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Welcome to the May/June 2015 issue of *TLT*. During the graduation season in March, we experienced many farewells. However, as the new school year started in April, though you have probably returned again to your hectic life in either new environments or your old work places, I hope you have already spent some special time with your new students and colleagues.

It has been 4 years since the Great Earthquake hit the Tohoku Area. The reconstruction process seems far from...
complete. JALT expresses our sincere wishes for the wellbeing of the people in these devastated areas, and asks JALT members to continue their help and support, both mentally and physically.

In this month’s issue, our Feature Article by Zack Robertson, Setting the Bar High: Micro-Level Perceptions of MEXT’s Elementary School EFL Policy, examines the opinions and perceptions of 15 elementary school teachers and administrators regarding the English Education Reform Plan released by MEXT in December 2013. In Readers’ Forum, Cheryl Kirchhoff shares her qualitative study, Global Personnel Development through Study Abroad and Study + Work Abroad, with students’ narratives for growth in English language use, initiatives to take challenges and responsibility, and intercultural learning. Finally, for the JALT2015 pre-conference article, Jean-Marc Dewaele from the University of London proposes that emotions are the heart of the foreign language learning process, and reports on some recent work that has investigated the role of emotion in the foreign language classroom, both positive (foreign language enjoyment) and negative (foreign language anxiety).

As always, we really appreciate the hard work and dedication of all the volunteers at TLT. We hope that you find this issue enjoyable and helpful!

Toshiko Sugino, TLT Japanese Language Editor

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Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT) is a nonprofit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan. It provides a forum for the exchange of new ideas and techniques and a means of keeping informed about developments in the rapidly changing field of second and foreign language education.

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TLTの2015年5/6月号へようこそ。3月の卒業シーズンにはたくさんのお別れを経験しなければならませんでした。しかし、新学期が始まった4月には、新しい勤務先や従来の職場で、すでに多忙な日々の中、新入生や新しい同僚と出会ってすでにわくわくするような毎日を送っていらっしゃるわけないかと思います。

2011年3月11日に起きた東日本大震災からすでに4年経ちましたが、まだ完全な復興とはほど遠いものがあります。JALTは引き続き被災者のご健勝を祈りつつ、会員の皆様のご支援をお願いする次第です。

本号のFeature ArticleではZack Robertson氏が、Setting the bar high: Micro-level perceptions of MEXT’s elementary school EFL policyの中で、「グローバル化に対応した英語教育改革実施計画」の6年間にわたる実施にあたり、小学校レベルでどのような問題があるかを突き止めるため、その実施計画を基にそれぞれの小学校関係者の意見をまとめた結果を考察しています。Readers’ ForumではCheryl Kirchhoff氏が、Global Personnel Development through Study Abroad and Study + Work Abroadという質的研究において、外国で語学学習のみを経験した者と、就業経験を伴う語学留学経験者が書いた文章を、比較・分析しています。最後に、2015年JALT年次大会のPre-conferenceの論文として、ロンドン大学のJean-Marc Dewaele氏が、On emotions in foreign language learning and useの中で、外国語学習において肯定的感情（例：外国語学習の楽しみ）および否定的感情（例：外国語学習不安）が果たす役割について報告しています。

いつものように、TLTの発刊に際し、一生懸命に取り組んでくださったすべてのボランティアの方々に感謝の意を表したいと思います。皆様どうぞ本号をお楽しみください。

Toshiko Sugino, TLT Japanese Language Editor

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Setting the Bar High: Micro-Level Perceptions of MEXT’s Elementary School EFL Policy

Zack Robertson
Ashiya Town Board of Education

This essay examines the opinions and perceptions of 15 elementary school teachers and administrators regarding the English Education Reform Plan released by MEXT in December 2013 in order to pinpoint problems that may occur over the following six-year implementation period. The study consists of short individual and small group interviews loosely structured around six questions concerning the proposed policy and its impact on elementary level EFL. Participant responses are analyzed for their possible implications for the following language policy metrics: compatibility, complexity, relative advantage, observability, and trialability. The essay concludes by advocating a two-way approach to curriculum development at the elementary level and citing a need for both macro- and micro-level policy actors to work together to effectively deal with the challenges ahead.

In December 2013, amidst the excitement of Japan’s successful bid for the 2020 Olympic Games, Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) announced sweeping reforms to its elementary and secondary level foreign language instruction policies (see MEXT, 2013). The primary goal is to increase the language abilities of both students and teachers through the establishment of teacher training programs, drastic curriculum overhaul, and the hiring of specialized language teachers (SLTs) and developmental leaders to spearhead the implementation process. While the policy affects both elementary and secondary education, there is a particular need to consider the possible ramifications of the proposal at the elementary level, where the foundation for the initiative is placed and where change will most acutely be felt. Based on data collected through focus-group and one-on-one interviews, this paper examines teacher and administrator perceptions of MEXT’s proposed policy changes for the elementary level in order to identify potential implementation obstacles and make the case for open dialogue between the macro- and micro-levels of the education system throughout the policy implementation period.

Theoretical Background

Language Policy Planning (LPP) is generally understood to take place across two tiers of social organization: a macro-tier typically applied to prescriptive concepts such as ethnicity or nationality, and a micro-tier that Beales describes as “the sum of all the processes, happenings, or activities in which a given set or several sets of people habitually engage” (in Holliday, 1999, p. 248). For the purposes of this essay, the primary macro-level actor can be viewed as the Japanese government (or MEXT) while the micro-level constitutes the local governments and schools and the professional groups that operate within them. Although successful LPP implementation requires careful coordination between the various actors of both tiers (Baldauf, 2006, p. 163), the micro/macro mismatch in Japan’s public education system is unfortunately a well-documented reality with teachers struggling to implement or achieve policy standards at the classroom level (see Ikegashira, Matsumoto, & Morita, 2009; Kumazawa, 2013; Nishino, 2008; Sakui, 2004; Underwood, 2012).

Waters (2009) describes LPP as a cyclical process consisting of initiation, implementation, and institutionalization (sustainment) stages. The initiation stage marks the critical period when a policy is still in development, its future depending on how various actors perceive the policy in terms of its compatibility, complexity, relative advantage, observability, and trialability (Rogers, 2003, pp. 15-16). During imple-
mentation, a policy will often pass through several layers of actors or institutions as it is transmitted from the macro- to micro-level, with each level ideally interacting with one another in a two-way manner as they pass on problems and solutions up and down the chain of command (see Figure 1).

The upward flow of feedback from the lower micro-levels, such as the interviews conducted for this study, are essential for the development and implementation of an effective and feasible language policy.

**Historical Context**

Before delving into MEXT’s proposal, let us first examine the history of EFL instruction at elementary schools in Japan. Though the proposal represents a marked shift towards centralization of its language education policy, MEXT’s increasingly top-down orientation is consistent with recent policy trends at the elementary level and typifies the top-heavy role that the government has traditionally taken in the other areas and levels of education (Nishino, 2008, p. 29). MEXT began asserting control in 2002 when it announced that foreign languages could be officially taught as part of the Integrated Study Block at the elementary level, even though more than half of public schools had by that time already implemented some form of English instruction (Butler, 2004, p. 250). By 2004, it was already considering mandatory instruction hours (Kajiro, 2007, p. 101) and in 2012 officially began requiring that all schools provide 35 hours of English instruction for the fifth and sixth grades, though student performance would not be formally assessed or graded (MEXT, 2008).

**Key Proposed Policy Changes**

It should be noted that the current policy proposal remains a plan until the Course of Study document is officially altered and ratified in 2016 (MEXT, 2013). The following points represent the major goals and changes set forth by MEXT for the elementary level:

- Establish mandatory instruction hours (35) for grades 3 and 4.
- Designate English as an officially evaluated subject for grades 5 and 6 and increase instruction time to up to 105 hours per year.
- Establish training programs for homeroom teachers (HRT), who will assume primary responsibility for classroom instruction.
- Hire and install SLTs to service the nearly 20,000 public elementary schools. SLTs will likely be primarily non-native English-speaking teachers with formal qualifications (MEXT is currently in the process of establishing what these will be) to teach English.
- Establish national and regional development leaders to promote and support program development.
- Create a communicative curriculum to develop the four core language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening), oversee the textbook creation process, establish assessment guidelines for teachers and students, and develop and distribute instruction and training materials.
- Establish language foundations so students will ultimately attain a CEFR (Common European Framework for Reference of Languages) proficiency level of B1-B2, or intermediate level, by the time they graduate high school.

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**Figure 1.** The Policy Implementation Process. Adapted from Havelock, 1969, and Flynn, 1980 (see Waters, 2009)
Policy implementation is set to occur in stages over the next 6 years, until 2020, with full implementation planned to coincide with the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. The aims are unprecedented and ambitious, but to what degree are they compatible with the micro-reality of a typical elementary school?

Study Rationale and Procedure

Because teachers “...filter, digest, and implement the curriculum depending upon their beliefs and environmental contexts” (Sakui, 2004, p. 155), it is important to consider how they and other micro-level actors perceive the policy in terms of feasibility and appropriateness. In order to investigate these perceptions, loosely structured individual and small group interviews were held with four school officials, nine HRTs, and two native/non-native English-speaking language teachers from three elementary schools. Sessions were conducted primarily in Japanese, and participants answered the following questions after first reviewing MEXT’s plan (2013):

1. Do you understand the proposed policy changes, particularly as they pertain to elementary school English education? What areas, if any, are unclear?
2. Do you think that the current education policy needs to be changed? Do you agree with these specific measures? Why or why not?
3. Do you feel that this policy schedule is realistic?
4. What kind of role do you feel you should be performing in order to implement the proposed policy?
5. How confident are you in your abilities to perform such a role? If you are unconfident, why?
6. What potential problems or obstacles can you foresee in the implementation of the proposed policy?

General Findings

Participants offered a range of different insights and answers (see Appendix for a more complete account), but the common points for each question can be summarized as follows:

1. Most participants understood the overall plan and policy goals but there was some confusion about the role of the SLT.
2. Participants agreed change is necessary to bridge the current gap between elementary and secondary language instruction, but doubts exist as to the extent student language abilities can be improved and maintained.
3. The participants viewed certain areas such as curriculum generation and training programs as feasible, but there was little confidence in hiring enough SLTs and improving HRT language ability by 2020.
4. Participants described their roles as implementational, performing duties designated by the national government.
5. Most interviewees expressed a desire to execute whatever role they were called to perform, but had doubts in their ability to produce the desired results.
6. There were many areas of concern including: HRT language ability, limited financial and personnel resources, scheduling conflicts, staff relationships, and overburdening HRTs who already have many other responsibilities.

Discussion and Implications

Due to the small sample size (N=15), the extent to which the findings of this small study can be extrapolated to represent all micro-level actors is limited; however, the issues they highlight can serve as a starting point for more rigorous future investigation. Using Rogers’s (2003) categories as a framework, the following sections will examine study participant answers in terms of their significance to the crucial initiation stage of the LPP process and what they could mean for the long-term policy success.

Compatibility

Analysis of participant perceptions reveals a number of possible compatibility issues with the new policy. From an institutional standpoint, one can cite logistical concerns such as finding enough time in the current schedule for the significant increase in language instruction hours. There is also the issue of HRT performance anxiety (see Butler, 2004, for a related case study), as experienced teachers may struggle with being put in a new role they may not feel capable of performing.

Participants also voiced concern about the possible negative socio-economic impact the policy could have, many worrying that the increased academic burden would only exacerbate the current academic gap between urban and rural areas. The Japanese government has been criticized on this issue before (Kobayashi, 2013; Terasawa, 2008), and given the documented shortage of qualified language instructors at many rural secondary schools (Ikegashira et al, 2009) the skepticism is understandable. MEXT will have to ensure that public schools nationwide are adequately serviced with
SLTs and other support staff in order to fight the perception that it is disconnected from the average educational environment.

**Complexity**

MEXT, anticipating that effective curriculum implementation hinges on HRT language competence, has announced plans to establish training programs, curriculum development, and the SLT position. Many participants expressed confusion about how some of these elements were to be integrated into the current system, which suggests MEXT may still have work to do to explain the policy at the micro-level. The SLT position, judging by the responses from administrators, may pose problems for school officials who may have little idea how to delegate work responsibilities to a position that does not fit neatly into a school's present hierarchical structure. SLTs may also be at a disadvantage in adapting to their new position in that they initially may not have a working model to learn from on the job, a critical aspect of teacher training in Japan (Kumazawa, 2013, p. 47). MEXT provides a visual interpretation of the new hypothetical workplace arrangement (MEXT, 2013, p. 5), but the example only serves to reinforce the perception that the new system will be far more complicated than the previous one.

**Relative Advantage**

Two fundamental issues at stake here are whether or not (a) implementing language instruction at the elementary level will actually increase student language skills/motivation and if so, (b) whether HRTs can be adequately trained in a limited amount of time to implement a communicatively oriented curriculum. Study participants expressed doubt or concern regarding the ultimate impact the policy will have on student and teacher language abilities, citing logistical issues and the other professional demands made on teachers and students by the current education system. The conclusions of other research related to the first issue also appears mixed: Some studies have argued that earlier introduction may improve certain language abilities, such as listening and speaking (for a full account see Katsuyama, Nishigaki, & Wang, 2008), yet others (see Kajiro, 2007) claim that gains are no longer as evident after students spend some time at the secondary level. Some research has also suggested that early instruction may in fact be demotivating for students, who begin to realize a disconnect between what they are taught and the available opportunities to use the language as they mature (Carreira, 2006). As for the second issue, study participants’ concern over the extent to which HRT language competency can be increased through in-service training programs is supported by Butler’s study (2004, p. 247), which revealed that after 120 hours of training only 7.8% of South Korean HRTs had enough English ability to perform communicatively-focused language instruction.

**Observability and Trialability**

The two questions from above raise even more fundamental issues pertaining to how to measure the success of the program when key targets such as motivation and communicative competence have proven difficult to accurately describe and assess on a large scale. But even if we assume that such metrics are available and valid, the issue still remains that “... because the benefits to be derived are in the distant future, it will not be possible to know in any useful sense whether the plan is viable until it is too late” (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997, p. 97). If the goal is for students to graduate high school within the CEFR proficiency range of B1-B2 and the policy will not be fully implemented until 2020, it may not be possible to make any conclusive observations until after 2030. Participant apprehension to the overall feasibility to the policy could stem from an inability to see positive results in the short term and may require MEXT to develop more concrete intermediate benchmarks by which to evaluate policy progress.

**Conclusion**

Although this paper has taken a critical position on many aspects of MEXT’s policy proposal, it should not be misinterpreted as a categorical rejection of the proposal itself as there are also positives that can be gleaned from this discussion. One cause for optimism is the general consensus at both the macro- and micro-levels that change is necessary if English instruction is to improve in Japan. Another is the general willingness of the micro-level study participants to make a genuine effort to perform their assigned roles to the best of their abilities. Still, the onus is on MEXT to make sure that this is not a one-way process and be willing to work with teachers and administrators at the ground level to clear the many hurdles that undoubtedly lie ahead. If it sets the bar too high in terms of demands on the learner and instructor without offering adequate support, it could find itself running into larger problems as the policy moves from the current implementation stage and into the institutionalization stage (Wedell, 2003, p. 453). This paper’s aim was to call attention to these potential
policy issues and make the case for open dialogue between the macro- and micro-levels throughout the policy implementation process.

References


Butler, Y. G. (2004). What level of English proficiency do elementary school teachers need to attain to teach EFL? Case studies from Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. TESOL Quarterly, 38, 245–278.


Appendix: Interview Questions and Consolidated Participant Answers

Homeroom Teacher (HRT); Assistant Language Teacher (ALT); Specialized Language Teacher (SLT); Administrator (A). Answers have been consolidated to avoid duplicate entries, and cases where a participant did not feel confident or comfortable answering the questions have been omitted.

Do you understand the proposed policy changes, particularly as they pertain to elementary school English education? What areas, if any, are unclear?

- Unsure about the duties of specialized teacher. (A)
- Unsure about what skill level of language instruction. (A)
- Need more clarification on communicative skills. (HRT)
- Unsure of the level the curriculum is aiming for. (HRT)
- Unsure how the new system is going to impact the current curriculum. (HRT)
- Unsure of how elementary and secondary levels will connect. (SLT)
- Lacks understanding of the overall education system. (ALT)

Do you think that the current education policy needs to be changed? Do you agree with these specific measures? Why or why not?

- Need to address the gap between teacher and learner attitudes toward language learning. (A)
- Doubts that it is in the best interest of all students to begin studying English this early. (A)
- Need to increase instruction and formalize the learning process to raise learner skill level. (A)
- Need to address student inability to translate classroom learning into real world situations. (HRT)
- Need to develop more globally oriented students. (HRT)
- The current system does not give students language skills they can use in the future. (HRT)
- Yes, because Japan is falling further behind other Asian countries in terms of English proficiency. (SLT)
Do you feel that this policy schedule is realistic?

- Six years is probably not enough time to sufficiently train the HRTs. (A)
- Does not seem possible to procure the necessary amount of SLT staff and train the HRTs. (A)
- New teachers who have received training while at the university will be better prepared than current HRTs. (HRT)
- The average teacher will probably not be able to gain enough language skills by 2020. (HRT)
- It is difficult to tell at this early stage in the process. (SLT)

What kind of role do you feel you should be performing in order to implement the proposed policy?

- Coordinate training for local teachers, procure enough SLT staff to service the schools. (A)
- Procure necessary staff and establishing training programs at the local level. (A)
- Support the HRT’s and staff in terms of training and motivation. (A)
- Keep a positive attitude despite the difficulties. (HRT)
- Under guidance of SLT, HRT should take a lead role in lesson planning, grading, materials development. (HRT)
- Taking responsibility for 30% of instruction for grades 5-6, particularly at the beginning of the school year. (SLT)
- Role will probably not change that much. (ALT)

How confident are you in your abilities to perform such a role? If you are unconfident, why?

- Can implement a plan from the national government, but we don’t have the time or resources to make everything by ourselves. (A)
- Not confident in language abilities, especially pronunciation. (HRT)
- Unsure how to incorporate the English I do know into a lesson and instruct the students effectively. (HRT)
- Unsure about ability to balance the large demands already expected with the extra demands of language and instruction development. (HRT)
- I feel I can perform the SLT role because I have been able to work at both the elementary and junior school level, and have the necessary teaching and language abilities. (SLT)
- Yes, because my current role is not very demanding. (ALT)

What potential problems or obstacles can you foresee in the implementation of the proposed policy?

- There is a large gap in the way the HRTs learned English when they were in school and the way in which they will be expected to conduct lessons. (A)
- Performance gap between students/areas of economic disparity will worsen. (A)
- Free time is already being used to develop reading and math skills. (A)
- HRTs currently have too many other responsibilities to dedicate the necessary time to training. (HRT)
- Unsure how the current academic demands can be met along with proposed changes. (HRT)
- Worried that implementation will be forced through at the last minute. (HRT)
- Worried about the quality of teaching materials. (HRT)
- Skeptical about HRT attitudes and acceptance of policy, and worries about senior teachers not cooperating with younger SLTs. (SLT)

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the study participants and Dr. Sue Fraser Osada for her advice and constructive observations throughout the writing process.

Zack Robertson has worked as a language instructor in Fukuoka prefecture for nine years, first as a JET Program participant and then as a privately contracted town employee. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, he is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in TESL/TEFL with Birmingham University. His research interests include language learning at the youth level and bilingualism. He is also an active member of the JALT Kitakyushu Chapter.
Global Personnel Development through Study Abroad and Study + Work Abroad

Cheryl Kirchhoff
Nagano Prefectural College

The definition of global human resources provides a useful way to evaluate study abroad options for university students. In this qualitative study, study abroad and study + work abroad students’ narratives were analyzed for growth in English language use, initiatives to take challenges and responsibility, and intercultural learning. Participants who studied and worked abroad described more growth in elements of global personnel development, particularly in taking the initiative to engage in a fruitful study abroad experience. This study suggests that study abroad experiences should include student-directed challenges outside the classroom to assist in developing graduates with global personnel characteristics.

Japanese universities are being called on to develop graduates who can engage with people of different cultures and represent Japan on the world stage. These graduates are often referred to as “global human resources.” Universities have responded by increasing study abroad options such as study tours, short-term study at language schools, and programs organized at foreign universities (Menking, 2012). A variety of options for study abroad are needed to accommodate students’ differing skills, aims, and resources. Moreover, the results of different study abroad options should be discussed. This study examines the foreign language use and personal growth of eleven Japanese college students who did study abroad or study + work abroad for eight to ten months.

“Global human resources” has been defined as people with vitality that can thrive internationally due to three factors: (a) foreign language, linguistic, and communication skills; (b) self-direction, a willingness to engage with challenge, cooperativeness, and flexibility, and a sense of responsibility and mission; and (c) understanding other cultures, and a sense of Japanese identity (The Council on Promotion of Human Resource for Globalization Development, 2011).

Evaluation of Study Abroad Experiences

The three factors of global human resources were used to evaluate a short-term study abroad program by Koyanagi (2013). The participants, 49 Japanese university students who studied one month in England or Canada, answered a self-evaluation questionnaire concerning the above factors. The results showed that participants perceived increases in their communication ability along with growth in assertive adult-like characteristics, but felt little improvement in intercultural understanding. Koyanagi observed that overcoming negative stressful experiences overseas required a change in thinking and behavior which may be connected to improvement in communication skill and maturity.

The influence of international experiences on a person’s ability to function effectively in a foreign culture was studied by Chang, Yuan, and Chuang (2013). The Taiwanese participants were analyzed by the length of time abroad and by the depth of their cross-cultural involvement, specifically either low involvement such as study tours or high involvement such as work or long-term study for a degree. The results found that length of time abroad had little effect on cross-cultural ability, however greater social involvement with the foreign culture yielded greater emotional resilience, flexibility, and openness. The study suggests that “physically being abroad may not be the key determinant for desired international competence. Rather, how people engage with the host society and how much they are involved in the new context have more of an impact on competence development” (p. 272). Studies evaluating American students’ study abroad experiences have found that involvement in the host community resulted in greater foreign language gains than those without community involvement (Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2012; Fraser, 2002).
Aim of the Study
The aim of this study was to broaden the understanding of long-term study abroad and study + work abroad experiences. Are the three factors of global human resources equally developed in both types of experiences?

Method and Instrument
This study examined the experiences of Japanese college students who lived overseas for eight to ten months, either studying only or studying and working. In order to learn the participants’ growth in foreign language ability, self-direction, and understanding of other cultures, narrative inquiry was chosen as a way to understand phenomena “from the perspectives of those who experience them” (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chin, 2000, p. 2). Narrative frames, a collection instrument developed by Barkhuizen and Wette, are a way to gather narrative data that is efficient for the participant and the researcher (2008). A narrative frame is a set of sentence starters that provides scaffolding for the writer to follow and yields data that can be analyzed across multiple participants. The narrative frame developed for this study consisted of eight sentence starters (Table 1) that guided the participants in describing the growth of their abilities.

Table 1. Sentence Starters in the Narrative Frame

| A. Reflecting on the last 3 months, I think living overseas is . . . |
| B. When I am in an unknown situation I . . . |
| C. When I meet someone for the first time I . . . |
| D. Speaking English outside the classroom . . . |
| E. I realized my English ability had improved when . . . |
| F. Once I felt uneasy but I faced the challenge to . . . |
| G. Recently I have been worried about . . . thus I am . . . |
| H. Now, I am putting energy into . . . |

The narrative frame, written in Japanese, was completed by the participants at two intervals during their time overseas, three months after arrival and during the last two months.

Participants
The participants were twelve female students in the English department of a junior college. They desired to improve their English communication ability and experience living abroad. After completing their first year of college they withdrew, went overseas and then returned to the college a year later. The participants planned their time abroad and made arrangements. They went to Australia, New Zealand, Canada or the United States for eight to ten months. Three participants received a student visa and nine received a working holiday visa. All began their time abroad with study at an English conversation school, which entailed about twenty hours of classroom study a week. Those who did study + work abroad began to work in restaurants several months after arrival.

Data Analysis
The narrative frame data was translated into English and checked by a Japanese researcher. Each participant’s first and second narrative frames were read recursively and changes in foreign language ability, self-direction, and cultural learning were noted. Next, responses to each sentence starter were analyzed across the eleven participants in order to find reoccurring themes. The study abroad and study + work abroad experiences were compared. Later, the participants were interviewed in order to clarify facts and seek more explanation.

Growth in Elements of Global Personnel

(1) Linguistic and Communication Skills
The following excerpts from the narratives show how the participants described their English communication skills at the beginning, mid-point, and end of their time overseas. The sentence starter is in italics.

“Speaking English outside the classroom I have to ask people to repeat many times. As opposed to in the classroom, when I speak people don’t understand me and give an unpleasant face. Now (four months) I’m used to it and my anxiety has lessened. Now, I don’t give up.” In month seven, I am “speaking English outside the classroom at my job every day. When I hear a customer use a phrase I don’t know I am trying to use it myself at least once.”

“In Speaking English outside the classroom I am slowly gaining confidence to speak” (four months). At six months, “Speaking English outside the classroom is easier now. I can speak without being concerned about the other person.”

The following sentence starter prompted participants to write about communication ability when meeting strangers.

“When I meet someone for the first time I was passive at first, but now (four months) I am used to it.”
“When I meet someone for the first time I am not shy and speak friendly and thus can make friends.” At seven months, “When I meet someone for the first time I don’t hesitate to talk. I am trying to develop close relationships.”
The following sentence starter prompted participants to write about noticing improvement in English ability.

“I realized my English ability had improved when I could hold a conversation in English without thinking about it.” At six months, “I realized my English ability had improved when without getting nervous I can listen and speak smoothly.”

One participant had not realized improvement in her ability at four months however at seven months she wrote,

“I realized my English ability had improved when I was able to counsel a friend in English and when I was able to express what I was thinking to the café owner.”

(2) Self-Direction, Challenge, and Responsibility

The second factor of global personnel includes self-direction, taking the initiative, taking a challenge and a sense of responsibility. The following sentence starter prompted descriptions of challenges the participants faced.

“Once I felt uneasy but I faced the challenge to use transportation that I hadn’t used before and left the city on a trip by myself.”

“Once I felt uneasy but I faced the challenge to start participating in running events. The twice a week running events have helped me to meet local people and have given me opportunities to use English.”

Another sentence starter revealed a sense of responsibility concerning time management, language improvement and jobs.

“Recently I have been worried about my plan for the next six months. Thus, in order to lessen my anxiety I am doing what I want to do and not losing my purpose. I decided to meet various people and study English conversation.”

“Recently I have been worried about my listening ability not improving much. Thus I am listening to the radio on every day.”

“Recently I have been worried about my job as a tour guide. It is more difficult than I thought. Thus I am studying every day to gain the trust of the customers and the travel company.”

(3) Cultural Learning

Although the narrative did not ask about understanding of other cultures, all the participants commented on making friends from many different countries. One participant was observant of the host culture and wrote about her efforts to learn about their culture and communication style.

“When I meet someone for the first time I have begun (at four months) to be able to look them in the eye and smile while I speak.” At nine months, “When I meet someone for the first time I look at them firmly. I have noticed that Australians often compliment the clothes, hairstyle or possessions of a person they meet, so I am trying to do this too.” Also, “Once I felt uneasy but I faced the challenge to initiate talking with the person sitting next to me in the bus. Australians talk easily with people they don’t know... on the bus or train... I was happy when I talked with someone on the bus and people around me joined in the conversation.”

The students who did study + work abroad proved that they had attained a minimum level of cultural understanding by the fact that they maintained a job. For most of the participants their first job was at a restaurant owned by an Asian immigrant. Although they dealt with customers and co-workers in English, they desired to work in an establishment owned by people of the majority culture. If they did get a job working for a majority culture owner, they were proud of their accomplishment.

“Once I felt uneasy but I faced the challenge and was hired by a restaurant that is fully managed by local people.”

Growth in all three factors of global human resources was seen in eight of the nine students who did study + work abroad. All of the quotes above were from these participants. The study only participants described growth in English ability however it was less pronounced than those who worked.

“Speaking English outside the classroom I sometimes can’t understand what they say because their speaking is faster than my teacher and homestay family...” At seven months, “I am Speaking English outside the classroom, even though my English is poor. If the other person smiles I can relax and talk to them, but if they don’t smile I get nervous.”

Discussion

The narratives provided a candid glimpse of the struggles to become an effective communicator in a foreign culture. Data from two intervals show the growth in listening comprehension, communication skills, and confidence to take risks. Comparing the experiences of the study abroad only and study + work abroad participants revealed different levels of development in the three factors of global human resources.

First, study abroad only participants described their communication ability as very low in the beginning. They cited “freezing” with nervousness when spoken to, and struggling with listening comprehension.
Toward the end of their stay abroad, although they still expressed low confidence in speaking, they were able to make conversation with cooperative interlocutors and understand dialogue in a movie. Study + work abroad participants also struggled to overcome shyness, yet mid-way in their sojourn were learning to become bolder and experienced success in communication with strangers. Near the end of their stay, they could communicate effectively with strangers and employers without nervousness. The need to work pushed them to communicate with a wider variety of people than those who studied only and whose primary communication took place the classroom.

Regarding the second factor, maturity, as seen in self-directed action, a sense of challenge, and responsibility was hardly seen in the study only narratives. They described challenges of choosing a higher level class and attending a public yoga class. In contrast, the study + work participants described their challenges in approaching an employer for a job, participating in community clubs, and traveling alone. For these students, their biggest challenge was creating a fruitful study abroad experience and sufficient income to continue living overseas.

A striking difference was observed in the third factor, the participants’ identity. The study only participants maintained a student identity, which viewed the world as an academic one where English improvement was measured by teachers and test scores, and challenges were within the classroom. The study + work participants’ identities were independent adults working toward their goal of improving their English usage.

Implications and Conclusion

In comparison to the study only participants, the study + work abroad participants described higher and broader English communication skills, showed more self-directed action, embraced challenges and accepted responsibility, and presumably gained a deeper level of understanding of the host culture as they worked in it. Being a working member of society is a deeper level of integration into the host culture than that of a tourist or a customer in a language school, and requires overcoming differences in communication style and values to accomplish work. The study + work experience undoubtedly developed the abilities of the participants. However, these observations should not be seen simply as causative. The students who chose to study + work were willing to try working in order to be able to stay abroad for a long time. They were also willing to accept non-traditional learning. The study only students chose not to work during study abroad due to adequate financial support, a high value on classroom learning, and a lack of confidence to be able to work.

Elements of global personnel that were developed in the study + work abroad participants may also be developed through tasks added to classroom learning programs. Unstructured tasks that require students to leave the classroom, initiate with people in the host culture, and find a way to contribute to society may be beneficial. Universities will preferably have multiple study abroad options to match students’ differing abilities and resources. This paper suggests that learning that occurs outside the classroom is also valuable for developing global personnel.

References


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On Emotions in Foreign Language Learning and Use

Jean-Marc Dewaele
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Every year, the plenary and featured speakers at our annual international conference write articles for The Language Teacher to give attendees some background to their conference presentations. This year, we will be publishing these articles in all of the pre-conference issues of TLT. For more information on JALT2015, please see the pullout preview in the centre of this issue of TLT, or visit our conference website: <http://jalt.org/conference>

Emotions are at the heart of the foreign language learning process. Without emotion, boredom would reign and very little learning would take place. I report on some recent work that has investigated the role of emotion in the foreign language classroom, both positive (foreign language enjoyment) and negatives ones (foreign language anxiety). It seems that both learners and teachers play a crucial role in managing emotions in the classroom. I also report on the difficulties associated with the communication of emotions in a foreign language and on their relative absence in foreign language course books and during classes. This leaves learners ill-prepared to recognise and express emotions appropriately in a foreign language, which is an essential part of sociopragmatic competence.

My learning and teaching foreign languages (FLs) in Belgium and the United Kingdom over many years convinced me that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is not just a cognitive process, but crucially also an affective one. It is my strong belief that success depends in large part on learners’ affective fuel levels, and that as teachers we have to keep the affective tank full.

I remember how surprised I was when I started exploring the literature for the effect of emotion on SLA. Researchers seemed to pay much more attention to cognitive and social perspectives, rather than emotional ones. Of course, Robert Gardner, and later Zoltan Dörnyei, could claim that motivation and attitudes have an emotional core in them, but it seemed hidden in complex models. Moreover, attitudes are quite constant, motivation has a long-term, goal-oriented perspective, in contrast to emotions who are experienced in the moment. Also, as MacIntyre (2002) pointed out, attitudes alone are not sufficient to support motivation.

What interested me were the emotions that arise, and fluctuate wildly, the moment a learner or user engages in FL learning or communication (cf. the recent study by Gregersen, MacIntyre & Meza, 2014). The word “emotion” itself was generally absent in the SLA literature up to the start of the current century, although there had been interest in one specific emotion: foreign language anxiety, especially since the study by Elaine Horwitz (1986).

One ground-breaking book, Arnold (1999), brought the concept of “affect” to the fore in FL Teaching. She focused on the importance of establishing a good emotional atmosphere in the classroom, it depending on both learners and teachers. She and others have pursued the study of this crucial topic (Arnold, 2011; Dörnyei & Murphy, 2003; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

I also became interested in how, and how much FL learners and users talk about emotional matters when they have the opportunity. This interest was shared by Aneta Pavlenko, whose talk I had missed at the International Symposium on Bilingualism in 1999 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Contacting her after the conference to apologise for having missed her talk, we agreed to collaborate on a study into the variation in the use of emotion vocabulary in our French and English interlanguage corpora, which led to the publication Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002). It was the start of a productive collaboration, with the development of the Bilingualism and Emotion Questionnaire (Dewaele & Pavlenko, 2001-2003), probably the first big online questionnaire in applied linguistics. We collected data from more than 1500 adult multilinguals all over the world on their language preferences to express feelings, love, anger, swearing with various interlocutors, including

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JALT2015 CONFERENCE ARTICLE

On Emotions in Foreign Language Learning and Use

Jean-Marc Dewaele
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their children, their emotional attitudes towards their different languages and their anxiety in using these languages with different interlocutors. This lead to many publications, including chapters in an edited book (Pavlenko, 2006) and two monographs: Pavlenko (2005) and Dewaele (2013). We discovered that multilinguals’ dominant language, generally their first language (L1), was often the preferred language to express emotions. However, multilinguals did report switching languages when becoming very emotional, typically for swearing. The type of instruction in the FL also played an important role in language choice for emotion. Participants who had learned a FL through classroom instruction and had simultaneously used that language to communicate outside the classroom, and participants who had started acquiring the FL early in life tended to use that FL more frequently to express emotion than participants who had purely formal instruction and were later starters. FLs that were used frequently were typically also preferred to express emotion. An analysis of individual variation in perceived emotional force of swearwords in the multilinguals’ different languages and the perceived emotional weight of the phrase “I love you” revealed similar patterns (Dewaele, 2008, 2013). Balanced bi- or multilinguals – reporting shared dominance in two languages – were found to prefer the L1 to express emotions (Dewaele, 2011b).

Interestingly, this work on emotion seems to have inspired other researchers to join in, leading to a substantial increase in publications (for ex. Garrett & Young, 2009; Gregersen, MacIntyre & Meza, 2014; Swain, 2013), as well as many presentations and panels at international conferences. Zoltan Dörnyei acknowledged the importance of emotion in SLA, declaring in 2010:

This is a huge topic, but the current situation is sadly straightforward: Apart from a few exceptions (for example the work of John Schuman, Peter MacIntyre and Jean-Marc Dewaele), emotions have been by and large neglected in the field of SLA. This is all the more surprising given that: (a) classrooms are venues for a great deal of emotional turmoil; (b) emotions are known to be salient sources of action (for example when we act out of fear or anger or happiness); and (c) the process of language learning is often emotionally highly loaded for many people (p. 22).

He confirmed this observation recently, stating that: “Perhaps the greatest omission of the classic Individual Differences paradigm is that it barely acknowledges the central role of emotions in human thought and behaviour” (Dörnyei & Ryan, to appear).

The point I made in a recent blog is that learners’ emotions are like wild horses (or at least, ponies). Learners can, with a little dexterity, and with a little help from teachers, harness the power of their emotions to absorb more of the FL and the culture.

One of the main problems of foreign language (FL) teaching is that the emotional component is too often ignored, resulting in relatively emotion-free (and therefore often boring) classroom sessions (Dewaele, 2005, 2011a). It is undoubtedly easier for curriculum designers and teachers to focus on rigid learning activities that require little emotional investment and therefore little potential for unpredictability, outbursts, surprise, risk-taking, embarrassment, anxiety ... and enjoyment.

In fact, it is my strong belief that by trying to play it safe, curriculum designers and teachers got the wrong end of the stick. Teachers need the liberty to do unexpected, challenging and funny things. Routine is a killer in the classroom.

Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014), inspired by the Positive Psychology movement, explain that negative emotions are not always bad, as they can help learners to eliminate an obstacle but they can be paralysing. Positive emotions on the other hand “can broaden the field of attention and build resources for the future” and help learners “to build relationships, personal strength, and tolerances for the moments when things become difficult” (p. xiv).

The importance of the role of both positive and negative emotions in FL learning surfaced in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) where we considered the relationship between FL Enjoyment (FLE) and FL Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) among 1746 FL learners from around the world. We found that learners reporting higher levels FLE experienced less FLCA, although some did score high, or low, on both dimensions. To our relief, we discovered that levels of FLE were significantly higher than those of FLCA. The difference between levels of FLE and FLCA was relatively small for beginning learners, but widened for more advanced learners. In other words, as learners progress, their FL anxiety weakens and their enjoyment grows. It is thus crucial not to give up FL classes too early. Interestingly, female participants (who scored significantly higher on self-reported proficiency in the FL) reported both significantly more FLE and more FLCA. It thus seems that emotions (both positive and negative) are the driving force behind FL learning.

This finding nicely illustrates Kramsch’s (2009) exhortation that passion and desire are at the heart of the teaching FLs: “Even if we teach a syllabus that is not of our choice and texts we have not selected, we need to find something about them that we either love or hate, but that we are not indifferent to. If we are, our indifference will become our students’ boredom” (p. 208).
I will conclude with a personal anecdote on the importance of emotion and emotion words from my days as a teacher of French at the Chamber of Commerce in Brussels in the late 1980s. That Friday evening, I had concluded the class with an unexpectedly outrageous song “Putain putain, c’est vachement bien, nous sommes quand même tous des Européens (F**k, f**k, it’s really good, aren’t we all Europeans after all?)” by Belgian artist Arno (maewa2, 2008). The (adult) students loved the song, or at least the chorus, and were belting it out, heading towards the door at 9 pm. As their teacher, I was quite amazed by the level of enthusiasm that the song had generated and thought they would never forget the meaning of the highly vulgar and emotional exclamation putain, or of the vernacular emotional adverb vachement. I will never forget what happened next. As I pulled the door open wide with a theatrical bow, the school director, who must have been leaning against the door listening to the racket inside, fell flat on the floor, got up blushing, and congratulated me meekly for a good classroom atmosphere and mumbled something about whether the song was appropriate. Students burst out laughing, and headed home singing and yelling “Putain putain, c’est vachement bien!” I assumed their affective tank was full.

References

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Possible Self Photo Albums

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Quick guide

» Keywords: Possible self, ideal self, describing pictures, feelings
» Learner English level: Beginner to advanced
» Learner maturity: Junior high school to university
» Preparation time: 5 minutes over two class periods
» Activity time: 40-70 minutes
» Materials: Possible Self Photo Album activity sheet (Appendices), pictures from magazines or Internet, colored pencils

Describing pictures in detail via the target language is an effective way of engaging second language (L2) learners in communicative language use. Lessons incorporating description are beneficial because learners are encouraged to create texts in their L2 that show understanding of context. In Japan, this also prepares learners for the Eiken and TOEIC tests, where they are required to understand and interact with descriptions of pictures. Encouraging students to identify with a possible self-image and describe related pictures can also motivate them. Motivation is a significant individual learner variable in second language acquisition and plays a key role in sustaining long-term L2 learning. Thanks to new L2 motivation research and the integration of L2 motivational theories and psychology, imagery and the notion of self play an increasing role in EFL classrooms. Helping students identify with a future L2 possible self can encourage learners to link their self notions to their actions via their ideas of what they might like to become and what they are afraid of becoming (Markus & Nurius, 1986) to create their ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2005). Encouraging students to create and describe an ideal L2 self can promote communicative use of the target language in addition to providing an opportunity for them to identify with their possible selves, thereby facilitating L2 motivation. The following activity is similar to Hadfield and Dörnyei’s (2013), Future photo album; however, it focuses on describing four specific pictures and the associated feelings.

Preparation

Step 1: The week before the main lesson, spend 5 minutes outlining the concept of possible selves. Ask students to think about themselves in the future using English and then bring in pictures, magazine cut-outs, or print-outs to class.

Step 2: Print the lesson handouts (Appendix A) before the main lesson.

Procedure

Step 1: Encourage students to think about Picture 1, their image of their future self. Have them draw a picture or use magazine cut-outs to create one.

Step 2: Instruct students to describe Picture 1. They should consider what they look like, reflect on their
Introducing Lesson Topics and Content Specific Lexis
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Quick guide

» Keywords: Vocabulary, guessing topic-specific vocabulary from context, lesson warmer, comparatives/superlatives, brainstorming
» Learner English level: Any
» Learner maturity: Any
» Preparation time: 10 – 20 minutes
» Activity time: 15 minutes – 1 hour
» Materials: Whiteboard or blackboard

This activity is a flexible, fun, and interesting way to introduce or review a lesson topic, and it can be extended to provide practice for all the major language skills. The example extension activities allow students that have already encountered the target vocabulary to develop further whilst remaining engaged with the material. The activity can be used in lesson types ranging from exam preparation to general English conversation, and students often enjoy the deductive side of the first stage.

Preparation

Step 1: Select a list of vocabulary related to the topic of the lesson. For example, if teaching a reading lesson on water pollution, the teacher could use the names of the five oceans.

Step 2: Find one fact for each of the words. This activity works best if the facts can be presented using comparative or superlative forms, for example, the largest ocean, the smallest ocean, etc.

Procedure

Step 1: Write the first letter of each word on the board, in this case PAISA for Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Southern, and Arctic. Encourage students to guess what the words are and the topic they relate to. This is often very difficult, so give extra letters as clues as necessary and/or write blank spaces for each of the missing letters, for example P _ _ _ _ _, A _ _ _ _ _ _, etc.
Step 2: After the words have been elicited and the topic of the lesson identified, dictate facts about the words for the students to write down.

Step 3: Elicit and explain the facts that you dictated in Step 2 and write them on the board in a different color and different order from the original list of words. Then, get the students to match the facts to the words in pairs or groups. Elicit and write the answers on the board.

Step 4: Get students to brainstorm or draw a mind-map about the lesson topic. This can be done individually, in pairs, or as a group. After a set amount of time (five minutes is usually sufficient), elicit words and draw a class mind-map on the board (Note: alternatively, this could be done directly on the board as a whole-class activity). This gives a good opportunity to establish the lesson topic and introduce or review related vocabulary, as each word item generated can become the genesis of a new mind-map. An example mind-map is provided in Appendix A and possible extension activities in Appendix B.

Conclusion

When starting a lesson it is important to establish the lesson topic, evaluate the students’ retrievable language relating to that topic, and to try and create a motivating, interesting, and engaging atmosphere. Introductory ‘warmer’ activities help to do this and can also reduce students’ affective filters (Krashen, 1981) and help activate existing schemata, allowing students to access the lesson more effectively (Fuscoe, 2013).

The above activity is beneficial for all students as, even if they have encountered the vocabulary before, they are being given the chance to review and engage with a word, making it more likely that the word will be remembered later (Schmitt, 2000). Also, if the words are being used successfully by the students in the extension activities, the retrieval routes to those items are being strengthened (Baddeley, 1997) and the increased exposure is helping the students to consolidate the vocabulary (Schmitt and Carter, 2000).

References


Appendices

The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

Using TED Talks to Build Large-Group Discussion Skills

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Quick Guide

» Key words: Large-group discussions, confidence, self-management, strategies
» Learner English Level: High intermediate and above
» Learner Maturity: Senior high school and above
» Preparation Time: Minimal, since the activity is student led. Teachers should view and approve TED talks chosen by learners
» Activity Time: 30-45 minutes
» Materials: TED talks (online), viewing summary template, seating plan with learners names, PowerPoint and projector facilities/whiteboard

Encouraging students to use English in large group settings is a challenge. This activity, when repeated (and varied) over time, has been used successfully in university EAP speaking and listening programmes to scaffold learners into confident large group discussions using explicitly taught conversation strategies, stimulating learner selected themes and resources, and self-managed presentations, participation and reflection.

Preparation

Step 1: Instruct the class to divide into self-selected groups of four. Outside class, each group selects a
TED talk from the Internet (9 – 15 minutes) relating to a theme being studied. Set dates for each group’s discussion and inform students.

**Step 2:** Groups prepare introductions to their talks that recap key points, without summarizing everything, and three questions designed to stimulate discussion. They should attempt to raise controversial issues and provoke differing opinions. Give the URL links to the class.

**Step 3:** Everyone watches the talks outside class time, prior to the dates set for discussion. (N.B. From the beginning of the semester, allocate class time to introduce and practice a range of strategies/functions, one by one. Model these, then practice in pairs, small groups and finally with the whole class. Select practice topics, beginning with less controversial ones, and, as students gain confidence, moving to more ‘sticky’ issues. Each practice session lasts 15 minutes. Tell students they will earn points during the TED talk discussions for using these strategies and for participation, which contribute to their overall grade).

**Procedure**

**Step 1:** On discussion day, distribute quiz sheets. Allow five minutes for students to write a short answer to a pre-set question to check viewing homework was completed (see Appendices). Collect these and record homework completion.

**Step 2:** The presenting group outlines their introduction (three minutes), sharing equal responsibility for this. They open the discussion to the whole class by displaying/asking their first question. Groups may use PowerPoint or the whiteboard, but each question should be visible for the duration of the relevant part of the discussion.

**Step 3:** Presenters invite class members to respond to the first question (and subsequent questions) and to comment on each other’s contributions. During the discussion, the teacher sits behind the class, keeping a tally of each individuals’ contributions on a prepared seating plan, and allocating a score for speaking quality (according to use of speaking strategies/functions previously taught) (see Appendices). The teacher does NOT participate, since presenters are responsible for self-managing the discussion. In fact, all class members should know that everyone has a responsibility to participate, to ensure respectful involvement, and to prevent articulate students from dominating.

**Step 4:** After 20 minutes, the presenting group closes the discussion. The class breaks into small groups/pairs, while the presenting group remains together. Everyone discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the discussion (five minutes), then students report back to the whole class, beginning with the presenters. The objective is to improve the quality of future discussions. The teacher makes final comments and suggestions. After calculating scores, grades can be distributed in a subsequent lesson.

**Conclusion**

For discussions to work well, teachers should explain that everyone’s contribution is important, that mistakes are acceptable, as are different opinions. Encourage students to express their opinions honestly and hold their ground in a setting of respect and mutual support. If a speaker is having difficulty expressing an idea, other presenters should ask if someone can offer a suggestion to enable the speaker to complete what they wish to say. Alternatively, the speaker may briefly use their first language, which should be translated by another class member, then reiterated in English by the original speaker, provided they have not already been interrupted with a polite (but assertive) interjection!

**Appendices**
The appendices are available from the online version of this article at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>.

**Involving and Motivating Learners Through Dialogue Writing and Role-Play**

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**Quick guide**

- **Keywords:** Dialogue writing, role play, motivation, involvement
- **Learner English level:** Intermediate and above
- **Learner maturity:** Junior high school through high school
- **Preparation time:** 10 minutes
- **Materials:** Varies depending on student activity
- **Activity time:** 10 minutes per group
Almost all teachers like to have active and cooperative students. One problem some teachers in foreign language contexts face is a lack of student participation and cooperation when practicing dialogues. This may be because the dialogues are not interesting or relevant to students’ lives. Personalized learning is regarded as an effective strategy for engaging students in the process of learning. The following activity proved successful in motivating and engaging students in my classes.

**Preparation**

**Step 1:** Divide students into self-selected groups with three or four to a group.

**Step 2:** Explain the features of a good dialogue, such as context, characters, and so on.

**Step 3:** Provide basic materials such as markers and paper.

**Procedure**

**Step 1:** Have students write short, meaningful dialogues in their groups using words they know or have learnt in their lessons. Their dialogues should have an original context and purpose with original characters they have devised. They can adopt different situations, such as in a bank or restaurant. The teacher acts as facilitator at this stage and should not overtly provide ideas on dialogues.

**Step 2:** After completion of their dialogues, learners should perform in front of the class. This takes the form of role-plays. Students are allowed to use props such as pictures, signs, and other materials when performing. They may choose to make use of costumes or other props to demonstrate their job or identity.

**Step 3:** Assign scores to each group based on the quality of their dialogues and their performance. This can be done using a checklist.

**Step 4:** Point out the strengths and weaknesses of the groups at the end of the class, paying special attention to pronunciation mistakes, word choice problems, and other technical aspects of the language.

**Step 5:** Announce one group as the winner to encourage them and motivate other groups for future role-plays.

**Conclusion**

This activity involves students and helps them develop their abilities. The strengths of the activity include encouraging student creativity, increasing engagement, and motivating students to take active ownership of their dialogue. Teachers can use this activity in their classes as a project or end of term challenge. They should see more active and cooperative students.

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**[RESOURCES] BOOK REVIEWS**

Robert Taferner

If you are interested in writing a book review, please consult the list of materials available for review in the Recently Received column, or consider suggesting an alternative book that would be helpful to our membership. Email: <reviews@jalt-publications.org> Web: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/book-reviews>

This month’s column features Alex Kasula’s review of Globe Trotters: Practical English with Video.

**Globe Trotters: Practical English with Video**

[Reviewed by Alex Kasula, University of Hawai’i at Mānoa]

Globe Trotters is a captivating textbook specifically aimed at the development of students’ speaking and listening skills, as well as other communication skills by engaging them through a multicultural use of English. Using pictures, au-
dio and video from *National Geographic*, the book represents a global perspective on the varieties of English, and focuses on how learners can communicate effectively by incorporating a variety of skills in both academic and real-world language use. *Globe Trotters* is comprised of 13 units, each addressing the culture of a different region or country. The complementary DVD contains one video per unit that concentrates on different aspects of each unit's topic, such as dance, music, or architecture. The DVD also complements the textbook by incorporating a listening section, language lab, travel adventures task, and a listening section for conversation practice. Although the guidebook is aimed at Japanese learners, it is not necessary to rely on the Japanese language explanations as teaching points.

Each unit in the text begins with a Warm-Up exercise that encourages discussion and vocabulary practice by using pictures. This is followed by a Before You Watch prediction activity that instructors could use to further connect students with the upcoming content and lesson. All subsequent sections require the use of the supplementary DVD, which is narrated in a clear, moderately paced conversational style by American-English speakers. The text provides students with both during and after task exercises focusing on comprehension and sentence formation. Building on these activities, the book turns to students' listening comprehension by taking a particular audio excerpt from the video and slowing it down. This allows students to pay particular attention to a conversation, without the assistance of visual aids.

Each unit also includes a Language Lab task that is complemented by audio on the DVD. This segment incorporates a short conversation between two individuals about an everyday topic such as being absent from “swim practice” (p. 29). These conversation segments help the learner to identify phrases in everyday English use, for example the expression “huh?” (p. 29). After the conversation, there is a communicative task designed to enhance learners' understanding of the phrase's meaning and use.

The final two sections of each chapter seem to be the most engaging and interesting for students. The penultimate section, Travel Adventures, engages learners in multiple tasks dealing with a specific aspect of travel, such as getting directions. These sections provide learners with authentic knowledge and communicative practice that will be useful in the real world and contribute to the use of task-based language teaching (TBLT) in the classroom (Long & Crookes, 1993). The final section in each unit is Engaging in Conversation, and learners use previously acquired information to complete a conversational activity representative of real-world contexts. There is a gradual increase in task complexity throughout each unit, with each unit culminating in holistic, practical, and authentic tasks, an approach which has been shown to be beneficial for L2 development (Robinson, 2011).

This textbook also includes review sections that are composed of games (for example, crossword puzzles), daily English listening practice, and communication activities, each acting as a cumulative review of the previous six units.

Although my students found the content of the textbook to be interesting and relevant, and though the text is clearly informed by TBLT pedagogy, I did not rely on the guidebook as my main resource. Rather, it served as an accompanying text to provide learners with extra practice. The supplementary teacher's manual primarily acted as an answer key to each unit and did expand to activities beyond the textbook.

The textbook is reasonably priced, and the complementary DVD acts as a useful resource for students to receive listening practice in different content. Overall, I found the text to be useful and it fit quite nicely into my course. It exposed students to practical uses of the language through common phrases and tasks applicable to life outside the classroom. Because of its clear layout, well-defined objectives, multicultural material, and focus on TBLT through communicative practice, I would highly recommend *Globe Trotters* as a textbook for a speaking and listening classroom, particularly in the EFL setting.

References

The JALT Extensive Reading SIG
8th Annual Extensive Reading Seminar
What is Extensive Reading?
Seinan Jo Gakuin University, Kitakyushu
Sunday, June 21, 2015
For more information:
http://jalt.org/er/events
Recently Received
Steve Fukuda
<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

A list of texts and resource materials for language teachers available for book reviews in TLT and JALT Journal. Publishers are invited to submit complete sets of materials to Steve Fukuda at the Publishers’ Review Copies Liaison address listed on the Staff page on the inside cover of TLT.

Recently Received Online

An up-to-date index of books available for review can be found at: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/recently-received>

* = new listing; ! = final notice—Final notice items will be removed May 31. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

Books for Students (reviewed in TLT)

Contact: Steve Fukuda <pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

![image of book]


* Compass Reading Series—Various Authors. Seoul: Compass Publishing, 2014. [6-level reading course for young learners incl. workbooks, audio CDs, downloadable supplementary material, and free vocabulary practice application].


! Drive—Various Authors. Tokyo: Compass Publishing, 2014. [4-level course focused on vocabulary building through repeated exposure and skill building via scaffolding w/text for each of the four skills incl. workbook for each skill].

![image of book]


! Nice to Meet You: Academic (Japanese Edition)—Barker, D. Nagoya, Japan: 8TB Press, 2013. [7-unit course focused on language used when meeting someone for the first time].

Positively English: Developing Speaking Fluency—Diem, R. Fukuoka, Japan: Carpe Diem Learning Solutions, 2013. [12-unit conversation course incl. downloadable teacher’s manual and e-learning companion website with assessments and activities].

! Real Reads: An Introduction to Literature—Nakanishi, W. J., Bibby, S., & Ota, M. Nagoya, Japan: Perceptia Press, 2014. [12-chapter literature-based reading course study book w/glossary and translations incl. online teacher’s guide w/downloadable audio and additional materials].

Student Teacher: Introductory English for Education Majors—Williams, S., & Morooka, V. Tokyo: Nan’un-do, 2014. [12-unit course focused on communication needs of education majors using educational themes and issues incl. audio CD].


Books for Teachers (reviewed in JALT Journal)

Contact: Greg Rouault <jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org>


![image of conference]

“Why can’t we be friends?”

Reuniting Linguistics and Language Education

Despite the merits that it can offer language teachers, linguistics often seems divorced from EFL education. The 2015 Michinoku English Education Summit (MEES) aims to provide opportunities for English educators to explore the dynamics between linguistics and EFL education. In doing so, teachers will gain a wealth of new language insights as well as practical teaching ideas. This MEES conference will appeal to any English language educator interested in the relationship between language and language teaching, regardless of their teaching context.

MEES 2015 conference and contact information:
https://www.facebook.com/MichinokuEES
(2015 conference event page link)
Cōgĭtat Ergo Estis (but that’s ok)

This year feels important for two reasons. The publication of this issue marks half my life being spent in Nihon. Whether it has been “n years”, or “the First Year n times” may depend on having lived longitudinally or in cross-section. Possibly the majority of “native” ELTs are the latter, since our working lives are in freeze-frame university environments: Professionally, we remain gaikokujin to students, and even to some colleagues. However, this does not mean that we can’t adapt, change, and somehow develop over time to become naikokujin (内国人) in our personal lives. But then again, maybe that is not so important, either.

This year also marks the tenth anniversary of my grandfather-in-law’s death. “Endo Tsuneo, 1909-2005” first appeared in Nihongo in the literary monthly Shi to Shisô. 10 years ago, returning to the hotel from a night market in Viet Nam the bicycle barely holding together I narrowly avoided a women and her baskets, who scolded me “Liên Xô!”

十年前に中央ベトナムに夜市場 ボロボロ自転車でホテル帰り途中 肩に天秤棒をかついだお婆さんと ギリギリにぶつけなかった 「Liên Xô!」 と彼女に睨んで叱れた。

“Soviet!”, the name of erstwhile allies from the Cold War 「ソビエト人」と意味して 冷戦の同盟に付けた名だった。

and next in Thailand I was “Farang!” (“that white foreigner”) which originally meant, naturally, Frenchman and in India, enduring sunlight required a head wrap exposing my face to local inquiry: “Brother, are you a Believer?”

インドにも 強い陽射しから頭を守るため 布でグルグル巻いた。 それで、ワシの顔だけ目にした地元に 「お宅、回教人ですか」と訊かれた。

but going further back, bopping around Nagasaki during Edo doubtless a line of brats would yell “Oi! Oranda-jin!” (“Dig that crazy Dutchman!”) もしかしたら、江戸時代の日本 ワシが長崎中心にブラブラしたたら 周りのギャキが「オオッ!阿蘭陀人!」と 叫びだすことをよく想像できる。

My Meiji-born grandfather-in-law referred to me as “Kent”, and last week shaking his shrunken hand for the last time, his eldest daughter said “Look, O-jiisan, Kent-san’s paid a visit.” 数年前に家内のふるさとで 祖父と初めて出会った時 彼の明治生まれの意識によると ワシは「ケントさん」。 そして、先週に寝たきり様子 で彼の細い爪っぽい手 最後に握手した時 長女は「見えて、おじいさん、ケントさんが 見舞いしてくれましたよ」と。

Make no mistake, I don’t see a Kingdom of Heaven, but my Soviet-French-Muslim-Dutch self as Kent the Mormon with his yarmulka chants the sutras when visiting his grave 実は、「羽化して天へ」と信じるモルモン教じゃない、ワシは ただ墓参りしたら ソビエト・フランス・回教・阿蘭陀の ワシはケントとして ユダヤ人のヤムルカをかぶりながら お経唱える
Form Technology for Language Teachers: How Do You Like Your Monkey?

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Simeon Flowers
Tokai University
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Online questionnaire technology can be used for various pedagogical purposes, as well as the core task of creating a research questionnaire. In this article, two teachers and writers for Digital Mobile Language Learning <http://digitalmobilelanguagelearning.org> analyze Google Forms <http://google.com/forms/about/> and SurveyMonkey <http://surveymonkey.com> to examine ways these two services can be utilized by language teachers in both language teaching and conducting empirical research.

Google Forms
Google has revolutionized computing through the development of an integrated, online virtual office that synchronizes across devices. Among other things, this allows for the creation and deployment of online forms that can be used for collecting data. Use of these Google services is free, and requires nothing other than a Gmail account. While this technology can be used to create research questionnaires, Google Forms can also be used for various pedagogical purposes, including the creation of quizzes (Flowers, 2014a) or even the management of an entire extended reading program (Firth & Mesureur, 2010; Mesureur & Firth, 2012). Quizzes made with Forms also render nicely on mobile devices (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Mobile Friendly Listening Quiz. This figure demonstrates how Google Forms render nicely on mobile devices. The quiz demonstrated here uses a YouTube video from EnglishLessons4U.

Form Creation
Form creation is done through a very intuitive web app. This allows for Google Forms to be edited collaboratively by team members. In addition, work in progress is automatically saved to Google Drive. Creating the forms themselves is a surprisingly easy process. As an example of its ease of use, a list of items can be copied and pasted from elsewhere to instantly create an array of responses for a multiple choice test item. Furthermore, by simply ticking a box, each item in that multiple choice question can be shuffled randomly for each respondent. Google Forms also takes advantage of Google’s search engine; this streamlines the entire process by allowing the searching for and embedding of images and even video to be done without ever leaving the form creation app.

Form Responses
Responses to a Google Form are sent to a spreadsheet that is automatically created and stored in
Google Drive. These spreadsheets can be exported to various popular formats or analyzed within Google Sheets. Though the teacher must do much of this, it is possible to create self-graded quizzes using the seamless integration between these two apps (Flowers, 2014b). Also, if preferred, there are add-ons to Google Sheets like Flubaroo (<http://www.flubaroo.com>) that assist in the feedback process. It is also possible to get a summary of survey or quiz responses in the form of pie charts and bar graphs from within Sheets at the click of a button.

Teaching Ideas and Examples Using Google Forms

There are a variety of ways a teacher might utilize the potential of Google Forms in the classroom. The authors have often used Google Forms to create supplementary learning materials; a few such examples follow.

Video Enhanced Listening Comprehension Quizzes

Google forms allow for the quick searching for and embedding of any YouTube video. There are quite a few YouTube channels dedicated to teaching language or adaptable for language learning. One simple idea is to embed a video into Google Forms, and then create a comprehension quiz for that video. The following link leads to a sample quiz that uses video from the YouTube channel EnglishLessons4U: <http://goo.gl/sb3aRy>.

Reading Quizzes Using Reading Passages Embedded into the Form

It is also very easy to paste in text from any source into Google Forms to create a reading comprehension quiz. News sources can offer a steady supply of new material. Voice of America’s Learning English (<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/>) offers news articles written for English learners. The following sample uses a VOA news article and includes a hidden bonus question for those who correctly answer the last question: <http://goo.gl/jWLNur>.

Quizzes Using Images as Prompts

Adding pictures to a form is also very simple because you can search for images and embed them from within the Google Forms web app. Image search with Google is very powerful, and more importantly, an advanced image search allows for a complex set of variables to be selected in your search. This includes preferences for: colors, images including a face, only photographs, clip art, or line drawings. In this way it can be easy to make a quiz that uses only images as prompts: <http://goo.gl/FY0guQ>.

Questionnaires and Quizzes Created by Students Collaboratively

Another way to use Forms is to build a survey or quiz collaboratively. This is an activity where students can be creative. The authors have had success getting students to build research questionnaires collaboratively using Google Forms. Another idea is to have groups of students create quizzes to test their classmates. Because of the collaborative nature designed into the Google Apps Suite, collaboration and integration with Google Forms is made easy with the initial setup of a Google Account (Flowers, 2014c).

SurveyMonkey

Founded in 1999, SurveyMonkey has established itself as a leading provider of free, customizable online surveys. Although the basic user plan for a SurveyMonkey account is free, individuals have to pay a fee to access data analysis services and customization features. The software is very easy to use and the online surveys render well on smartphones. Moreover, the teacher can quickly check a survey’s progress through the mobile application. It is these mobile applications that enable the teacher to make use of the software during class time. SurveyMonkey questionnaires are being used for Extensive Reading reports, class reflections, in-class polling, student-led research projects, peer review forms for presentations and other assessment tasks. All of these uses are available through the basic free plan. However, it is only after one chooses to pay for the more expensive plans that one can take advantage of the true power of SurveyMonkey.

Key Benefits of SurveyMonkey

Answer Piping

An important advantage of an online survey is that respondents can be asked to read and respond to the sections that are relevant to them. After answering a question prompt for example, the respondent is led past irrelevant sections to the questionnaire to sections that are specifically applicable to them based on their answer to a particular question. This creates a more seamless experience for the respondent and, hopefully, it will encourage the collection of higher quality data (Martins, 2010).
Answer Filtering
In order to identify correlations or trends in the data, one can ask the answer filter to show only the specific answer sets that are of interest. For example, the filter could be used to focus in on respondents who have studied abroad if one of the questions asked whether the respondent has ever studied abroad.

Qualitative Analysis
SurveyMonkey has built in word frequency and category labeling functions to help the teacher evaluate open-ended responses effectively. Moreover, these two functions in combination with the built-in search function help make the researchers job much easier when evaluating large quantities of qualitative data.

Customized Reporting
SurveyMonkey creates charts and reports based on survey responses, which can be downloaded as a PDF or JPEG file. These files or charts can then be embedded directly into a report, presentation, or research paper. It is worth noting here, that the teacher can also use the answer filter to generate individual reports for students or other interested parties.

Teaching Ideas and Examples Using SurveyMonkey
Two tasks that the authors most regularly use SurveyMonkey to fulfill are for managing students’ extensive reading logs and as a peer-review tool for in-class presentations or writing evaluations. For the extensive reading log, after students finish reading a book they are required to complete a short survey. Within the survey students have to: (1) select their name (this assists with survey filtering); (2) answer some general questions concerning the book (for example, the publisher, number of words, title, and perceptions); and (3) complete three open-ended questions about the book (for example, What was your favorite line from the book? Who was your favorite character and why? What would be a good question to test whether the reader actually read the book?). During the semester the teacher can quickly check the survey’s results to evaluate the progress of the class. If the teacher wants to investigate a specific student’s progress, they can use the filter function to see a student’s individual responses. At the end of the semester, a teacher can use the filter and customized reporting functions to create an overall report for each student that is used to grade students on their extensive reading effort.

SurveyMonkey questionnaires also assist in the facilitation of peer-review activities in the classroom. In the case of in-class presentations, the teacher can create a short questionnaire that reflects an evaluative rubric for the task. The teacher shares a link or QR code to the online survey with students who then, after each presentation, complete the questionnaire on their smartphones. At the end of the task the teacher is able to use the filter and customized reporting functions to generate an overall peer review for each speaker.

For basic research purposes the SurveyMonkey free plan will be enough for teachers to employ it in the basic ways discussed above. However, as the examples above suggest, the paid service makes this tool much more useful for language teachers and researchers (see Table 1 below for a summary of differences between these two services). Although an annual price tag of ¥40,000 may be a turn-off for some, teachers could pool money to purchase a shared account, or encourage their school to invest in SurveyMonkey Enterprise, whereby all teachers in a school or department could manage their own SurveyMonkey account.

Conclusion
Online questionnaires represent not only a powerful tool for academic research, but also a way for teachers to save time and extend their lessons beyond the classroom. Table 1 below provides a comparative summary of Google Forms and SurveyMonkey. The major differences found include the cost of SurveyMonkey versus the free offering of Google Forms, and the sophisticated response analysis services offered by SurveyMonkey versus the largely self-styled analysis one must conduct using Google Sheets.

Table 1. Comparison between Google Forms and SurveyMonkey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Google Forms</th>
<th>SurveyMonkey (Basic)</th>
<th>SurveyMonkey (Gold)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>¥40,000 Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Question Varieties</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile App</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applications | Google Forms | Survey-Monkey (Basic) | Survey-Monkey (Gold)
--- | --- | --- | ---
Question Piping: (Respondents answer questions based on their responses) | Yes | No | Yes
Automated Text Analysis (Open-ended Questions) | No | No | Yes
Image Embedding | Yes | No | Yes
Sound Embedding | No | No | Yes
Video Embedding | Yes | No | Yes
SPSS Integration | Yes | Yes | Yes
Question Limits | No | Yes (10) | No
Response Limits | No | Yes (100) | No
Design Themes | 19 | 51 | 51
Customized Reporting | No | No | Yes
Answer Filtering and Cross Tabulation | No | No | Yes
Professionally Designed Survey Templates | None | 31 | 51
Generates Printable Surveys | Yes | Yes | Yes

References


Editor’s Note: As you’ve read above, online tools provide a powerful tool for language teachers. To learn about many more technology tools, sites, and programs for language learning, join us at the JALTCALL 2015 Conference at Kyushu Sangyo University next month. Registration is open now at <http://account.jaltcall.org>; more conference information is available at <http://conference.jaltcall.org>. See you in Fukuoka in early June and until then, stay Wired!

Malcolm Swanson
This column serves to provide our membership with important information and notices regarding the organisation. It also offers our national directors a means to communicate with all JALT members. Contributors are requested to submit notices and announcements for JALT Notices by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

Email: <jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org> Web: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/jalt-focus>

Perspectives on a Membership Fee Increase
Kevin Ryan, Director of Treasury, and Fred Carruth, Director of Membership

You are probably already aware that the EBM passed a motion to increase Membership Fees in February, and that when the OGM passes the same motion in June, it will become possible for us to put that into effect, probably from September 2015. Please check page 60 of the Sept 2014 issue of *TLT* for more background.

How Did We Get Here?
We haven’t raised fees for almost 20 years. In that time a lot of things have happened. TESOL, in the same time period, has almost tripled its fees. Here
in Japan, many of our expenses have kept rising, while the increase in consumption tax has added to these costs. Please note that the last time we raised our fees in 1997 was the last year the consumption tax was raised. The 1997 increase in dues from ¥7,000 to ¥10,000 was larger in percentage terms than the current rise to ¥13,000. And yet, after the increase in 1997 we had no noticeable attrition, with membership numbers remaining steady. Sure, it was the tail end of the bubble, and JALT had its largest budgets ever, topping out at over 100 million yen, but we still spent more than we took in until we raised fees.

Since 1997, JALT has been streamlining, and so have businesses. Our revenue sources have significantly changed. Consolidation and slashed advertising budgets in the publishing industry mean that the portion of our annual income from Associate Members (publishers and other companies) decreased from about 35% of total revenues in the 90s to about 15% last year. Our annual International Conference continues to generate income, but we now rely on it for close to half our total revenues. If it were ever to be canceled—as we came so close to doing in Kobe two years ago because of typhoons—we would be in dire straits. Becoming an NPO in 1999 brought with it additional costs in reporting and managing records, but even as these tasks increased, we have greatly reduced the cost of the Central Office staff.

Our Reserves, or common Reserves, or “rainy day fund” are probably the best indication of our long-term financial health. When we have a surplus (it’s not a profit because of our status as an NPO), we put that into the common Reserves (our bank account that acts like insurance) and our Reserves go up. But when we run a deficit, and spend more than we bring in, the Reserves decrease. In the early 2000s we had our largest Reserves ever, at about 34 million. That was about half of our goal of one year’s expenses. In the years since then we have had more deficits than surpluses. Our Reserves are now down to around 20 million, slightly up from our lowest point since 2005 when we were at 16 million. Reserves that are much less than our operating costs are not good long-term planning.

Alternatives to raising fees have been tried and implemented. We have seen our annual budgets decrease from 100 million to about 70 million over the last decade and a half. Our budget for next year is 65 million. Reducing the budget means cuts in services. We have come to the point that trimming fat is no longer possible. For more information on the history of JALT Finances, (mostly graphs) see <goo.gl/vZVutZ>.

What Does This Mean? And, What Does This Mean to You?
Increasing Membership Fees will mean a more stable JALT—one that can bounce back from a conference affected by severe weather or a more serious natural disaster. It will mean JALT can look toward expanding and improving the services we offer, both domestically and internationally. It will mean that JALT does not have to rely on short-term solutions and will be able to collaborate throughout the association more equally and effectively to provide the best possible services to our members at the local and national levels. It will mean continuing our excellent publications, with room to move further online, gradually and intelligently. It will mean a smoothly functioning Central Office—one where any member can call and get information most business hours, from a real person. It will mean that we can remain an NPO, with the reporting and auditing expenses covered. It will mean we can maintain our mutual affiliations with other organizations around the world. It will mean we can continue to bring chapter, SIG, and other officers together for planning and development workshops.

To do all this, it is necessary to raise JALT membership fees across the board. For example, in addition to the fee for regular memberships going up to ¥13,000, SIG memberships will go up to ¥2,000. These fee rises are tied in with what we are hoping is just the first step in a restructuring of JALT that is currently underway. Contingent on the fee increases receiving approval at the OGM (Ordinary General Meeting), a motion was passed to include one SIG and one chapter membership as part of your regular JALT membership. If you want JALT to continue to be the vibrant organization it has been through its long history, please support these proposals and vote “Yes” online in the June OGM.

The significant changes which are leading us to raise membership fees have also made us realize that JALT needs to reinvent itself for the 21st century. Look for more on the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Committee in the next issue of JALT Focus.

2015年第1回総会開催通知
Notice of the First 2015 JALT Ordinary General Meeting (OGM)

• 日時：2015年6月28日(日)
  Date: Sunday, June 28, 2015
• 時間：14:30 – 15:30
  Time: 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.
場所: 山西福祉記念会館、ホール
Location: Hall, Yamanishi Welfare Memorial Hall

議案 / Agenda:

第1号議案 議長選出 / Item 1. Determination of chairperson

第2号議案 議事録著名人選出 / Item 2. Determination of signatories


第5号議案 平成26年度監査報告 / Item 5. Audit Report (2014/04/01-2015/03/31)

第6号議案 平成27年度事業計画 / Item 6. Business Plan (2015/04/01-2016/03/31)

第7号議案 平成27年度予算 / Item 7. Budget (2015/04/01-2016/03/31)

第8号議案 会費値上げの提案 / Item 8. Motion to increase Membership fees

第9号議案 その他の重要事項 / Item 8. Other important issues

*6月初旬に、会員の皆様に議案詳細、各報告書のリンク先、及び個別の不在者投票へのリンクをEメールでご案内いたします。

An email containing details of the agenda, including links to the various reports that will be presented, and a link to an individualized ballot will be sent to you during the first week of June.

Eメールがお手元に届きましたら、不在投票の方法に従って投票をしてください。本総会は、特定非営利活動法人（NPO）としての地位を保つ為に必要なもので、過半数以上の会員の皆様による出席（定足数）をもって、正式に開催することができます。幸い当学会では、会員の皆様に向けて電子投票システムを提供させていただいており、不在投票をしていただくことで、本総会の出席者としてみなすことができます。

お手数をおかけいたしますが、ご支援とご協力のほどよろしくお願いします。

When you receive this email, please follow the instructions on how to complete the absentee ballot. It is important for us to have a majority of JALT members present at the OGM for it to be valid, and holding a valid OGM is necessary for us to maintain our status as a nonprofit organization (NPO). Fortunately, you can vote online by absentee ballot and be counted present for the meeting, as per the JALT Constitution.

Thank you very much for being a member of JALT and for your continued support.

In this edition of Showcase, Cesar Santoyo shares with us how Filipino teachers are paving the way for Montessori Education in Japan, and how they are contributing to rebuilding in the Tohoku region.

Filipino Teachers Paving the Way for Montessori Education in Japan

In the aftermath of the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami came the Tohoku reconstruction that resulted in the formation of Filipino migrants initiated Social Enterprise English Language School (SEELS)—a Montessori English program aiming to provide Filipinos living in the disaster-stricken region with the English teaching knowledge and skills to start their own English language tutorials within the neighborhood training programs. SEELS was registered as a limited corporation under the Tokyo Legal Affairs Bureau on May 18, 2011.

From July 2011 to March 2014, SEELS have trained 166 Filipino teachers. In addition to this...
number, SEELS have trained a number of Japanese as well as immigrants from Chile and Cuba to become teachers of English as a second language (L2). Most of SEELS training certificate holders are living in the coastal areas of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima Prefectures where the 3/11 tsunami caused so much devastation.

Montessori English School commenced L2 English programs for preschoolers, high school, and adults in Fukushima during August 2012 and in Sendai in March 2013. JALT has made significant contributions to the SEELS-Sendai School with JALT-SIG members involved in the organisation and held the Free Campus Fair on March 3, 2013. This event contributed to the school's enrollment recruitment drive and also raised awareness of the SEELS' language teaching and learning programs.

Since its creation, SEELS has been dedicated to continually improving the training and services it provides. This has been evident through the implementation of both innovative teacher training and school curricular programs. The results have been remarkable and have contributed to the current objective at SEELS which is to “Teach English the Natural Way” using the Montessori system of teaching. SEELS is reintroducing the language and phonics teaching method developed over a hundred years ago by Dr. Maria Montessori.

In 2018, English will become a regular subject in elementary schools across Japan. As a result of these new Mombusho English learning objectives, SEELS is now tailoring its language teaching and learning through its SEELS Montessori English phonics program towards preschool children and their parents interested in English learning and teaching programs for their children. SEELS vision and mission is to implement the Montessori English Phonics program prior to entering elementary school to help children build an English foundation in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that will contribute to their L2 learning in elementary school.

This year is a milestone year for SEELS with the launching of several new projects and programs. In April 2015, the biggest initiative to date is SEELS in partnership with various jukus offering Montessori English Phonics for children between the ages of seven and ten. In addition, the Montessori English phonics and English language course for mothers and parents is being offered as a way to help contribute to and enjoy their child's language learning. Another milestone is the launching of the “10 Days English Phonics Spring Holiday” being held between March 25 and April 4, 2015 by SEELS-Montessori English Phonics School in Tokyo. The ten-day spring holiday program is a three-hour daily program that includes phonics reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. The SEELS-Montessori English Phonics School in Fukushima and Chiba Prefectures will also offer the same courses as in the Tokyo SEELS schools. Included in these SEELS initiatives are the SEELS-Montessori teacher certificate holders located around Tokyo, Aichi, Osaka, and Gifu who are permitted to conduct home tutorials and community school program anytime using SEELS-Montessori brand, teaching system, materials and company license.

As a result of the excellent service being provided by SEELS, a milestone in their short history has been the acknowledgement by the Japanese government through the awards and support that they have received. Most notably has been the recognition awarded through the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, and the Cabinet Office of Michinoku Kigyo that is leading the Tohoku reconstruction. Such recognition serves to increase peoples' awareness of SEELS and dedicated people like Cesar Santoyo, who has played a major role in the establishment and growth of SEELS and the development of language teaching and learning in Japan, especially in the areas that were devastated in the Tohoku region.

Cesar V. Santoyo is the President of SEELS, a language teaching initiative that provides middle- and low-income families with English language teaching services by Filipino migrant women as well as opportunities to become certified teachers. Since the Great Eastern Earthquake on March 11, 2011, Cesar has led SEELS and been committed to improving the lives of both Filipino migrant women and Japanese people across disaster-stricken regions including Fukushima and Sendai, Japan.

Did you know the Learner Development (LD) SIG offers a variety of grants to both LD SIG members and non-members? Visit <http://ld-sig.org/grants> to find out more!
This issue’s Grassroots Outreach is its swansong: highlights from an 18-year print run and a conference review explaining how a global island studies specialist teamed up with a local EFL instructor to present ways to resolve regional territorial conflicts. This example of a glocal grassroots outreach effort underlines the importance of achieving Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) and the effectiveness of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology.

Swansong

The inaugural issue of this column aired in February 1997 as The Region reporting on language teaching in 21 countries in Asia and the Pacific (McMurray, 1997). Contributors wrote benchmark studies on English teaching in Hong Kong the year it was returned to China (Lundelius, 1997) and when English was first introduced in elementary schools in Taiwan, Korea, and Thailand. Interviews were conducted with teachers based in Singapore, Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Australia. The column was retitled Outreach in June 2009—an altruistic name that attracted reports on philanthropic projects in Bangladesh, volunteers in Vietnam, writing centers in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and India, call centers in the Philippines, high schools in Shanghai, global varieties of English, haiku, drama, and music.

In April 2013 Outreach merged with Grassroots—a column about local chapter and SIG activities that had been lovingly edited by Joyce Cunningham, Mariko Miyao, and Carol Begg—to create Grassroots Outreach. The synergy of comparing international and domestic issues produced a vibrant series of articles on both sides of a debate informing readers about the risks of submitting articles to unscrupulous international journals (Brown & Cook, 2013) as well as conference reviews allowing readers to contrast the way CLIL, EAP, CALL, CLT, and Task-Based Learning are taught in Japan and overseas. Recent reports in this column have included foreign language related activities undertaken by Asian scholars, graduate students, past JALT presidents, an ambassador, and a minister of education.

References


Intercultural Communicative Competence and English Language Education in a Globalized World

David McMurray

The International University of Kagoshima

This year’s top billing at English teacher conferences here in Japan as well as overseas goes to scholars who believe it is essential for students to learn to competently communicate with people from different cultures. Keynote speakers who are specialists in Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) were chosen to address the annual Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET) convention to be held in Kagoshima from August 29 to 31 and the international Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) convention held in Toronto from March 25 to 28.
An example of how ICC can be taught was provided by Godfrey Baldacchino who was invited to present his research on resolving island territorial issues at Kagoshima University, the site of the JACET convention as well as at the International University of Kagoshima (IUK) in February. In deciding upon a desired outcome for his lecture on this divisive topic, the seasoned instructor from Malta on sabbatical from the University of Prince Edward Island aimed at nurturing his students’ capacity for reflection and evaluation of their own and others’ values, beliefs, and behaviors. In essence, the mainstream lecturer from a sociology discipline suggested that if the students wanted to one day become key players in resolving Taiwanese, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese island conflicts, they should have a high level of ICC. ICC is the ability to interact with people who have different social identities as well as their own individuality (Byram, 2008, 2012). Byram (1997) suggests that ICC has five components: attitudes, knowledge, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and interact, and critical cultural awareness.

Previous lecturers who had spoken on global issues at IUK include Rebiya Kadeer, president of the World Uyghur Congress and Caroline Kennedy, the US ambassador to Japan. These guest speakers, who were protected by dozens of security officers, were able to distill an intense debate among the audience of mostly Japanese, Taiwanese, Korean, and Chinese majors in intercultural education for whom English was a foreign language. Their key messages were about changing the world and encouraging students to gain an intercultural education so that they could become critically involved in taking positive grassroots-level actions in the world.

Assisting students in Japan to acquire ICC can be developed through guest speaker sessions according to Nakano, Fukui, Nuspliger, and Gilbert (2011), but it is challenging when essential content such as conflict resolution is taught in a foreign language. An educational approach that effectively addresses this challenge is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Inviting guests from other societies and encouraging a diverse student body on campus to register for these lectures provides ample opportunity for exposure to different cultures. Offered as optional lectures, students can receive additional exposure to the English language without requiring extra time in the regular curriculum.

In deciding upon a suitable way to present a sensitive topic that touches on economy-led geopolitical circumstances, Baldacchino borrowed from the CLIL approach. CLIL has its roots in immersion learning; Canadian schools are the forerunners in this field. English is the medium of instruction for his graduate degree programs in Canada that attract French, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese speakers. For his lecture in Japan that was taught in English he focused on the learning of content. Baldacchino (2007) planned a lesson illustrating several case studies of islands in the world which are shared by two or more countries. His pitch to students was that Japan could better work to share or divide possession of the islands that Taiwan, China, Korea and Russia claim they exclusively own. He appointed a teaching assistant (TA) recently hired as an EFL teacher at a local high school to help with reading and the simultaneous learning of essential vocabulary. CLIL is a lexical approach. Realizing that the reading of text prior to a lecture would be helpful, the TA encouraged learners to notice keywords when reading from a manuscript provided prior to the lecture. The TA also provided interpretation during the lecture and facilitated the question and answer period.

Using a CLIL approach, the guest speaker and TA were successful in teaching the islands studies subject as well as the language. This seems to concur with the conclusion of the case analysis by Nakano et al. (2011, p. 50) that, “There is strong evidence to support a variety of the benefits of guest speaker sessions.” Participants experienced a valuable lesson in the importance of ICC. The learners were immediately drawn into studying a complex topic which motivated them to acquire essential language and intercultural competence so they could communicate in a glocal community of classmates and instructors from Japan and abroad. The English language was experienced in a real-life situation in which students used the language to debate a global issue.

As globalized societies seek to expand across oceans and boundaries, English has become an essential lingua franca in today’s world. To be fluent in today’s world, foreign-language students need to combine ICC with grammatical knowledge, reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Globalization has also been a trigger for the development of CLIL.
methodology aimed at teaching English as a foreign language in a manner that responds to students' needs today.

References


Jennie Roloff-Rothman

JALT currently has 26 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes announcements of SIG events, mini-conferences, publications, or calls for papers and presenters. SIGs wishing to print news or announcements should contact the editor by the 15th of the month, 6 weeks prior to publication.

Email: <sig-news@jalt-publications.org> Web: <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news>

SIG News Farewell

Hello everyone, friendly SIG News editor here. It is with both sadness and happiness that I announce the end of the SIG News column in the print version of TLT. As this column ends, so too will my editorship of it. I have had a wonderful time helping SIGs to get their voices heard while building connections with innumerable people across the JALT community. I am truly thankful for the last few years and will miss contributing to TLT.

Thank you to everyone on the TLT staff who helped me and thank you to all of the SIG officers with whom I corresponded more regularly than I probably do my own family! I’d also like to take a moment to thank Mark Brierley, the SIG Liaison, for being such a supportive and helpful contact who allowed me make this column the best possible megaphone for the JALT SIGs. I’d like to close with a quote by the writer Charles Dudley Warner which exemplifies how I have approached this column and working within the JALT community: “It is one of the beautiful compensations of this life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.” I hope we SIGs can all continue helping ourselves, by helping each other. See you out there!

-Jennie Roloff Rothman

SIG Focus

Sad the SIG News column is ending? Fear not! Like a phoenix from the ashes of one column rises a new one! The July / August 2015 TLT will mark the beginning of SIG Focus, which will be co-edited by Joël Laurier and Robert Morel. This new column will give a more in-depth view of one SIG each month, providing readers with a more complete picture of the different SIGs within JALT. While the SIG News column will no longer be in the print version of TLT, information about SIG events, publications, and calls for papers will still be available online at <http://jalt-publications.org/tlt>. We hope that this new format gives readers a fresh look at the variety of SIGs within JALT. Read on for a word from the two new column editors!

Hello, my name is Joël Laurier. I am a longtime Japan resident, originally from Ottawa, Canada. Over the last eighteen years, I have taught at the eikaiwa, elementary school, junior high school and university levels. In each of these teaching contexts, I have benefitted from JALT’s communities of practice, and TLT has been a big part of that. Currently, I am Programmes Co-Chair of the Gunma JALT chapter and a member of the LD SIG programs committee. I am very happy to be joining the TLT team to help JALT SIGs reach out to TLT readers. I welcome your comments on ways to put the best focus on the various interest groups.

Hi, my name is Robert Morel and I have taught at the secondary and university levels in Japan since 2003. I have been involved with JALT SIGs for the past four years and acted as publications chair for the Junior and Senior High School SIG and editor of The School House from 2012–2014. I hold an MA TESOL from Teachers College Columbia University. I look forward to working with the SIGs to showcase their activities.
PanSIG2015, PanSIG2015, May 16-17, Kobe City University of Foreign Studies • “Narratives: Raising the Happiness Quotient”

PanSIG2015 is shaping up to be an exciting conference, with interesting presenters, inspiring plenary speakers, entertaining banquet, and a multitude of chances for networking. Invited speakers are Liliana Landolfi (“Motivation Lost—Motivation Regained: Investigating Students’ Narratives on Language Learning”), Curtis Kelly (“Why Our Brains Like Stories”), and Kim Horne (“The Virtues of Character Education—Simple Ways to Bring Joy, Meaning & Purpose into Your Classroom”). For more information see the PanSIG website at <http://pansig.org/2015>. If you are interested in working on the conference, contact the conference chairs, Donna Tatsuki and Donna Fujimoto, at <pansig2015chair@gmail.com>. Pre-register for reduced conference fees and to reserve tickets to the networking events! See you in Kobe in a few weeks!

Bilingualism

Our aim is to further research on bilingualism as it occurs in Japan. We also promote mutual support among our members through our newsletter (3x/year), academic publications, an active email list and Facebook group. Parents in international marriages, people who communicate in more than one language, and teachers of multilingual students all take advantage of the practical and theoretical information available via our group. For more information, visit our website: <http://bsig.org>.

Upcoming events: For people in the Tokyo-metro area, Yokohama JALT will be hosting a special event with Bilingualism SIG on Sunday, 20 Sep 2015, at Kannai Hall. The topics covered will be the factors that help foster bilingualism and how to navigate the “juken” (school entrance exam) system in Japan. For more information on this event, visit the Yokohama Chapter website: <http://yojalt.org>.

Bilingualism SIG’s annual forum at the JALT National Conference, in November 2015 at the Shizuoka Granship, will focus on adding literacy skills in a minority language for bilingual learners.

Business English

The JALT Business English SIG seeks to develop the discipline of teaching English, conducive to participation in the world business community. We aim to provide instructors in this field with a means of collaborating and sharing best teaching practices.

JALT Business English SIGは、世界のビジネス界に通用する英語教育の発展を目的に持ち、結成されました。連携体制を組み、最善の教育方法を共有することにより、英語教育に携わるインストラクターの皆様のお手伝いを致します。

College & University Educators

JALT CUE SIG will be holding a 90-minute forum at the PanSIG conference in May entitled Right Turn, Wrong Turn: Finding a Path to Success. There will be presentations from James Dunn, Steve Paton, Heather Doiron, and Wendy Gough. Following the presentations, there will be a discussion period between the presenters and the participants.

The 2015 JALT CUE Conference will be held on 26-27 Sep at Sugiyma Jogakuen University in Nagoya. The conference theme will be “Diversity: Communication and Education.” The call for papers is available on the JALT CUE SIG Facebook page. Soon there will also be information on the JALT CUE SIG website.

Computer Assisted Language Learning

Greetings from the JALT CALL SIG! We continue to make progress with our preparations for JALT CALL 2015 at Kyushu Sangyo University in Fukuoka. Once again, the dates for the conference are 5-7 Jun, with special workshops held on the evening of the 5th and the main conference on 6-7 June. Ema Ushioda, a leading researcher in learner autonomy and learning technologies, will serve as our keynote speaker. Also, Rab Patterson has recently agreed to serve as our plenary speaker. Rab is an educational technology specialist, an Apple Distinguished Educator, and a Google Certified Teacher. He is known for his presentation skills and his passion for the craft of teaching. Lastly, the JALT CALL SIG will be represented at the JALT PanSIG2015 conference from 16-17 May at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. To find out more about JALT CALL, including information about JALT CALL 2015, please visit <http://jaltcall.org>.

Critical Thinking

The Critical Thinking SIG has been active in this early part of 2015. We have been active with presentations at ETJ Expos as well as garnering submissions for our forums at the PanSIG 2015 conference in Kobe City on 16-17 May, and the 2015 JALT conference in Shizuoka at the Granship from 20-23 Nov. We are planning events for both forums that will provide opportunities for members to engage with issues relevant to their interests. Also, we are always looking for opportunities to connect with and bring opportunities to our members so they can enhance their knowledge and skills as well as network with people. For more information on how to become involved with and even organize Critical Thinking SIG programs, please contact <program@jaltcriticalthinking.org>.

Along with being active on the programs front, we are always accepting submissions for our two publications - our member newsletter, CT Scan, and our flagship publication, Critical Thinking and Language Learning (CTLL). The latter is our academic journal and we are looking for quality submissions that pertain to exactly what the title implies - critical thinking and language learning. If you have a short article or opinion piece, CT Scan may be the place for your ideas, but if you have a longer more academic research oriented article then CTLL could be the place for you. For more information about our publications please contact <publications@jaltcriticalthinking.org>.

For all the happenings and dealings pertaining to the Critical Thinking SIG please explore our website <http://jaltcriticalthinking.org>. We hope to make a connection with you by seeing you at an event or reading your article. Be well and keep thinking critically.

Extensive Reading

We have a new URL for the ER SIG website: <http://jalt.org/er/>. Please update your bookmarks and visit it! You can also find a link to our Facebook page there.
8th Annual Extensive Reading Seminar: “What is ER?”
The JALT ER SIG is planning to hold our annual seminar on Sunday, 21 June, 2015 at Seinan Jo Gakuin University in Kitakyushu. Go to the GBC Symposium in Fukuoka on Saturday and come to the ER Seminar on Sunday! Check our website for up-to-date details.

ER Forum at PanSIG 2015 - “What is ER?”
A panel of ER practitioners and researchers will discuss (re) defining ER. Come join us for this at PanSIG in Kobe.

Write for us: Use the links to our publications ERJ and JER to find out about how to submit articles. Get started at <http://jalt.org/er/publications>.

Join us: If you aren’t yet a SIG member, please join us. You’ll get our twice-yearly printed Extensive Reading in Japan, usually sent with a sample graded reader, discounted admission to our seminar, and our regular e-newsletter.

Framework & Language Portfolio 
Here is a list of activities the FLP SIG has planned for 2015:
- The first FLP SIG kaken project – CEFR informed EAP textbooks for Japan has been published!
The FLP SIG will be delivering presentations this spring at:
- JALT Shinshu chapter (April 18th, Matsumoto) addressing CEFR implementations at institutional and class level at universities in Japan
- PanSIG 2015 in Kobe. Talk to us about your usage of CEFR and portfolios.
- The 2nd conference on Critical, constructive assessment of CEFR-based language teaching in Japan and beyond at Tokai University in Tokyo, 6-7 June, 2015. The exact details about the venue, time, and date are currently being worked on. Please look at this space and keep checking our homepage regularly: <http://sites.google.com/site/flpsig/home>

Ongoing work:
SURVEY – HELP needed – Please take the survey at: <http://tinyurl.com/CEFRRinJapan-survey>, spread the news and help us collect data. Thank you so much!

Gender Awareness in Language Education
All JALT members are encouraged to consider attending future GALE forums and events and read GALE publications so as to encounter a range of perspectives about gender issues, teaching, and learning.

We also have a Facebook page, an online discussion list for all members, and an executive discussion list for officers and any GALE member who would like to take an active role in, or know more about, GALE business.

For more information about GALE, visit our website at <http://gale-sig.org/website>. If you have any questions about joining GALE, please send a message to <coord@gale-sig.org>.

Global Issues in Language Education
GILE aims to promote global awareness, international understanding, and action to solve world problems through content-based language teaching, drawing primarily from the fields of global education, peace education, environmental education, and human rights education. The SIG produces a quarterly newsletter, organizes presentations for local, national, and international conferences, and maintains contacts with groups ranging from Amnesty International to Educators for Social Responsibility to UNESCO. Contact us for a sample newsletter or for more information about the SIG’s work in “teaching for a better world.” Visit <http://gilesig.org> or contact Kip Cates <kcates@rstu.jp>.

Japanese as a Second Language
The mission of the Japanese as a Second Language Special Interest Group (JSL SIG) is to serve as a resource for promoting JSL/JFL teaching, learning and research. We welcome JSL/JFL teachers, learners, and researchers to join and take an active role in our SIG. Would you like to make a contribution to our SIG newsletter by sending your article? We are accepting articles, book reviews, JSL announcements, conference reports and reviews, interviews, lesson plans, student essays, etc. from JSL SIG members and their students and colleagues. Write your article either in Japanese or English and send it to <jals@jalt.org>.

Learner Development
The Learner Development SIG is a friendly network of more than 200 members who are interested in exploring and researching practices that develop autonomous learning and teaching. We organize forums at the JALT national conferences and hold local get-togethers to discuss research and practice. We publish research, reports, reviews and more in our biannual newsletter and are planning a new annual journal on key research issues. We support community outreach projects in Tohoku and education-related NGOs. We offer grants for membership, subscription, research, conferences and outreach projects. For more information, visit <http://id-sig.org>.

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Lifelong Language Learning
The LLL-SIG invites those teaching languages to young, middle-aged, and older adults to share information through our website <http://jalt.org/lifelong/index.html>, newsletter, at various SIG conferences and events (including PanSIG), and at the JALT International Conference, where an annual LLL-SIG forum is held.

Our Facebook page can be accessed at <http://facebook.com/jaltLLL>. As of this writing, we have nearly 200 likes and we always welcome more. If you “like” us, you will be able to find out about not only our SIG’s events, but also you are able to get tips about lifelong language learning and teaching, and find out about opportunities and events in the community that stretch your capabilities and broaden your horizons, including volunteering possibilities.

Literature in Language Teaching
LLL SIG members engage with literature through film, creative writing, poetry, the short story, classic literature and world liter-
Material, as well as literature in translation. We welcome interest from those working with cultural studies, politics through literature, language learning, and applications of literary texts in different contexts. If you are thinking about getting involved, please contact us!

Upcoming events this year include the PanSIG in Kobe, 2015, which connects the ideas of storytelling and happiness. We also welcome suggestions on possible lit-themed events for future conferences. We are always looking for volunteers to help out with things such as events planning, reading and proofing for our journal, and helping the SIG grow. If you are thinking about getting involved, get in touch!

All important guidelines and information for contributors are available on our website <http://liltsig.org>. To join the SIG, tick Literature in Language Teaching when renewing your SIG membership.

Materials Writers

The MW SIG shares information on ways to create better language learning materials, covering a wide range of issues from practical advice on style to copyright law and publishing practices, including self-publication. Our newsletter Between the Keys is published three to four times a year and we have a discussion forum and mailing list. Our website is <http://materialswriters.org>. To contact us, email <mw@jalt.org>.

Mind, Brain, & Education

The BRAIN SIG has been flying! As of February, we grew to 63 members and 12 officers. We published our first MindBrainEd Bulletin with another right behind. This bulletin uses an interesting system. Rather than doing new research ourselves, we link to existing great articles, podcasts, or videos online and write Think Tank pieces about them. We are having forums on “Ten Things from Neuroscience Every Teacher Should Know” at the Kobe PanSIG2015 and Shizuoka JALT 2015. We helped FAB do two conferences in the Philippines and will collaborate on FAB8 in Kyoto in September. Come join us!

Other Language Educators

OLE will hold its 4th SIG conference at Chukyo University, Nagoya, tentatively scheduled for 3-4 Oct 2015. Please send proposals (with the subject heading OLE4SIG) to <reinelt.rudolf.my@eheim-u.ac.jp>. The submission deadline is Friday July 31. More information on this conference will be available at <http://geocities.jp/dlinklist/ENG/OLEkon2014.html>. The most recent information on OLE at JALT 2015 will be provided by the coordinator in the OLE newsletters at the above address.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication. The Pragmatics SIG is in the process of creating a library of humorous comics and videos that highlight pragmatic matters in everyday conversation. Look for some new videos on our website <http://pragsig.org> soon!


The teaching of pragmatics to language learners has been advocated as a result of empirically demonstrated needs and benefits (Bardovi-Harlig, 1996, 1999; Bardovi-Harlig, 2003; Kasper & Schmidt, 1996; Kasper & Rose, 1999). Furthermore, language textbooks rarely include pragmatic information and teacher manuals generally fail to offer any supplements (Velenga, 2004). Over the past decade, efforts have been made to collect and publish pedagogical guides and materials for use by language teachers. A recent cataloguing and analysis (Tatsuki, forthcoming) of pragmatic topics addressed by several prominent pedagogical collections indicates that directive and expressive speech acts (especially requests, apologies, compliments, refusals, and suggestions/advice-giving) are the most common topics for teaching materials/lesson plans. Awareness-raising activities are the next most frequent. The areas underrepresented by teaching materials include deixis, commissive speech acts, and other topics such as implicature/explicature.

Prospective authors are encouraged to contact the editors with suggestions for rare and underrepresented topics. For information on manuscript formats contact Donna Tatsuki <dhtatsuki@gmail.com>.

School Owners

The School Owners’ SIG now has new leadership and is working to increase our activity over this coming year. Please look forward to a new website coming soon as well as an event at the Pan SIG. Those interested in becoming members please contact Paul Moritoshi, Membership Chair, at <paulmorio-shi@gmail.com>.

Speech, Drama, & Debate

SDD SIG is continuing its winning combination of conferences, workshops, publications, and events. A very interesting Dramatic Classroom Workshop was held at the University of Yokoai, 22 Feb and Fukui Chapter on 8 March. This is the exciting line-up we have planned for the rest of 2015:

1. Conference: Presentations and Workshops at PanSIG2015 in Kobe, 16-17 May
2. Conference: Yokohama Chapter/SDD Conference 28 June
3. Conference: Presentations and Workshops at JALT2015 in Shizuoka
4. Publication: Something new—we plan to publish an activities book, so if you have ideas for teaching speech, drama, debate, or oral interpretation, or would like to be an editor of the book, send inquiries to the SDD contact email address on the official JALT SDD page or <sdd@jalt.org>. The format will be the same as the My Share articles in The Language Teacher.
5. Publication: We are preparing the next issue of our peer-reviewed journal, Mask & Gavel. Please consider submitting an article. (See <http://sites.google.com/site/speechdramaanddebatepublicsite/home> to download some of the back issues.)
6. Speech Contest: JOESC2. The first annual JOESC (Japan Online English Speech Contest) was so successful that we will repeat it this year.

Finally, we are happy to provide speakers to chapters/events. Send inquiries to the SDD contact email address on the official JALT SDD page or <sdd@jalt.org>.
Study Abroad

The Study Abroad SIG provides a supportive place for discussing areas of interest regarding study abroad and intercultural training. We welcome submissions for our newsletter, Ryuugaku, and we are looking for new officers to join the team. Visit our new website at <http://jalt-sa.org> or contact us at <studyabroadsig@gmail.com>.

Task Based Learning

The TBL SIG was created for teachers and other professionals who currently use or are interested in using task-based approaches in the classroom. It focuses, in particular, on issues related to task-based language teaching and learning in the Asian EFL context. The SIG serves as a useful forum for the exchange of practical teaching ideas, theoretical discussion, and academic study of TBLT issues. Our journal, OnTask, focuses on both research and theory, in the form of feature articles as well as more practical TBLT-informed lesson plans. Potential contributors to OnTask are invited to contact our publications officer at <ttbltinasia@gmail.com>.

Teacher Education & Development

The Teacher Education and Development (TED) SIG is a network for those who want to help themselves and others become better teachers. TED SIG will have another active year in 2015, beginning with PanSIG in May. Dr. Bill Snyder, the SIG coordinator, will be in Kobe and several members will be giving presentations.

Preparations are underway for this year’s EFL Teacher Journeys Conference. This year the conference will be held in Tokyo with details of the plenary speakers to be announced shortly. The success of both the Teacher Journeys conference and TED SIG has been down to both our officers and the active participation of our members, so check out TED’s website, <http://jalt.org/ted> for more details about the SIG and how you can participate.

Also, don’t forget about TED SIG’s journal Explorations in Teacher Education. The journal welcomes stimulating articles across the field. This year we plan to subject all articles to peer review, so make sure to look out for some great articles. Submission guidelines for articles can be found on the website. You can also stay in touch with us via Facebook or Google+ or by following <@tedsig> on Twitter.
As TLT undergoes some changes this summer to lower costs while simultaneously increasing quality, columns like Chapter Events that feature info of a timely nature will be moved over to the <http://jalt.org> website. The site will be set up in such a way that each of JALT’s 34 chapters will now be able to maintain their event news by themselves. Therefore, sadly this May/June issue is my FINAL column as your Chapter Events editor. It’s been great working with you all since I first took over as editor in Nov. 2011. Best wishes for continued success with your chapter events!

**GIFU**—Retasking Dictogloss by Mike Stockwell & Extremely Short Stories (ESS) by Saya Ike and Cheryl DiCello, Sugiyama Jogakuen University. This presentation will demonstrate three ways a short dictogloss component on quizzes supports vocabulary acquisition, timely assessment, and evaluation of achievement for learners. ESS is a creative writing activity in which students write freely on a given topic, following a rule of “exactly 50 words.” In this study, ESS was introduced at three universities using discourse analysis and attitudes towards English learning. Sat 23 May, 19:00-21:00; JR Gifu Station, Heartful-Square-2F (East-Wing); One-day members ¥1,000.

**GIFU**—Improving Job Prospects for Educators in Japan by Richard Miller, Kobe Gakuin University. Whether looking for a job or working full time, there are a number of consistent things that everyone can do to improve their career. In this presentation, the overall job market will be explained and how things are changing. Based on those findings, practical advice on what the attendees can do to advance their careers will be given. Sat 20 Jun, 19:00-21:00; JR Gifu Station, Heartful-Square-2F (East-Wing); One-day members ¥1,000.

**HIROSHIMA**—Writing EFL Materials for the Japanese Market: A Focus on Materials for Japanese Teachers by Diane Hawley Nagatomo, Ochanomizu University. Nagatomo, who has been publishing English textbooks in Japan for over 20 years, will explain the important issues which writers must understand if they wish to publish. Especially, it is important to be able to write high-quality textbooks which will be used by Japanese English teachers. Sun 10 May, 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; <http://hiroshima-jalt.org>; Non-members ¥500, students ¥200.

**HIROSHIMA**—TEAP: A Model for the Revision of Japan’s Entrance Exam System by toddler Fouts, Eiken. The Test of English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) is a university admissions test developed jointly by Eiken and Sophia University. The presenter, as one of the test’s designers, will talk from an insider’s perspective about the development of the TEAP, describe its content, and explain why it has the potential to revolutionize Japan’s English education. Sun 28 Jun, 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; <http://hiroshima-jalt.org>; Non-members ¥500, students ¥200.

**KITAKYUSHU**—A Card Game for Vocabulary Learning by Adam Stone. This presentation will introduce a computer program that produces a modifiable card game that can be used in some English classes as a vocabulary builder and to strengthen lexical recognition. Research and analysis of the efficacy of this vocabulary game, and any future directions of this project will be discussed. Attendees will be able to try the game, give feedback on it, and ask questions. Sat 9 May, 18:30-20:30; Wel Tobata; Non-members ¥1,000.

**KITAKYUSHU**—Ecolinguistics: The Evolving Ecology of a Language Near You by Michael Phillips, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. Using Bell’s Technology (or Innovation) Adoption Lifecycle theory, this presentation will allow attendees to reflect on elements of their current teaching situations and practices, based on an understanding that the model “describes the adoption or acceptance of a new product or innovation, according to the demographic and psychological characteristics of defined user categories.” This workshop will offer attendees the opportunity to identify personal and institutional stages of acceptance, reflect on various teaching methods and approaches, and consider the efficacy and perceived costs/benefits of such approaches. Sat 13 Jun, 18:30-20:30; Wel Tobata; Non-members ¥1,000.

**MATSUYAMA**—English for Beyond the Classroom by Jim Ronald, Hiroshima Shudo University. Much of the spoken language found in English textbooks or classrooms may appear strange, or even rude, in real communicative situations. We
will first consider the ways that pragmatics may offer insights into how language is actually used in social contexts, then try out a range of pragmatics-focused classroom activities. Sun 17 May, 14:15-16:20; M33, Aidai Muse, Ehime University; <http://www.ehime-u.ac.jp/english/access/ohokoh/cge.html>; One-day members ¥1,000.

MATSUYAMA & EAST SHIKOKU (cosponsored)—The 6th Annual Shikoku JALT Conference (program details TBA). Keynote speech: Language Teaching, Digital Technology, and Assessment by Neil Cowie, Okayama University. Oxford University Press Featured speaker: TBA. Short papers/presentations: TBA. Sat 13 Jun, 13:30-17:30 (tentative); Tokushima University in Tokushima; One-day members ¥1,000.

NAGOYA—Open-Ended Communication for Young Learners by Michael Rector, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies. Lee and VanPatten (2003) observe that many communication activities are grammar drills that do not develop communicative competence. Rather, attention to grammar needs to be integrated with lessons that have a communicative purpose. Based on research the speaker conducted in a first year Japanese junior high school classroom, this workshop demonstrates how to support open-ended communication for young beginners, including the theoretical background and research results. Sun 24 May, 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; <http://nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/about-us/access-hours>; Members free, non-members ¥1,000 (1st visit free).

NAGOYA—Improving Job Prospects for Educators in Japan by Richard Miller, Kobe Gakuin University. Whether looking for a job or working full time, there are a number of consistent things that everyone can do to improve their career. In this presentation, the overall job market will be explained and how things are changing. Based on those findings, practical advice on what the attendees can do to advance their careers will be given. Sun 21 Jun, 13:30-16:00; WINC Aichi B1008 (*Note: meeting’s temporary location); <http://nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/e/about-us/access-hours>; One-day members ¥1,000; 1st visit free.

OKAYAMA—Phonological Memory and Listening Comprehension by Junichiro Takeno and Two Twenty-Five Minute Presentations on Reading by Kyoko Sunami-Burden. Takeno’s presentation focuses on the role of phonological memory in listening comprehension. Phonological short-term memory, specifically the capacity of the phonological loop, is largely affected by the learner’s rehearsal speed. Sunami-Burden’s presentations are: 1) An Exploration into the Students’ Insights about Extensive Reading, and 2) The Effective Use of a Checklist on Silent Reading in the EFL Reading Classroom. Sat 13 Jun, 15:00-17:00; Notre Dame Seishin University, Logos Hall, Room 7-2; Non-members ¥500.

SENDAI—Mind and Body: The Science and Art of Teaching Children by Marco Brazil. The art of teaching lies in your creativity and the personal touch you bring to the job. In this workshop, Brazil will share his thoughts on how children learn. He will demonstrate why the active learning approach works better than the traditional method of listen-and-repeat. He will also speak on the whole language approach to teaching. Come with your singing voice and be ready to move! Free for everyone thanks to the generous support of Oxford University Press. Sun 31 May, 9:30-14:00; Shimin Katsudo Support Center; <http://www.jaltsendai.org>.

SENDAI—Comprehension-based and Production-based Language Teaching by Rod Ellis, University of Auckland. Traditionally, language instruction has emphasized the importance of learning through producing sentences in the target language. The case for an alternative, comprehension-based approach to language instruction was first made in the 1960s. In this talk, Ellis will review the arguments for comprehension-based and production-based instruction and also examine what conclusions can be drawn from research. Cosponsored by the Tohoku English Language Education Society and JALT Sendai. Fri 26 Jun; Miyagi University of Education; <http://www.jaltsendai.org>; JALT members free, non-members ¥500.

GIFU: January—Tailoring digital music material for the EFL classroom by Steve Quasha, Sugiya Jogakuen University. Quasha’s first encounter with music in EFL was being driven mad by The Carpenters playing in the classroom next door. Since then, he’s come from viewing music as a sedative used by lazy teachers, to using music as a motivating educational resource. Recent research seems to show that musical input activates many parts of the brain, stimulating emotions and memories which can facilitate language learning.

Of course, choosing the right songs is critically important. Quasha introduced his own DQ method for choosing songs: “Can they do it?” (D) and “Is it a quagmire?” (Q). Songs must be largely understandable and not cause the lesson to get bogged down in unimportant language points. Also import-
ant is that the song contains some language that students can actually take out of the classroom and use.

Participants in the workshop were also introduced to an app called “anytune”. This app allows the teacher to have precise control over the speed of the song, so that it can be slowed down to aid students in hearing the lyrics.

 Reported by Paul Wicking

GUNMA: March—The feasibility of using cooperative task-based learning to teach pronunciation by Kayvon Havaei-Ahary. Part of a short action research project that he conducted at his school, Havaei-Ahary’s presentation began by highlighting the importance of pronunciation and the unfortunate lack of pronunciation practice in Japanese high schools. After presenting a brief background of his research, Havaei-Ahary asked attendees to discuss their own classes and the role pronunciation plays in them. Following a brief discussion among Gunma JALT members, Havaei-Ahary explained that the pronunciation training methods used in his research were brought about by the course of study reforms suggested by MEXT in 2009. As proposed by MEXT, Havaei-Ahary’s method is 1) learner centered 2) promotes learner autonomy and 3) promotes communicative competence. After a short break, attendees looked at the details of Havaei-Ahary’s research and its conclusions. The clarity and completeness of Havaei-Ahary’s presentation showed the pains and care he has taken in his research into the future of teaching pronunciation.

 Reported by John Larson

HAMAMATSU: January—The Triple Bottom Line: An approach to engaging students learning English in current issues, debate, academic writing, and critical thinking by Daniel Devolin, Aichi University. Devolin led Hamamatsu JALT into the New Year with a quick rundown on the economic and social relevance of The Triple Bottom Line (TBL). Based in economics, TBL looks at the sustainable overlapping area of societies, economies, and ecologies. This commonality can be a source of stability, and a resource for maintaining and developing the interlocking conditions required to meet our global needs. Within university-level language learning, particularly focusing on current issues, debate, academic writing and critical thinking, TBL provides an introduction to interdisciplinary approaches. Topics can be explored through the three features of the theory, providing students with structure and direction when encountering cognitively challenging ideas. If correctly and gradually implemented, students develop tools and means to express their opinions and engage deeply with classmates on numerous subjects. Naturally, students need to feel comfortable seeking out ways of expression. Accordingly, classroom rapport is important so that inhibitions are reduced. Scaffolding is necessary. TBL is custom-made for group work. Individual groups can research a topic from one of three aspects, or individuals within groups are allocated one of the three. Thorough interaction with content encourages top-down and bottom-up processing. Students contribute new knowledge to wider classroom interaction in the form of presentations, written assignments, discussion and debate, and potentially absorb it into their broader schemata.

 Reported by Susan Laura Sullivan

HIROSHIMA: January—Teaching English to junior high school students, followed by My Share & Book Reports by Allan Antonio and colleagues. Antonio is currently a JET working for the Higashi Hiroshima City Board of Education. He and his colleagues discussed and described the methodologies they are using for teaching English, and the Board of Education directives that guide their teaching choices. While high school teachers might have benefited the most directly from this presentation, it was highly informative to others such as university and supplementary language school teachers who can expect to see the results of the new educational guidelines in the coming years. After their presentations we enjoyed hearing several book recommendations and teaching ideas from our local Hiroshima chapter members.

 Reported by Ariel Sorensen

HIROSHIMA: February—Administrative practices as institutional identity: Local impediments to the globalization of HEIs in Japan by Greg Poole, Doshisha University. Poole came to Hiroshima and presented a number of interesting issues about administrative practices in Japanese universities. This behind-the-scenes view gave us insights into why Japanese university systems do some of the confusing things they do. Greg has been working both as an anthropologist doing participant observations and as an administrator himself for many years. Due to his extensive experience, the Hiroshima chapter was allowed to peek into the issues that face Japanese higher education and the problems they are having with increased pressure from globalization.

 Reported by Ariel Sorensen

HOKKAIDO: November—CALL-Plus Workshop 2014 featuring Unleashing Potential by Haruhiko Tsuru, et al., Sapporo Gakuin University. Language educators convened on the campus of Sapporo Gakuin University for a full-day workshop brought to them by the joint efforts of JALT Hokkaido and the Hokkaido chapter of the Japan Association of College English Teachers. Attendees were given a choice of over 25 presentations and interactive workshops on such varied topics as computer-assisted writing fluency exercises, university English education needs analysis, developing cloud and desk resources, and intercultural exchange using student-made videos in Moodle. The keynote was a team presentation by teachers from Sapporo Gakuin University who have been working together to create and teach a course for pre-service teachers. They spoke about how collaboration in syllabus development and teaching cannot be forced; it must be voluntary to work. Teachers stand to gain a lot from working together and while cooperation also entails compromise, the overall impression given was that collaboration in teaching was worth the effort for both the teachers involved and the students.

 Reported by Haidee Thomson & Joseph Tomase

HOKKAIDO: January—Understanding bilingualism by Barry Ratzliff & Shannon Koga, Hokkaido International School, with Tim Greer, Kobe University. JALT Hokkaido collaborated with the Sapporo International Communications Plaza to present a three-hour program showcasing multiple perspectives on bilingualism. The event began with Bilingualism in Education by Ratzliff and Koga. The presenters combined quantitative data with their experiences as both educators and parents to shed light on bilingual development in educational environments. Strong takeaways were that second language development is supported best when anchored upon strong first language skills; that parents should make active and early decisions about their child’s language environment(s); and that commitment to bilingualism is key. Part II featured an interactive Q+A panel where your correspondent joined fellow panelists Ratzliff, Koga, Greer and the Plaza’s own Ulli Jamitzky. Audience members asked poignant questions about supporting their children’s bilingual development. Part III featured Greer’s talk Doing Bilinguality in Interaction. Greer
 lâu from his own and others’ research using Conversation Analysis as a tool to examine interaction at the micro-level; this provided a meaningful contrast to the more macro-level discussion of bilingual development from Part I. A strong takeaway from Greer’s talk was that bilingual identity is by no means a fixed trait that exists prior to interaction between individuals. On the contrary, Greer argued that bilingual identity is talked into existence by that very interaction. Greer demonstrated this vividly using video recordings of bilingual youths skillfully negotiating their bilingual identity.

**Reported by Joseph Tomasine**

**IBARAKI: December—Note-taking in L2 listening instruction: Theory and practice** by Michael Crawford, Dokkyo University. Referring to his own experience of learning Portuguese and Japanese, Professor Crawford first stated that listening can be particularly challenging for developing language learners. Popular comprehension-based exercises, however, fail to provide helpful training to learners because those exercises are designed to “test” their comprehension of certain information rather than to “teach” them the know-how of listening. The presenter argued that focusing on learners’ note-taking can be instrumental for better listening instruction because their notes bring to light what is taking place in their minds as they process information. He also introduced his recent study in which his students showed significant improvement in their note-taking abilities as well as their awareness of it as an important academic skill. Toward the end of the presentation, Professor Crawford invited the attendees to engage in listening exercises such as dictogloss and story problems. The attendees experienced first-hand how note-taking not only induces intent listening but also yields necessary information for more attentive listening instruction. The day’s meeting ended with a year-end party in which participants celebrated the officers’ exceptional work as well as another successful year of learning and sharing for our local chapter.

**Reported by Naomi Takagi**

**KITAKYUSHU: February—Kitakyushu hosted two presenters this month: Creative variations for textbook conversations** by Bill Pellowe and **Assessing gains in extensive reading** by J. Lake. In the first presentation, Pellowe talked about various methods for adapting English conversation textbooks to various classroom settings, offering several unique approaches for engaging students such as having students use smartphones for recording and assessing dialogue performance. In the second half, Lake presented recent research findings supporting the incorporation of reading for speed as a means for improving learner reading fluency, motivation, test scores, and streamlining various cognitive and neurological processes that strengthen overall language competency.

**Reported by Zack Robertson**

**NAGOYA: January—Special techniques to teach writing in English for Second Language Students** by Atsushi Iida. Iida, assistant professor at Gunma University, showed two interesting methods to help guide writing in English for Japanese university students. According to Iida, Japanese students need training to convey their voices to others for successful communication. Therefore, he gives them opportunities to describe an issue, after showing them examples of “descriptive writing.” That means to observe, get information and write about it in detail. Iida emphasizes that voice is more important than grammar in writing. One more unique and effective method is composing haiku poems (5-7-5 syllables) that are culturally familiar to Japanese students. This can help facilitate the development of their voices. They should always think about audience, when they compose haiku to express emotions and construct voices. Students’ experiences are reflected in these very short poems. As they do not need to write grammatically correct sentences, they do not hesitate to write in English. Iida also demonstrated some activities for use in the EFL classroom.

**Reported by Sumiko Shiraishi**

**NIIGATA: February—Teaching: Art or science** by Eric Kane. Many braved the cold and wind to attend a dynamic, humorous, and warm presentation by Kane. Framing his talk with a brief discussion about whether teaching falls under one category or the other, Kane highlighted ten things that make a teacher great, punctuating his talk with compelling anecdotes and practical tips for teachers of any level. Included in his talk were recommendations for building trust between teachers and students, communicating with intent, maintainable doable challenges, being clear, consistent, and caring, offering students multiple pathways to success, and acknowledging effort, among others. Facebook feedback from participants indicated a high level of satisfaction and, more importantly, motivation! It was also great to see so many new faces!

**Reported by Melodie Cook**

**OKAYAMA: January—The “Stop, Start, Continue” method of feedback by tertiary students. Telling the story of a research project.** by Peter Burden. Burden, who has done extensive research in the area of student evaluations, discussed a new type of survey for university students which provides instructors with more valuable information to act upon than the standardized ones generally administered by schools. The “Stop, Start, Continue” (SSC) was used over three semesters and feedback provided by students enabled Burden to better reflect upon his own practices and revise teaching methods and content accordingly. Students freely listed things they think the instructor should stop doing in class, those he should start doing and those which should be continued. They also evaluated their own ability on a five-level scale from beginner to advanced. Although the speaker found it quite time consuming to quantify the answers, results
I would like to suggest some activities to start thinking about whether furthering your education would be beneficial, you have time to start thinking about whether furthering your career during this second New Year season, especially if you have fallen behind on the New Year’s resolutions made in January. It is now the beginning of the Japanese academic year, a second new year, of sorts. In that context, I would like to suggest some activities to start developing your career during this second New Year season, especially if you have fallen behind on the New Year’s resolutions made in January.

Develop new relationships in your workplace and community. These can be small-scale and informal or more organized and formal. Try sharing some of the highlights of any conferences you attended during spring break with colleagues. Or start a reading circle with people in your office or instructors in your area at different institutions. Most of you are already members of JALT; become more active in your local chapter or special interest group (SIG), or volunteer for one of the JALT-related conferences. Consider joining another academic or professional group such as Japan Association of College English Teachers, Google Educators Group, or English Teachers in Japan. Some groups charge a membership fee, many are free.

This can also be a good time to reflect on your teaching and professional development. What did you do well in the classroom? How can you improve? In what areas did your CV improve? What can you do to add to it? Compare your reflections with colleagues and offer peer support on your teaching or your CV. Ask someone to observe your classes (or a video of the class) and provide feedback (offer to return the favour). April is a good time to start thinking about whether furthering your education would be beneficial, you have time to...
investigate and apply to programs which begin in the fall (or even the following spring).

Some of this reflection and collaboration can be turned into research and publication opportunities, the next set of goals. You could write up one of your more effective lessons as a ‘My Share’ style article (in TLT or another similar journal). Action research on how you teach is a part of reflective teaching, results may even be suitable for publication. If you have noticed a linguistic puzzle in your classroom that warrants further investigation (for example, Why do many of my students say, “What do you like, sports?”), design a study to investigate it. If you have read an interesting book over the break, or attended an engaging conference, why not write a review for TLT, OnCue or a SIG-sponsored publication? New memberships may offer additional opportunities for presenting and publishing.

Before trying to implement any of the ideas or goals outlined above, it is important to keep in mind the mnemonic of SMART goals. To ensure success, your career goals should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (Miller, 2012).

Note: TLT is changing and we would like to get feedback from you. If you have any suggestions for how this column could be made more relevant and useful, or if you have an idea for a topic, please contact me at: jic.coordinator@gmail.com.

Reference


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**[JALT PRAXIS] THE WRITERS’ WORKSHOP**

**Introduction to The Writers’ Workshop!**

Paul Beaufait  
*Prefectural University of Kumamoto*

Craig Daly  
*University of Glasgow*

Loran Edwards  
*Kansai Gaidai University*

Charles Moore  
*Concordia University*

David Ockert  
*Toyo University*

Welcome to the first column of The Writers’ Workshop! The column itself will be managed by a team comprised of members of the Peer Support Group (PSG). This column will be written on a collaborative basis by the members of the PSG. All of the members of the PSG are volunteers, most of whom have experience in the writing and publishing process. As a group, the PSG has a wealth of experience which we intend to share even more through this column. Publishing in academic journals is now, more than ever, essential for career advancement among TEFL educators in Japan (Beaufait, Edwards, & Muller, 2013), and one of the most arduous and perplexing periods of an author’s writing career is at the outset. We at The Writers’ Workshop will expound on topics that provide advice and support for novice writers, experienced writers, or nearly anyone who is looking to write for academic purposes (for example, need to publish in Japan, etc.) as well as other types of writing.

The Need to Publish in Japan

While many academic professionals around the world habitually aim to strike the right balance between research and teaching (Hohle & Teichler, 2012), Japanese universities broadly require their teaching faculty to have published academic writing. In the report *Quality assurance framework of higher education* issued by Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2009), one of the qualifications for the positions of professor and associate professor is stated as one “who has research achievement” (p. 14-15). Japan is perceived as having a university system
founded upon a German model where professors’ roles are research-focused (Huang, 2007), with a lesser focus being given to the function of teaching students, and it may still be that “the great passion of the Japanese professor is to conduct research and publish interesting findings” (Arimoto, Cummings, Huang, & Shin, 2014, p. 22). With this in mind, a TEFL instructor’s best path for career advancement in Japan is the course of publishing writing.

There are also reasons outside of career advancement or job security why it might be smart to begin your publishing career now. You may just want to publicize your research to make it more available to your colleagues in your field or profession. Publishing can also have the result of building an open and accessible public profile, which can lead to receiving more funding for your research (Hundley, Simkhada, & Teijlingen, 2013). One study has shown that “early publication activity is strongly associated with subsequent productivity” (Clemente, 1973, p. 417), drawing a strong correlation between those that begin publishing their work at an earlier point in their careers with their overall productivity measured over the span of their careers. In other words, the earlier that you can start your publishing career, the better!

How “The Writers’ Workshop” Can Help

Becoming a better researcher and writer will not only help develop yourself professionally, but will also benefit the institutions in which you work by ensuring that your students receive teaching based on sound, up-to-date pedagogy! That is the mission of this column: to assist you in becoming a better researcher and writer, and in the process help you to progress in your career professionally.

If you have just begun the writing process, you may have a myriad of questions regarding how to start. Should you conduct your own research, or should you co-author with someone else? What are the standards that you need to adhere to while conducting research? What journals are most appropriate for your work? Who is available to approach for help, and what are some publishing “pitfalls” that you should avoid? In each bi-monthly column of “The Writers’ Workshop,” a distinctive topic related to academic writing and the publishing process will be presented. Potential “Workshop topics” could range from finding appropriate destinations for writing submissions, to the clear advantages the latest “academic reference management” software offers the writers! The June Issue of “The Writers’ Workshop” will be the initial column that will offer practical advice on how authors’ can reform their writing and improve their chances of publication, so please don’t miss it!

Craig’s Story

I am a perfect example of the type of person who will benefit from this column. Before coming to Japan, I achieved a Masters in English Language from the University of Glasgow. This is where my love and fascination with the English language began as I studied in depth courses such as: Phonology and Phonetics, The History of Grammar, Old English, Semantics, Sociolinguistics, and, of course, Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

In 2005, I arrived in Hiroshima to begin working for a large eikaiwa. After two years, I decided to return to Scotland to become a teacher in my home country. In the following two years, I completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Secondary Education (English), got married to my girlfriend, and became a fully qualified teacher filling the post of High School English teacher in a school in the Highlands of Scotland.

After 2 years, we decided to return to Hiroshima, and since then, I have worked in various full-time and part-time positions. I have worked in universities, high schools, junior high schools, elementary schools and day care centres. I have taught business English in companies, babies as young as a few months old, and travel English to elderly people.

In my opinion, my resume is well rounded with a lot of experience and relevant qualifications. However, I have never published. I did not need to write a thesis for my Masters or my Post Graduate Diploma. This may seem like a small hole in my resume, but in Japan, this is a huge crater.

As many of you may know, Japanese culture tends to value adhering to regulation and procedure. I have received numerous rejection letters based solely on the fact that I have never published. A few institutions have contacted me after reviewing my resume and have requested publications. I have replied and pleaded my case explaining the nature of my studies and my qualifications. This has always led to the same result. No publications, no interview.

At this current point in my career, it is clear I need to start publishing articles to progress, but the publishing process is a daunting minefield and I have no idea where to start. I have so many questions.

There are probably many teachers in the same boat as me. If you are one of them, and you share most of the questions I have raised in the previous paragraph, this column is here to assist.
Introduction to the Editors
Craig Daly has been teaching English for seven years in Hiroshima. He holds a Master’s degree in English Language from the University of Glasgow and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Secondary English) from the University of Strathclyde. His research interests include use of the L1 in the L2 classroom and extensive listening.

Charles Moore is an International English Instructor at Saito Keiai Kindergarten in Osaka. He holds a Master’s degree in TESL from Concordia University. His research interests include extensive reading, extensive listening, and vocabulary acquisition strategies.

JALT Writers’ Peer Support Group
Another resource available to writers is the JALT Writers’ Peer Support Group, a team of writers and reviewers that collaboratively assist writers in developing their writing (Beaufait, Edwards, & Muller, 2013). In the first few issues of The Writers’ Workshop, PSG Coordinator Loran Edwards and ICT Coordinator Paul Beaufait are going to provide a retrospective overview of the JALT PSG group, giving readers a framework for the group’s formation, founding principles, and scope in helping writers prepare their writing for publication! This month’s piece will be focused on the group’s formation and founding principles regarding its mission to collaborate with writers to prepare their writing for publication.

The JALT Writers’ Peer Support Group: A Celebration of Collaboration—15 Years on
Paul A. Beaufait, with Andy Barfield, Wayne Johnson, Torkil Christensen, Wilma Luth, & Loran Edwards

The Writers’ Peer Support Group (PSG) has been helping writers and teachers in Japan since 1999, and in its current form, manifests an evolving process model of multi-faceted collaboration.

Helping writers is always a tricky proposition, but with the PSG, the “helpees” (if I may) coming forward have a wish to step outside the confines of grammar and embrace meaning and more generally current ways of writing. With the PSG there is a dialogue between peers that is stimulating and, certainly for me, thought provoking. It is good to see the PSG is still alive, and one could wish it was used more, and more readily by those in need. (T. Christensen, personal correspondence, 28 February 2015).

What the PSG has endeavoured to avoid, even in recent collaborative endeavours with conference reviewing committees, is giving thumbs-down-or-up feedback on articles or proposals—as peer-reviewers might. Instead PSG peer-readers work with writers, not to grammar-check or proof-read for publication, but rather to improve the overall clarity, focus, and organization of their writing, and strive to encourage writers throughout the process to revise their papers to the point where they submit or resubmit them, or decide on new venues for publication.

A Group with a Mission: Collaboration Through Reflection
In 1999, an informal network of writers took on the challenge of responding to others’ writing for publication in The Language Teacher (TLT), named itself the PSG, and embraced “a set of [four] working principles” that the group had developed “in collaboration with the first [aspiring] writers” to work through the process with the PSG (Barfield, 2000).

The Peer Support Group . . . [evolved] in response to an institutional turn in the way TLT interacted with writers. With the introduction of an editorial advisory board and a blind peer review system for main articles, a different, more academically oriented register of writing had started to become the new norm . . . From this perspective, the creation of the PSG can be seen as a counter-balance where we aimed to create a collaborative, rather than evaluative, space in which writers might find peer support for developing their writing. . . .

The explosive growth of computer-mediated communication in the 1990s was a further important factor in enabling members of the Peer Support Group to communicate with each other, be directly accessible for would-be writers, and create portable online teacher development support. . . .

[I]t is interesting to find that the four principles still hold for collaborative peer writer-reader responding: (a) enhance the writer’s confidence, (b) make specific comments in relation to the development of the whole text, (c) focus on content and organisation, and (d) invite the writer to [let us] know which comments have or have not worked for them, and why. Clear as these principles are, a reader responder still faces the challenge of negotiating
them afresh each time they interact with a writer—and with themselves in a reader—responding role.
(A. Barfield, personal correspondence, 01 March 2015)

To put those collaborative practices into perspective, it might suffice to say that they were similar to, yet less structured than schemes for “cooperative development” advocated by Edge (1992 & 2002), and yet more structured than “co-mentoring” in reflective writing praxis à la Bolton (2005, p. 71). As Luth and early collaborators put it, “The PSG is a group of teachers who understand the challenges of writing well and have experienced the benefits of collaborative work with sympathetic readers” (Luth, 2001, Who is the PSG).

Barfield, the very first PSG coordinator, recalled group inspiration drawn from Nelson’s publications (1990, 1996a, 1996b) and JALT appearances promoting “the power of a non-evaluative approach to writing development” (A. Barfield, personal correspondence, 01 March 2015). In the three years prior to conception of the PSG, a series of articles in the Teacher Education SIG newsletter had illuminated practices of teaching writing for fluency (Barfield, 1996; Nelson, 1996a, 1996b), for instance postponing focus on “surface level features” (Nelson, 1996b, p. 6), and provided reflections on emergent practices in collaborative writing for professional development (Barfield, 1997; Beaufait, 1998a, 1998b; Kotori, 1997).

At about the same time, Johnson and Sower, who also became founding members of the PSG, took over the JALT Job Information Center (JIC) and began a series of co-authoring endeavours culminating in a piece entitled Networking, Employment, and Involvement ... (Sower & Johnson, 1999). In retrospect, it appears as if the JIC and TED professional development wires crossed, sparking a flame difficult to extinguish.

It was soon after this that the Peer Support Group was formed. I remember Jill Robbins asked me if I would be interested in helping out—I said “sure”. (W. Johnson, personal correspondence, 03 March 2015).

Barfield explicitly recognized the collaborative nature of PSG work in an introductory article for TLT, noting, “This text is the collaborative reading and writing of Andy Barfield, Jim Goddard, Wayne Johnson, Wilma Luth, Jill Robbins, Sandra Smith, Craig Sower, and Malcolm Swanson” (p. 9). Luth, one of the first writers to engage with the PSG in that sort of principled collaboration on writing at a distance, went on to serve as PSG coordinator herself on two occasions.

Even after moving on from Japan and the PSG, she has continued to promote reflective practices as a freelance teacher and teacher trainer in Canada. Currently preparing and editing a beginners’ guide to such practices (Luth, n.d.), she has turned to a publishing collaboratoire called The Round (http://the-round.com/) for assistance, and received peer author feedback on a current draft (W. Luth, personal correspondence, 04 March 2015).

Those principles and practices continue to guide the PSG in collaborating with others on their writing for professional development. As the current coordinator observed, “It doesn’t matter if you are working on your first paper or your twentieth, ... having someone else read and review your work can always lead to valuable insights, which strengthens the paper in the end” (Edwards, 2013).

More information
To find out more about the PSG and what it does, and learn how to become a peer-reader or how to submit a paper for feedback, please visit the JALT Publications PSG webpage:

<http://jalt-publications.org/psg>

Feel free to choose “Peer Support Group” as the addressee in the contact form accessible from the top bar on any JALT Publications page to volunteer as a peer-reader or send inquiries about writing projects to the PSG Coordinator.

About the author
Paul Beaufait is the ICT Coordinator for the PSG. His career in language education spans three decades. He holds a Master’s degree in French and a certificate of accomplishment in TESL from the University of Montana, as well as a certificate in technology-based distributed learning from the University of British Columbia. He now lives and teaches in Kumamoto, Japan.

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References


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Use the attached furikae form at Post Offices ONLY. When payment is made through a bank using the furikae, the JALT Central Office receives only a name and the cash amount that was transferred. The lack of information (mailing address, chapter designation, etc.) prevents the JCO from successfully processing your membership application. Members are strongly encouraged to use the secure online signup page located at <https://jalt.org/joining>.

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The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

- A professional organization formed in 1976
  - 1976年に設立された学術学会
- Working to improve language learning and teaching, particularly in a Japanese context
  - 学の学習と教育の向上を図ることを目的としています
- Over 3,000 members in Japan and overseas
  - 国内外で約3,000名の会員がいます

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  - 毎年1,500名から2,000名が参加します
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- Publishers’ exhibition - 出版社による教材展があります
- Job Information Centre - 就職情報センターが設けられます

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- The Language Teacher—our bimonthly publication
  - を隔月発行します
- JALT Journal—biannual research journal
  - を年2回発行します
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  - 年次国際大会の研究発表記録集を発行します
- SIG and chapter newsletters, anthologies, and conference proceedings
  - 分野別研究部会や支部も会報、アンソロジー、研究会発表記録集を発行します

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Meetings and conferences sponsored by local chapters and special interest groups (SIGs) are held throughout Japan. Presentation and research areas include:

- Bilingualism
- CALL
- College and university education
- Cooperative learning
- Gender awareness in language education
- Global issues in language education
- Japanese as a second language
- Learner autonomy
- Pragmatics, pronunciation, second language acquisition
- Teaching children
- Lifelong language learning
- Testing and evaluation
- Materials development

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- IATEFL—International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- JACET—the Japan Association of College English Teachers
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- TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Membership Categories

All members receive annual subscriptions to The Language Teacher and JALT Journal, and member discounts for meetings and conferences. Members are strongly encouraged to use the secure online signup page located at <https://jalt.org/joining>.

- Regular 一般会員: ¥10,000
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A Yurukyara that Fits

Last year a student wrote a paper about rejuvenating his hometown’s economy by introducing “loose characters” to attract tourists and increase economic activity. Shocked by his proposal, I wrote a long note at the bottom of his paper excoriating him for taking such a cynical view of Japan’s rural economic problems, and pointing out that promoting his town with the help of drug dealers and prostitutes would bring only moral and financial ruin. He glanced at my note, appraised the indignant look on my face, and after a confused pause, pulled out his smartphone to introduce to me some images of Japanese yurukyara [ゆるキャラ = “loose” or “relaxed” characters].

Yurukyara turned out be cute-but-clumsy promotional figures—like homemade Disney characters—designed by local governments to attract tourists and business. Kumamon, an animated bear from Kumamoto, is perhaps the most popular of the many yurukyara, all the more so because he has no criminal record. (The same can’t be said of deceptively doe-eyed Funassyi from Chiba, a headbanger and miscreant who is well known to the police.)

Since then I’ve become aware of many other “loose characters” in the media. My own Okayama Prefecture perpetuates its locally famous “son of a peach” Momotaro story to promote tourism, fruit consumption, and interspecies dating. Yes, that’s right, the traditional Momotaro story has been cute-ified to the point that one of the ogres he once swore to kill is now his girlfriend!

Some public officials in tourist-challenged areas may go even further and toy with the very name of their locality. As another student put it in her paper on the same topic, “the best way to attract visitors is to change your hometown’s name.” At first I thought her advice was a bit excessive. Surely such an extreme act would be prudent only if you lived in a place such as “Pimple Peak” or “Sewage Springs”. But apparently some politicians don’t find it such a farfetched idea. A few years ago Kagawa Prefecture launched a media campaign, complete with mock press conferences and posters, in which the governor claimed he had exercised executive privilege to change the name of his prefecture to “Udon-ken” in honor of its noodle tradition. (The 24-karat gold toilet museum there wasn’t quite doing its job as a tourist trap.)

But would this be a wise move all around? Should Yamaguchi start calling itself “Fugu-ken” (Blowfish Prefecture)? Rather than give up a town’s historical name to the glare of its most attractive commodity, local leaders might do better to keep the name and simply attach a descriptive catchphrase to it, like many American states do when issuing automobile license plates: “The Sunshine State” (Florida); “The Corn State” (Iowa); “Seat Belts Fastened?” (Ohio); or “Not Quite Rectangular, but Definitely Not Square” (Utah).

Naturally I’ve got some great ideas for Japanese prefecture catchphrases: “Ibaraki Rocks”; “Totally Tottori”; “Niigata’s Gonna Getcha”; “Don’t Be Sorry, Come to Aomori”; “Where’s Ehime, Anyweh?” It’s true that license plates here are issued at the municipal level, not prefectural, but some of these still might work: “Live the Saga Saga.”

Cute, unrealistic representations of identity should be nothing new to us. We creatively modify our internet personas all the time, caricaturing ourselves in order to enhance our images, sell ourselves, or maintain our privacy. Admit it: that 15-year-old cover photo on your Facebook page is just a “loose character” of who you are right now. So, after a good three minutes of creative brainstorming, I’ve finally picked out my own yurukyara:

Meet Ojitchi (オジッチ)I! Cleverly combining “OG” and a Japanese word for “reality” (実地 jitchi)—with maybe a little “old guy” (おじさん ojisan) in there, too—Ojitchi represents the most charming qualities of an unpaid humor columnist for a specialized, limited-distribution journal. Watch for the campaign posters on your local police station bulletin board.
Why narratives?

- They are central to how we create and maintain relationships.
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