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| **IRIS: Establishing a digital repository of data collection instruments used for second language learning research** |
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| **Background** |
| The nature of instruments used to collect data clearly influences the validity of the claims made in any research using them. How we elicit data is also the source of lively debates, such as how to measure implicit vs. explicit knowledge, how to elicit the construct of autonomy in language learning, how to measure working memory capacity, how contextual characteristics determine the usefulness of a particular instrument, and how to elicit L2 processing vs. L2 competence. Currently, researchers create and keep their own instruments and maintenance and access to the instruments is ad hoc. Usually only brief descriptions with occasional short samples are available in published work. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses often conclude that there is a lack of studies with particular characteristics, making it difficult to draw useful conclusions and make recommendations for practice. |
| **Aims & Design** |
| IRIS aims to **i**mprove the transparency and availability of primary research tools. This will, in time, facilitate systematic research agendas across time and space, and enhance systematic reviews and meta-analyses.  IRIS is a free, searchable, up- and downloadable collection of instruments, materials and stimuli that have been used, in published studies or approved PhD theses, to elicit data for research into second and foreign languages. This includes research into the effectiveness of different types of experimental treatments and instructional techniques; linguistic development and how languages are learnt; the contexts in which second languages are used and learnt; and stakeholders' (learners', teachers', policy-makers') opinions about language use and how these impact teaching and learning.  A few examples of data collection materials are: interview protocols, language tests, observation schedules, pictures, questionnaires, software scripts, sound files, teaching intervention tasks, word lists, but there are many other possibilities.  IRIS is searchable across a wide range of parameters, such as author, instrument type, research area, participant characteristics (e.g. teachers, learners, trainees), L1, L2, language feature(s), proficiency. It is independent of institution, country, journal, publisher, and funder, though all these parameters are searchable.  To submit, search, download, and for further information, visit:  <http://www.iris-database.org>  To qualify for upload, materials must have been used to collect data published, or 'in press', in a peer-reviewed journal article, book/chapter or conference proceedings, or in an approved PhD thesis. |
| **Funding** |
| *The Economic and Social Research Council* *of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*.  *The British Academy*, as an 'Academy Research Project'. |
| **Collaborators** |
| Co-Investigator: Professor Alison Mackey http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/mackeya/.  **Advisory Board:**  ***Second language researchers***  **Professor Rod Ellis** (University of Auckland, New Zealand, and Cheung Kong Scholar Professor, Shanghai International Studies University, China); **Professor Susan Gass** (Michigan State University, US); **Professor Jan Hulstijn** (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands); **Professor Lourdes Ortega** (University of Hawai'i at Manoa, US / Georgetown University, US); **Professor Leah Roberts** (University of York, UK); **Professor Norman Segalowitz** (Concordia University, Montréal, Canada); **Professor Peter Skehan** (Emeritus, Chinese University of Hong Kong, China).  ***Technical expertise***  **Michael Day** (UKOLN Centre of Excellence in Digital Information Management, University of Bath, UK); **Dr. Judith Klavans** (University of Maryland Institute for Advanced Computer Studies, US); **Professor David Martin** (ESRC National Centre for Research Methods and ReStore Sustainable Web Resources Repository project, University of Southampton, UK). |
| **Impacts** |
| Announcements, flyers at:  *International Association of Teaching English as a Foreign Language*  *Language World, Annual Teacher Conference of the Association of Language Learning, UK*  Support from national and international langauge teaching and learning associations. |
| **Publications** |
| Marsden, E., Mackey, A. (2012) *IRIS: A digital repository of data collection instruments for second language research.* The Annual Conference of the British Association of Applied Linguistics Language and Learning SIG. University of Oxford, 4th-5th July 2012.  IRIS features in a growing number of publications including handbooks, encyclopedias, and books on second language learning and teaching. |