

## Editorial

**Reflections on English Language Teaching** replaces the former *Working Papers* published by the Centre for English Language Communication. This is the first volume and we look forward to further publications, possibly on an annual rather than a biennial basis.

This first volume of **Reflections on English Language Teaching** is published in conjunction with the Promotion of Standard English (PROSE), 2001, and contains articles on the investigations of English language teaching to students from the People's Republic of China. The reason for this emphasis is that CELC has a number of PRC students, both undergraduates and graduates in its regular courses as well as pre-matriculation students in the consultancy courses. With such a large number of PRC students in CELC, it is necessary for its teachers to understand the kind of English language education they had in their country so as to facilitate more effective teaching. Thus, it is appropriate that the first article in this volume is a discussion on English language teaching in China since the post-war years. Feng Anwei's article, *Bo Cai Zhong Chang – A Slogan for Effective ELT Methodology for College English Education*, gives us an insight into the various policies and approaches adopted by the Chinese government and their recommendations for better teaching, that is, combining traditional Chinese methodology with the communicative approach. But as PRC students leave home for overseas studies such as those coming to NUS, studies from Happy Goh & Tan Kim Luan – *Reflections of ESL and EFL Students Through Email* - and Susan Tan - *Strategy Training for English Language Learners from PRC* - show that in a new learning environment, these students can readily adapt to the communicative approach in ELT and can learn to acquire language learning strategies on their own to improve their proficiency. Preferential learning strategies depend on the proficiency of students as Zhang Mingyuan finds out in his study on *Language Learning Strategies and English Language Proficiency*. This finding is validated by another quantitative data in, *Learner Diaries as a Tool to Heighten Chinese Students' Metacognitive Awareness of English Learning*, by Carissa Young & Fong Yoke Sim. All in all, these four articles have made a fairly

thorough investigation of the ways PRC students learn English on their own.

In writing, PRC students tend to translate directly from their mother tongue, leading to incorrect English. Tan Cheng Lim's contribution, *Empirical Errors in PRC Students' English Compositions*, explains why PRC students tend to make the most common errors in their writing. In spoken English PRC students who may sound unintelligible to other speakers of English have problems with certain vowels and consonants, basically because of interference from their mother tongue. Laina Ho in her article, *Pronunciation Problems of PRC Students*, identifies some of these common problems and possible causes, and recommends teaching tips for ELT teachers to help PRC students improve their pronunciation. While PRC students realise that they do not speak well, they can be quite critical of the varieties of English spoken in Singapore. Carissa Young assesses the attitude of PRC students towards Singapore English in her contribution, *You Dig Tree Tree to NUS: Understanding Singapore English from the Perspectives of International Students*. Their views make us more aware that PRC students' expectations of spoken English in Singapore are high but these expectations are not always met. It is therefore necessary to promote and maintain the use of Standard English for academic discourse among NUS students, including foreign students.

The editorial committee wishes to acknowledge the encouragement and support from the Director of CELC, Dr Wong Lian Aik, who is also Chairman of the PROSE Committee. PROSE provided the financial budget for this publication.