

Christopher Brumfit Thesis Award

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Christopher Brumfit Award 2014

The Editor and Board of *Language Teaching* are pleased to announce that the winner of the 2014 Christopher Brumfit thesis award is **Dr Hilde van Zeeland**. The thesis was selected by an external panel of judges based on its significance to the field of second language acquisition, second or foreign language learning and teaching, originality and creativity and quality of presentation.

Dr van Zeeland's Ph.D. thesis was entitled *Second language vocabulary knowledge in and from listening*. The thesis investigates two issues: (1) ESL learners' knowledge of spoken vocabulary; and (2) their success at inferencing and acquiring new vocabulary from listening. Studies 1 and 2 reveal similarities as well as differences between L2 written and spoken word knowledge. In the spoken mode, they reveal a gap between knowledge of isolated and contextualised words. These studies stress that written and spoken word knowledge differ, and that knowledge of spoken words does not necessarily entail knowledge in listening. Study 3 explores listeners' success in lexical inferencing, and identifies variables affecting their success. Study 4 measures L2 listeners' incidental acquisition of vocabulary through listening. Overall, the studies emphasise the need for more research attention to spoken vocabulary knowledge, especially in the listening context. They also reveal the potential of listening for expanding vocabulary knowledge, and provide insights into factors affecting success in inferencing and acquisition.

The external referees commented on 'an ambitious research project, which demonstrates that it is possible to take a principled and systematic approach to the investigation of complex and "messy" aspects of language use. Designed and executed with great care and presented with exemplary clarity, it contributes to knowledge in the field by exposing problematic assumptions which have weakened the validity of previous research. Unusually for a Ph.D. thesis, it not only invites replication studies but also provides other researchers with a toolkit.' Dr van Zeeland completed her thesis at the University of Nottingham, UK, under the supervision of Professor Norbert Schmitt.