

# Observing Classrooms and Breaking Rules

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This forum explored Professor John Fanselow's ideas about teaching and learning with papers inspired by his notions of classroom observation and how teachers can innovate. Fanselow defined classroom observation as essential because it allows teachers to recognize unconscious patterns in the culture of instruction, particularly unexamined practices and ingrained assumptions about teaching and how learning takes place. In this paper, four authors will summarize their forum presentations.

このフォーラムでは、John Fanselowの教育と学習に関する理論について検討し、そのclassroom observation(教室観察)理論、教材・教室運営の導入方法に触発された発表者による小発表が行われた。Fanselowは、classroom observationは教育に不可欠なものと定義した。Classroom observationを実施することで、教師は、授業をしている中で、無意識に行っているpattern(思考や行動の様式)に気づかされるからである。特に、教育指導や学習に関する根拠の無い授業の進め方や染み付いた思い込みなどである。本稿では、フォーラム発表の中から4発表を各発表者が要約する。

**T**HIS PAPER reports on the Forum titled *Observing Classrooms and Breaking Rules*, which was presented at the JALT2011 Conference.

For the past 30 years—through his teaching, writing and association with the Columbia Teachers College TESOL program in Tokyo—John Fanselow has made a significant contribution to EFL education in Japan. This forum explored Professor Fanselow's ideas about teaching and learning with papers inspired by his approaches to classroom observation and ways of stimulating teachers to make their teaching more innovative and effective. Fanselow considers classroom observation to be essential because it allows teachers to recognize unconscious patterns in the culture of instruction, particularly unexamined practices and ingrained assumptions about teaching and how learning takes place. Fanselow advocates questioning prescribed notions about teaching, contending that when teachers “do the opposite,” they better understand what instruction and learning actually mean.

Observation is seen by Fanselow as both (1) a mindful and self-reflective approach that instructors can apply to their own practices, as well as (2) a collaborative and exploratory process of consensus building among colleagues that refrains from summative judgments or top-down directives. Observers are seen as “visiting teachers” who nonjudgmentally help their peers view their teaching practices in a new light.



In the first section, *Breaking Rules: The way to innovate in teaching*, Gregory O'Dowd outlines the philosophical groundwork of *Breaking Rules* and looks at its practical applications and influences on teaching style. This part of the paper ties together the disparate pieces of the forum and offers an account of how those who have studied under Fanselow internalized and operationalized his procedures for fostering self-awareness.

William Bradley, in the section entitled *Structuring classes with non-verbal cues and descriptive observation*, explores practices of curriculum development, foregrounding observation as a tool for building consensus about the kind of curriculum that is put in place in the classroom.

The third section, *Program Administration and observation: Making observation a part of normal practice* gives an account of how Joseph Dias uses observation as an extension of course evaluation to follow-up instruction that goes above and beyond the curriculum, with potential to impart program-wide benefits.

Mariko Miyao, in her section, *Student-centered language learning projects in a CALL classroom: Unexpected findings generated by observation*, describes unanticipated outcomes revealed through the observation of how students carried out a project involving digital storytelling in a CALL classroom.

The forum also featured David Shea, who explained his attempts to introduce “scaffolded discourse,” with a grounded analysis of how students do and, importantly, do not pick up extended patterns of talk. However, his part of the forum has not been included here as it requires a more extensive treatment than this brief report can accommodate.

## Breaking Rules: The Way to Innovate in Teaching

Greg O'Dowd

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The leaders in any field are the ones who do not accept the status quo; they see the horizon and wonder what is beyond it. And after they go there, through their own efforts and trials, they tell us about the wonders they have discovered and try to excite us as well. Professor Emeritus John F. Fanselow is one such explorer. Professor Fanselow went from teaching English in northern Africa (in particular Nigeria and Somalia) as a volunteer for the Peace Corps in the 1960s to becoming Professor Emeritus at Teachers College, Columbia University. His long career has focused on teaching methods and teacher training, and particularly on classroom observation. He is also an acclaimed published writer, whose 1987 *Breaking Rules: Generating and Exploring Alternatives in Language Teaching* has influenced a generation (my generation) of teachers, materials writers, and teacher trainers. Many ESL teachers are familiar with Fanselow's book, others may have even read some of the reviews that such ground-breaking contributions get (and there have been many), and younger teachers may be hearing of it for the first time. The goal of *Breaking Rules* is to produce better outcomes for both teachers and students: learning better, faster, more efficiently, and achieving their purposes by examining unquestioned classroom practices.

Now, I would like to tell you what *Breaking Rules* means to. First, the title sounds quite odd – *Breaking Rules*. Aren't teachers supposed to follow rules and even enforce them to maintain order? The “rules” Fanselow refers to actually mean the status quo alluded to earlier – the standardization of teaching in old

molds, the thoughtless, automatic way teachers operate to impart knowledge to numerous students in a single room during a specific time period to produce “X” result. Indeed, Fanselow has issued a wake-up call for teachers to realize that much of what they do in the classroom is shaped and controlled by unconscious rules, conventions and habits imposed within their working environments. Most teachers are aware of the “normal” rules in teaching:

- teachers use approved textbooks;
- teach the text;
- teachers teach while students sit quietly and “absorb” what is offered;
- teachers write on the blackboard;
- students do not challenge the teacher;
- students are passive in their seats in class;
- students speak when spoken to by the teacher.

Although these may seem like standard rules for teaching, they can be seen as part of the problem in that they may restrict and bind teachers’ actions and thwart consideration of what the students are actually capable of doing to enhance their education.

Of course, *Breaking Rules* does not imply that teachers who follow this approach believe in disorder; order is still a necessary element in effective teaching. Rather, before rules can be broken, teachers need to make themselves aware of the rules they have been following without realizing it. By breaking them, they become more conscious of other possibilities and alternatives. Thus breaking rules is actually an exploration of what teachers do as teachers, why they conduct classes in a particular way, and what rules prevent them from achieving their full potential. Fanselow invites teachers to break the rules that bind them to inefficiency and free themselves to generate new ideas and alternatives without preconceived notions of what is “good” or “bad” teaching.

Fanselow often used anecdotes to illustrate his points. For this particular point, he told of a student teacher he was observing, along with a senior Japanese teacher. The student teacher made a somewhat bumpy start to the lesson, at which point the Japanese teacher jumped up from his chair, demanded that the student teacher sit down, and then proceeded to teach the class in the classic style, after which he looked at the embarrassed teacher and yelled, “OK, now you teach like that!”

My own experience was not so different. Many years ago, I had observed other classes at my university in Shizuoka (not the one at which I currently teach) and saw teachers who “taught” by reading the textbook non-stop and rarely left the front podium or even looked at the students. The few students present in the classroom were either sleeping, reading magazines, texting on cell phones, or talking quietly with each other. Of course, at the end of semester, it was standing room only in those same classes as teachers handed out exam tips (e.g., writing the exam questions on the board). All of these practices were “accepted” rules. However, in my classes, I adopted a system of continual assessment, pair work, group work, and a variety of communicative activities. The noise level in the classroom sometimes rose a bit, but not without a purpose. However, on several occasions, the door swung open and a senior Japanese teacher, who happened to just be walking past, would rush in and shout at everyone to pipe down – then, when seeing me in the classroom, the teacher would look surprised and say, “Oh, I thought there was no teacher in this room.” I assured him that I was there doing an activity and they would turn around and leave. Later, I was told by another senior teacher (obviously my methods were being discussed by the senior staff) that I was “confusing the students and I should try to make my class the normal university type.” When I asked what he thought was confusing to them, he added that my classes did not fit the norm and so students would be unsure of what was expected of them. I know it is ill-advised to argue with tenured professors, but I would humbly submit that,

under my supervision, my students knew what they had to do in my classes to pass (it was printed in the syllabus) and it was the quiet ones that were not doing what they were supposed to be doing. I, of course, worked to lower the volume of my classes.

Breaking rules means growth, expanding on potential, discovery of what can be, and doing something different in order to achieve more within the same time frame. It means getting out of the rut that teachers can so easily fall into; our comfort zone, the safe way, the same way, the known way, the ordinary way, the easy way, the no-extra-effort-needed way. Teachers can either follow the rules and go through the motions, or break some rules to find more meaning in what they do as teachers, to find better ways of doing the same old things. I know this because this is what I learnt from *Breaking Rules*.

Fanselow's book is not about short-term answers but a gradual long-term exploration. He made his book more like a merry-go-round (where readers can get on and off) than as a ladder to climb. Fanselow encourages teachers to truly "engage" in their work because to understand one's teaching, teachers have to act and think outside the box that hems them in. The ultimate aim is to help teachers see their own teaching differently so they can improve their classroom practice.

## Structuring Classes with Non-Verbal Cues and Descriptive Observation

William S. Bradley

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### Prologue

(Teacher writes on white board: *The class will begin when everyone greets the person to their right or left and asks them a question. After a momentary hesitation, the participants (at JALT 2011 this was fellow researcher / teachers but in other contexts it would be students) talk to each other ...*

### Structuring With and Without Verbal Language

With a slight modification, this sentence was one that John Fanselow wrote on the board in an early summer seminar class some years ago when I was a student in his class. What does such a sentence tell us about classroom rules, the everyday sense that is unwritten and yet deeply ingrained in each of us, veteran teachers, novices, and students alike?

I will offer three responses to this question. First, it shows how dependent classrooms are on the teacher structuring an activity, and more specifically, 98% of the time doing it with explicit verbal and often repeated commands: calling roll, greeting students, telling them where to sit and when to open their textbooks, and explicating the task that they will attend to that day.

Second, it reminds us of the impact of the paralinguistic, the use of non-verbal actions, cues, and prompts, which Fanselow often made use of to call attention to how underutilized such inputs are. Without verbalized language, specifically the structuring for beginning and ending, and how to carry out a task, and

how to evaluate it, we (teachers), and our students, feel momentarily at a loss, but then unexpectedly freed to do something out of the ordinary, in other words, to break the rules of the taken-for-granted classroom interactional patterns and fixed routines.

Third, it signals the necessity for the recipients (i.e., the students) to suspend their automatic and passive receptivity towards the targeted activity. Students are thus encouraged to do a little rule breaking themselves in order to understand what they may be able to do with the particular activity and language. Without exaggerating too greatly, they are asked to reconstruct the structuring activity of the teacher. Fanselow reminded us that the reason for breaking rules was “to see more clearly what we each are capable of and how our preconceived ideas sometimes limit this capability” (Fanslow, 1987, p. 7). In this way, breaking rules is an important way of promoting autonomous reflection and learning in the classroom.

### Intermission

(Another sentence on the white board: *You call yourself a teacher, I'll show you how to teach!*)

### Evaluative and Descriptive Observation

The second sentence comes from the book *Contrasting Conversations* (Fanselow, 1992) and refers to a statement that Fanselow heard from a teacher trainer many years ago. Specifically, the question targets what it means to be effective or “What Mean Work,” as one of the chapters in *Breaking Rules* referred to it. The chapter was titled as such after a question that was asked by a nonnative English-speaking teacher, symbolizing the necessity for doing the opposite, and creating alternatives. Judged by a single criteria of right or wrong, the interrogatory sentence can be classified as failing grammatically. However, asked in the context of a workshop on the effectiveness of a particular teach-

ing method, the question addresses a central issue of evaluation and feedback. What does it mean when someone says this particular method works? Works for whom and in what ways?

These examples, simple as they are, indicate the types of activities and vignettes that encourage us to talk about our observations of other teachers and their teaching. The chances to do observations for me nowadays are not as frequent as several decades ago when I and other M.A. students were engaged in visiting each others' classes, taking notes, and making video and audio tapes, which we used in our seminar classes as the basis of discussion. Nonetheless, over the past two years, I did have the opportunity to do five to ten classroom observations, some with my own undergraduate students, who were engaged in their *kyoiku jishu* (teaching practicum), in high schools and junior high schools. Other times, I was able to observe colleagues in my university as part of the faculty-wide professional development system that we developed.

In nearly every case, the expectations of those observed were that I would “treat them as other events in life” (Fanselow, 1987). In other words, the unspoken and hard-to-overcome assumption was that I was there to simply observe, nothing more, nothing less, what others have referred to as the “nominal” model of supervision, simply to “keep in touch” or provide a veneer of accountability (Goldsberry, 1988, cited in Bailey, 2006). Never mind notes, never mind relating much in the way of feedback, other than the usual expressions of thanks or “job well done.” When given a chance to say more, I managed to make a few comments, mostly in the form of questions. Even now, in most cases, I can recall the repeated initial reactions from both my students and colleagues, of slight surprise mixed with trepidation that some evaluation (I'll show you!) was about to be delivered, even if it were done in a friendly manner.

## Conclusion

The two abbreviated scripts that I've related (as brief examples of much wider repertoires and in-depth discussions that can be developed in attempting to understand one's own teaching and interactions in classrooms), in backwards order from the title, namely breaking rules and observing classrooms, indicate the deeply ingrained commonsense that inhabits our teaching routines. While such commonsense scripts, roles, rituals, structuring moves, and the like, are no doubt irreplaceable to some degree in formal educational settings, these routinized moves in classrooms also prevent us from alternative ways of seeing and researching our teaching, which can then be used as the basis for craft orientations of teaching; teaching as tinkering and reflecting, as John Fanselow's work encourages us to do. In short, the systematicity of rules and routines that we assume as an indispensable part of our teaching repertoire, is at the same time a scaffold that can be used to stimulate ourselves and students to explore further.

## Program Administration and Observation: Making Observation a Part of Normal Practice

*Joseph Dias*

*Aoyama Gakuin University*

As a member of the first cohort group that joined and graduated from the Teachers College TESOL program in Tokyo in the late 80s, I was honored to have had a front row seat in seeing Professor Fanselow's procedures of observation (Fanselow, 1987) adapted to a Japanese context. As a youngster at the time, and someone quite new to teaching, perhaps I had a slight advantage over my classmates in breaking some of the "rules" of teaching since I was blithely ignorant of many of them in the first place. Early on in my teaching, I was determined to find ways to bring activities that I found engaging and enlivening, such as juggling and pantomime, into the language classroom (Dias, 1991, 1992, 1996). Professor Fanselow's foundation course on classroom observation taught, experientially, that no matter what method, activity, or task one might try to carry out, and no matter how innovative one thinks the selected content might be, dozens of tacit assumptions about desirable teaching procedures and learning outcomes can make the classroom experience a carbon copy of ones previously experienced or observed. This section will demonstrate how classroom observation among teachers is being promoted in a program which he is co-coordinating in the English Department of Aoyama Gakuin University (AGU).

To truly break out of routines that are carried out because one *ought* rather than because one *can*, it is necessary to carefully observe oneself, preferably through video or audio recordings to avoid distortions that memory may introduce and the tendency

to make judgments rather than simply to describe. Coding and categorizing, as described in varying degrees of detail and complexity in Fanselow's *Breaking Rules* (1987) and *Contrasting Conversations* (1992), can bring a teacher from an awareness of what is happening in the classroom, including the unconscious "rules" that had been followed, to a point where an exploration of alternatives is possible. Small changes from a teacher's norm (e.g., random rather than opportunistic student groupings or having students, by turns, post homework assignments on a class BBS from notes they took in class instead of the teacher always doing it) may lead to disproportional changes in students' motivation, sense of autonomy, or feeling of inclusiveness.

To draw a parallel with some findings in a seemingly unrelated area, research shows that more than 70% of aviation mishaps are linked to communication and coordination issues rather than a lack of technical skill. These issues stem from being lulled by the automatic and routine, the autopilot, if you will (Lautman & Gallimore, 1987; Ruffell Smith, 1979). In the same vein, Cushing claims that the repetitive, ritualized nature of most aviation communication can cause mishaps through mindless overuse of familiar communication patterns. It "induces a degree of ritualization, with statements and situations losing their cognitive impact and participants falling into a pattern of simply going through the motions for their own sake" (Cushing, 1994, p. 46). What might a "classroom mishap" be? No, or little, learning occurring? Students starting out unmotivated or losing motivation? A student not reaching his/her potential? That's where observation comes in. Observation of classroom communications can illuminate how administrative directives, teaching practices, and student performance coordinate with each other or how out of sync they might be.

Most members of university faculties in Japan would agree that precious little classroom observation actually happens, despite the fact that, for the last several years, self-evaluation

checklists related to professional development include classroom observation. At AGU, for example, full-time faculty must indicate whether they observed someone else's class, or were observed themselves, on an annual basis. It tends to be neglected just as much in language programs as a method of ascertaining what is going on in classrooms--compared to course evaluations by students, for example--owing to its image as 1) being time consuming; 2) causing stress for the observed and the observer; 3) having associations with assessment and evaluation; 4) implying that one is being observed because (s) he has done something wrong; and 5) often being unstructured in nature, making the "observations" more impressions than a systematic body of data that can be worked with.

We are trying to counter these perceived drawbacks in our department in the following ways:

- by allowing teachers to arrange to observe (and be observed by) other teachers who are teaching the same course at the same time slot for just 15 minutes or so while the students of the observing teacher are occupied in a self-directed task.
- by emphasizing peer-to-peer observations that are arranged among teachers themselves in order to avoid the perception that observations may lead to punitive measures.
- by making the goal of observation the discovery of something that's new (to the observer) which can be played with in the observer's own classes.
- by structuring it, while maintaining flexibility so that teachers can attend to particular aspects of the observed class that they are interested in focusing on (e.g., methods of student feedback, elicitation, or class groupings). A customizable grid can be made available to observers with such headings as "time line," "teachers' words," "teachers' actions," "apparent purpose," "students' words," "students' actions," "interaction patterns," "stages of lesson," etc.

- by making observation the new normal.

In the brief time that we have put this system in place, observations of several reading classes, taught by Japanese instructors, have resulted in list of ingenious alternatives. A few of them include:

- Use of the CALL functionality of a classroom to get students to have a pre-reading discussion by randomly linking pairs of students using the computer's headsets. Students with malfunctioning headsets form pairs or trios by walking to another part of the room to find other victims of techno mishaps.
- Group work in which students discuss written responses to HW reading assignments that have been written by other students (with names hidden), avoiding the reluctance some students might feel in expressing their own answers or ideas, risking embarrassment.

The importance of including classroom observation as part of the normal operations of a language program cannot be overemphasized. Along with course evaluations, testing or portfolio evaluation, feedback from teachers through informal teachers' room talk and more formal meetings, and occasional focus group interviews, a balanced view of what is happening in the classroom can be discerned. Sufficient time should be allocated to train teachers in observation methods and follow-up. This might be done during orientation sessions at the beginning of the term or through more regular faculty development seminars. It can help teachers, and course administrators, switch from a "mindless overuse of familiar communication patterns" (Cushing, 1994) to an engagement with new varieties of classroom interactions that might avert classroom crashes.

Full-time lecturers can show leadership by offering to be observed first, thereby gaining the trust of those who might feel insecure about the observation process.

## Student-Centered Language Learning Projects in a CALL Classroom: Unexpected Findings Generated by Observation

Mariko Miyao

Tsukuba Gakuin Universtiy

Fanselow (1987) explains that the aim of his book *Breaking Rules* is "ultimately to see teaching differently" (p.165). He suggests that by doing something different or new, teachers will have a chance to look at their teaching from different perspectives or find new ways of teaching and learning. He also reminds us of the importance of objective observation to find out more about our teaching. This paper introduces an example of one teacher's classroom experiment and observation, providing an account of some unexpected consequences arising from a student-centered writing project using a new type of IT tool in a CALL classroom.

## A Storytelling Project Using Windows Movie Maker

In the spring semester of 2010, as part of a course titled *Learning English on the Web*, students were asked to create original stories and quizzes in English utilizing the groupware Study Note (n.d.). In the fall semester, a new writing project involving storytelling using Windows Movie Maker (n.d.) was conducted. Introducing digital storytelling in the course seemed very natural and interesting for the students, although the teacher was not so familiar with the software when the project was initiated and the outcome was difficult to predict. The software turned out to be straightforward for the students, allowing them to spend less time learning about the tools and more time writing their own stories.

*Digital storytelling*, according to the Educational Uses of Digital Storytelling website (n.d.), is “the practice of using computer-based tools to tell stories.” The Center for Digital Storytelling website (n.d.) defines a *digital story* as “a short, first person video-narrative created by combining recorded voice, still and moving images, and music or other sounds,” and a *digital storyteller* as a person “who has a desire to document life experience, ideas, or feelings through the use of story and digital media.”

### Unexpected Results from Students’ Narration

Referring to Fanselow’s book, *Breaking Rules* (1987), Maley (2004) mentions that “if [teachers] never try anything different, however small, they never find out how it might have changed things.” When “we change our customary practice, we become more aware of the effects of what we do.” In line with Fanselow’s theory, this section will examine what was discovered when the author conducted what was for her a new undertaking, involving digital storytelling using Windows Movie Maker.

In our previous story-writing projects, a majority of students did not have time to record narration. This time, however, all the students were able to narrate their stories. The main reason for this change was that the new software made narration natural and easy. The procedure of the writing project consisted of three steps: students arranged several photos, wrote a story which linked the photos, and then narrated the story. Students could concentrate more on the content, allowing them to write creatively using their original ideas and then narrate what they had written.

Some unexpected findings arose from how students approached the narration part of the task. Without any practice, one’s narration tends to be rather monotonous, even when narrating one’s own story. Especially those students who are

normally reluctant to speak out in class may not be interested in practicing narration, and thus might be expected to narrate their stories in a monotonous manner. Surprisingly, however, the teacher while reviewing the students’ recordings at the end of the semester, found none of their narrations to be monotonous as they adjusted their intonation and speed appropriately. Even some of the shy students narrated so well that they must have practiced many times before recording.

This was indeed a pleasant surprise and a totally unexpected outcome of the current writing project. It seemed that all the students were motivated to perform well on this kind of learner-centered writing project, where they themselves were in charge, while the teacher only played a facilitating role. In fact, Fanselow (2011), regarding *learner-centered education*, mentions that “the most powerful learning takes place when we are in charge and seek answers to our own questions, whether we are learning languages or ways to teach languages, or anything else.”

Fanselow (1987) also describes incidental learning as follows: “In all of life, we learn a great deal incidentally (p.168),” and “deliberate, conscious attempts to learn are effective partly because we alternate them with unplanned, unconscious moments of learning (p.169).” This time, the teacher incidentally learned that, by conducting a new activity, she could find a different side of her students and new ways to encourage them to learn more actively.

### Further Learning Process for Students

Before starting to write their own stories, the students had a chance to view digital stories created by people from all over the world, for example, at the Center for Digital Storytelling website. Thereby, they could acquire a deeper understanding of other people, cultures, countries, and the outside world. Some

stories might be too difficult for EFL learners, but nonetheless, they can get some useful knowledge for the telling of their own narratives by browsing various stories.

It was also found that, by using photos they had taken themselves, students were able to write about their memorable events. Once they had chosen suitable photos, they were able to concentrate on writing and narrating. Their stories were very interesting, with narration and professional-looking effects and transitions between the photos, through the use of Windows Movie Maker. The student-created digital stories can be viewed at the Learning English on the Web course website (Miyao, 2010), under: "Fall 2010: Digital Stories by Students."

### Reflections

By going through a new classroom project using a new Internet tool, the teacher had an opportunity to look at her teaching and her students from a different perspective. The students not only wrote interesting stories but also narrated their own stories. They practiced narrating because they had a good reason to do it, not because they were forced to practice. Students wanted to improve their narrations for the audience. The teacher herself had not known that there were many interesting and moving digital stories for her students to read. These were just a few of unanticipated findings and happenings experienced by this teacher. None of these might have happened if this new writing project was not conducted by switching to a new IT tool, by trying an alternative. Also the teacher became more aware of the effects of what she did by changing her customary practice, thus, by breaking rules.

### Conclusion

The papers in this forum demonstrate the wide-ranging influence that Fanselow's approach to observation has made on the

authors. Fanselow's ideas have empowered teachers to look with a more open mind at the whole enterprise of teaching so that they could be more aware of their *actual* practice. Through careful observation of themselves and of colleagues, teachers can get beyond buzz words--such as communicative language teaching, autonomy, or learner-centeredness--to find out what these terms might mean at their core and in a teacher's own classroom interactions. Only when the unspoken, and often unconscious, rules are known, can they be broken. The consequences of this new knowledge can lead to the exploration of alternatives in one's own classroom, in particular courses, or across entire programs.

Fanselow's principles are potentially relevant to teachers interested in Gardner's (1999) theory of Multiple Intelligences as well as work done by various researchers in the area of learning styles and strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995; Willing, 1988). Breaking rules inevitably leads teachers to adopt an expanded repertoire of classroom activities and approaches that will likely appeal to a larger range of students.

### Bio Data

**William S. Bradley** is a Professor in the Faculty of Intercultural Communication at Ryukoku University in Otsu, Shiga, Japan. His research interests include the internationalization of Japanese higher education and policy, risk, and multiculturalism.

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**Gregory O'Dowd** was awarded his Masters of Arts (TESOL) from Columbia University Teachers College and is the Foreign Language Instructor at HUSM. He specializes in Speaking and Listening Skills as well as Classroom Dynamics, Life-long Learning and Problem-based Learning. He is very interested in economics, Japanese culture, science fiction stories and is a big fan of Star Trek

**Mariko Miyao** has been teaching English-related subjects at Tsukuba-Gakuin University since 1990. Her research interests include CALL, business English, student motivation, and classroom observation.

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