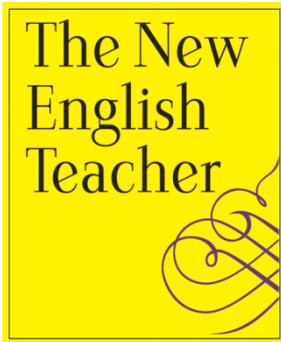


announcements



THE NEW ENGLISH TEACHER presents information and ideas on theories, research, methods and materials related to language learning and teaching. Within this framework the Journal welcomes contributions in such areas of current enquiry as first and second language learning and teaching, language and culture, discourse analysis, language planning, language testing, multilingual education, stylistics, translation and information technology. **THE NEW ENGLISH TEACHER**, therefore, is concerned with linguistics applied to education and contributions that have in mind the common professional concerns of both the practitioner and the researcher.

Editor:

J.A. Foley

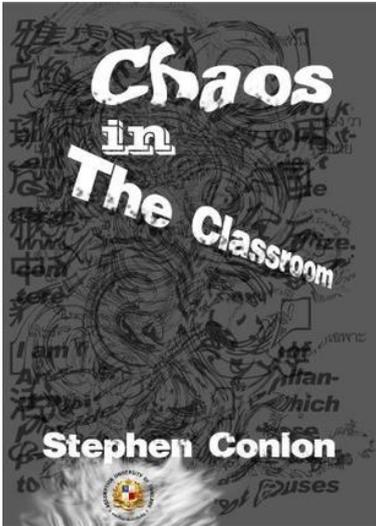
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Chaos in the Classroom

Stephen Conlon

Assumption University Press,
2009

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Price: 350 Baht

Discourses have fractal patterns in which utterances are meaningful parts of an ecosystem. This ecosystem is the language of the text as much as it is the wider language with which a text engages. Any fractal part of a discourse can be seen when we do not try to impose traditional forms of order on language or things. When we study language as a fractal system in which patterns of meaning occur in one discourse or part of a discourse and these patterns recur in other discourses, we see new ways in which discourses form larger environments. What we start to see is that the traditional ways we have conceived things has been distorted and misshaped: too much artificial order imposed on what we do distorts and impedes the flow of thought which brings discourses to life.

Chaos in the Classroom charts the personal ecology of one writer's mind as he has tried to think outside the frameworks of received ideas. The resulting picture may be chaotic, but when these essays are read as a whole, there is a creative pattern of relationships between the various aspects of the writer's linguistic experience

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i

In “Understanding Thai Nationalism and Ethnic Identity”, an article that influences the conceptual framework of this piece, Stithorn Thananitchot (2011) defines a third approach to understanding Thainess, that of instrumentalism. However, I prefer to think of instrumentalism i.e. the deliberate use of notions of national identity for particular social and political ends, as a sub-set of both the primordialist and constructivist approaches.

ii

For some interesting reflections on what has been called “unThai” behavior in the fields of political thinking, ethnic identification, sexual relationships and choice of beer, see Pravit Rojanaphruk (2005)

iii

As my colleague, xxxxxxxx xxxxxxx, points out the phrase *TIT* is a *farang* counterpart to the Thai *mai pen rai* which translates roughly as “It doesn’t matter”: “In a way it’s a little bit of Thainess rubbing off on foreigners - a way for foreigners to deal with and accept Thai behavior that is at odds with Western cultural mores. A foreigner saying *TIT* has exactly the attitude of a Thai saying *mai pen rai*. *Mai pen rai* is another double edged sword. It makes for an easy going attitude but can also lead to complacency, laziness, and complete stupidity” (Personal communication to the author).

iv

Canadian beauty queen Natalie Glebowa won the Miss Universe competition held in Thailand in 2005. “Throughout the contest, Natalie gave a nice traditional Thai greeting known as a “[Wai](#)” on every appearance which helped her win over Thai audiences and judges.” (“Natalie Glebowa”). She increased her popularity and honorary Thainess by her later marriage to Thai tennis champion Paradorn Sripachan and by her frequent appearances in advertising. In one of these advertisements, she cemented her “Thainess” by giving the *wai* to her parents. Interestingly, Paradorn’s previous girlfriend *luk kreung* singer Tata Young was slammed for being “unThai” when she indiscreetly revealed the fact of her relationship with Paradorn (See Pravit Rojanaphruk 2005, 7).