



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Seminar Series
School of Languages & Linguistics

Patterns in L2 writing

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Drawing upon a convergence of sociocultural theory and linguistic emergentism, this study investigated the development of four ESL users' written lexicogrammatical patterning (collocations and colligations) through a longitudinal research design. A qualitative methodology was developed in order to capture a dynamic and historical view of the ways in which the participants combined words.

Specifically, recurring patterns were traced in the participants' essays, first as they prepared for the IELTS exam and then as they entered their university courses. During this time, the participants received feedback on their writing and were interviewed about the histories of particular word combinations. Selected patterns were later tested using the principles of dynamic testing. The findings suggest that the ability to imitate and adapt linguistic resources (individual words and word combinations) and sociocognitive resources (e.g. memory and attention) are paramount in the massive task of internalizing the lexicogrammatical patterning of a second language.

These findings generated a theoretical model of language patterning from which implications for second language learning and teaching may be drawn.

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| Time: | 3:15pm |
| Date: | Friday 13 November 2009 |
| Location: | Room 407, Babel Building, University of Melbourne |