Arend Béatrice, Fixmer Pierre (2019)

Siri and 'friends' animating the research on speaking and writing, conceptual issues and outlooks.

Abstract

Our paper aims at launching a discussion on how innovative built-in speech recognition software (*Siri* and 'friends') is currently challenging the 'traditional' research on speaking and writing related to language learning. Our theoretical considerations focus on how *Siri* is a promising tool for eliciting and enhancing thinking about language. With regard to its key feature enabling Apple devices to recognize and to produce oral natural language and to convert it in real time to written text, *Siri* prompts reflection on the complex dynamics between the Oral and the Written.

Research on speaking and writing in terms of language learning is mainly concerned with pathways to language awareness. Thus, sociocultural theorists assert that writing is closely intertwined with abstract thinking and concept formation. Many scholars emphasize on the differences between the spoken and the written word: the former is linearly unfolding in real time, dynamic, and fades rapidly away, the latter is addressing a distant 'other', displayed in space, and persists over time.

Following this line of research, we will give some outlooks on how *Siri* can (and will in the future) contribute to provide oral speech flow with reflexive planning and intentional effort 'traditionally' assigned to writing. Moreover, we will point out how *Siri* can raise learners' awareness and understanding of the word as a meaningful piece of language and object of thought.

- Arend, B., Fixmer, P. (2018). Some basic reflections on voice-controlled Human-*Siri* Talk. In *Proceedings 10th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies.*
- Arend, B., Fixmer, P. (2018). Investigating Siri as a virtual assistant in a learning context. In *Proceedings of the 12th Annual International Technology, Education and Development Conference*.
- Goody, J. (1987). *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Linell, P. (2005). *The Written Language Bias in Linguistics*. New York: Routledge.
- McTear, M. et al. (2016). *The Conversational Interface*: *Talking to Smart Devices.* Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Olson, D.R. (2016). *The Mind on Paper.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge: MIT Press.