, and overall quality.

These results will be discussed in relation to trends observed for both collaborative and individual writing in previous research. The implications of this study will also be discussed for theoretical models and pedagogical practice.

### **Exploring TBLT practices in Hong Kong senior secondary schools through the framework of Intended Constructive Alignment**

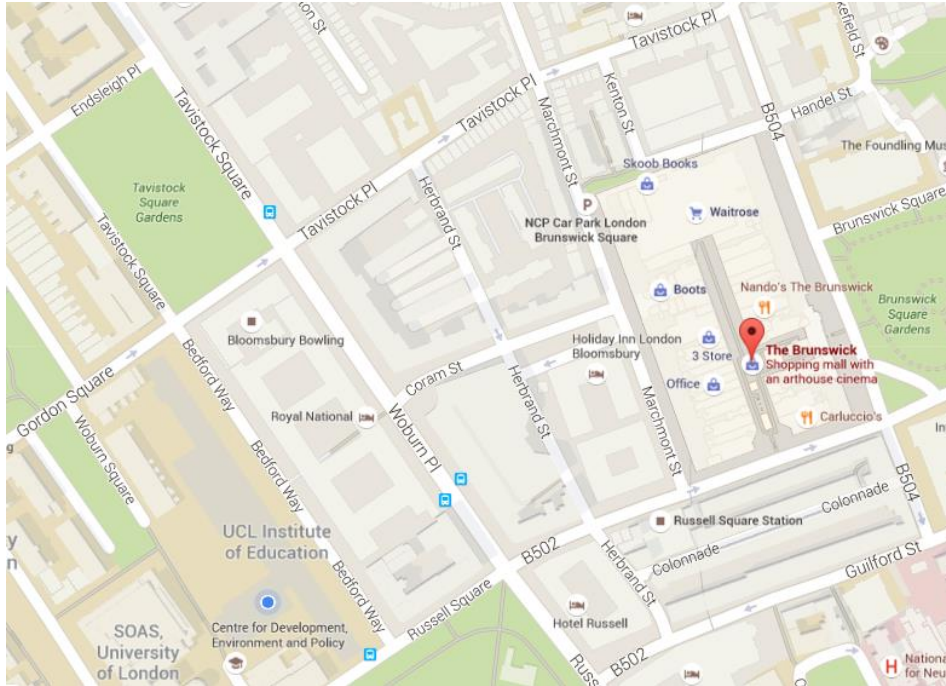
**Suet-Sin (Kristy) Cheung**

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has gained increased popularity as a pedagogical framework for teaching second languages in the past few decades. The growing adoption of TBLT has naturally been coupled with an enhanced interest in task-based language assessment (TBLA). From a language testing perspective, imposing TBLA promotes positive washback as the assessment tasks and pedagogic tasks share the same theoretical underpinnings. This is also referred to as constructive alignment, wherein curriculum objectives and examination goals are intentionally aligned. While it is generally assumed that, when curriculum and examination goals are aligned, positive washback occurs, little is known about whether the introduction of TBLA indeed leads to greater reliance on TBLT teaching principles. To bridge this gap, the current doctoral project endeavours to investigate the extent of alignment between a task-based assessment and accompanying pedagogical approaches in the Hong Kong secondary context. Specifically, I will explore whether and how the integrated assessment tasks in the Hong Kong senior secondary exam may influence the adoption of TBLT through observing teachers' planning and use of textbook materials.

This project employs a qualitative research design obtaining three major sources of data: (1) exam-related documents, (2) textbook materials designed to prepare learners for the integrated task in the HK secondary exam, and (3) verbal protocol and interview data from local Hong Kong secondary English teachers. This presentation will focus on the study design and part of the results generated from the exam-related documents and textbook materials.

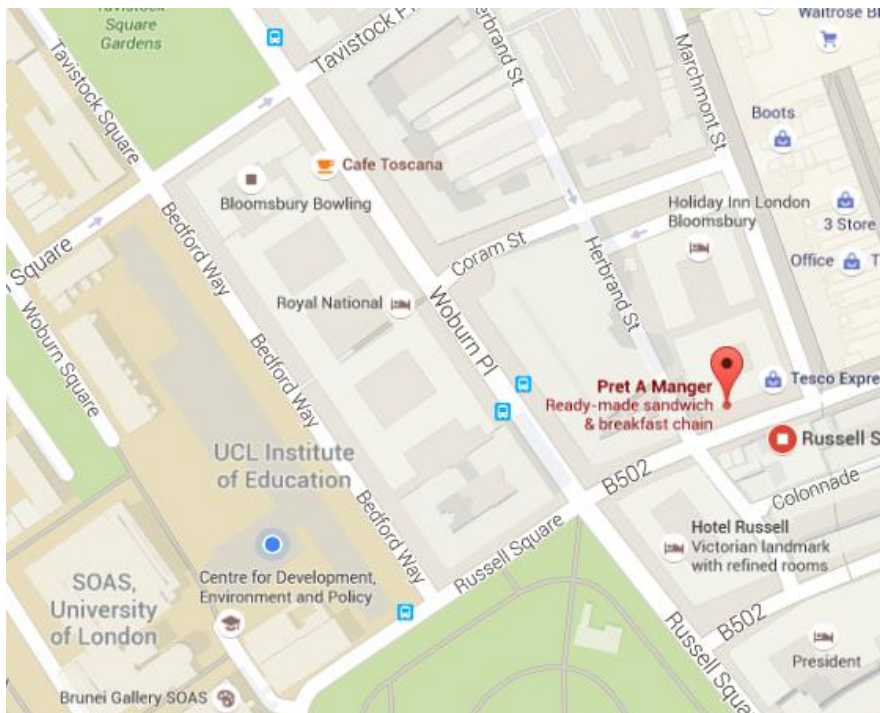
## Some places to eat nearby

**Brunswick Centre (Starbucks, Waitrose, Itsu etc.)**  
The Brunswick, London WC1N 1BS



### Pret A Manger

40 Bernard St, London WC1N 1LE



## Café in the Gardens

Russell Square, London WC1B 5EH

