# Extensive listening and how it affects reading speed

Joshua Brook Antle, Toyo University

本研究では、extensive listening がリーディング・スピードにおよぼす影響を調査した。日本人大学生３５名の志願者が本調査の被験者となった。被験者３５名を、無作為に、対照群（control group）、extensive listening を課すグループ (EL)、extensive reading を課すグループ (ER) の３つのグループに分けた。まず、全員に事前テスト（pre-test）を受けてもらいリーディング・スピードを調べた後、ERグループおよびELグループには、８週間にわたってそれぞれの課題に従事させた。ERグループの結果は、課題として与えられた読書量（８週間の実施期間中に６冊)をこなした学生が少なかったため、分析対象とはならなかった。しかし、ERグループのデータは、統計的な結論を導くには不十分ではあるものの、暫定的な比較を示す数値として報告しておく。ELグループに関しては、事前・事後テストにおける被験者のリーディング・スピードについて、その平均値を対照表に示した。ELグループのリーディング・スピードは明らかに向上しており、そのことは対照表の結果に如実に示されている。また、本調査結果は、ELによってリーディング・スピードを向上させるには、３０分のオーディオ・ブックを毎週約１本聴くことが必要であることも示唆している。

While extensive reading has been credited with learner improvements in reading comprehension and reading speed (Storey, Gibson, & Williamson, 2006) as well as in grammar and vocabulary acquisition (Nation, 2001; Krashen, 2004; Mason, 2006; Brown, Waring, & Donkaewbua, 2008), there has been considerably less research focused on extensive listening (EL). The aim of this study was to discover if EL helps learners improve in other skill areas, specifically, how using audio CDs of graded readers impacts reading speed as compared to extensive reading.

## Extensive reading and extensive listening

Extensive reading (ER) is a form of second-language reading where students read large quantities of material at a level slightly below their own (Krashen, 2004). The material should also be enjoyable and of high interest to the student. The main goal of ER is to improve reading fluency, but there are also other benefits (mentioned above). For the purposes of this paper, we are going to assume that the benefits from EL are fundamentally the same as those from ER.

Where EL starts to differ from ER is in the speed of the input. A reader can go through the material at her or his own pace, whereas for EL, this is largely out of the listener's control. Another difference is that EL gives the student the opportunity to hear the speaker's intonation, stress and prosody.

## Reading speed and why it is important

Learners can benefit from an increased reading speed. Tests such as TOEFL and TOEIC require the students to read long texts in a relatively short period of time. Reading speed may also contribute to comprehension, in that learners are more able to follow the plot of a story when they can quickly read the text (Wilkins, 2009). In addition, improvements in reading speed make reading more enjoyable.

## Current study

This study will look at extensive listening as a possible approach to improving reading speed. The original belief behind this study was that by engaging in EL, students would be forced to process input at a quicker rate. It was hypothesized that this might have a carry-over effect into reading. For this study the participants were divided into three groups: ER, EL and control. The main research questions under investigation in this paper are as follows:

1. Do the participants show an increased reading speed after engaging in two months of extensive listening practice?
2. Assuming reading speed improves, within each group, what amount of material is required to show an improvement in reading speed over a two-month period?

### *Participants*

Thirty-five students decided to join this research project. Students were assigned to one of the three groups: extensive reading, extensive listening, and control. The students were given a pre-test to measure reading speed: a short reading passage (Quinn, Nation, & Millett, 2007) at the General Service List (West, 1953) one thousand word level.

### *Treatment*

The extensive reading and extensive listening stage of this study lasted for eight weeks. The ER and EL groups read/listened to graded readers during this time (a suggestion of trying to read/listen to at least one book a week was given).

### *Measurement*

The post-test consisted of another reading taken from the same collection of readings (Quinn et al. 2007) used for the pre-test. Some of the participants failed to read/listen to the target number of books. Because of this, a cut-off level of six books over the eight weeks was established. Consequently, the results for the ER group and five of the EL participants were not used in statistical analysis. A t-test was used to analyze the results: a matched-pairs t-test using the pre-test and post-test results for the EL group.

## Results

A one-tailed matched-pairs t-test was conducted to compare pre-test and post-test reading speeds for the listening group. There was a significant difference in the scores; $t(6)=2.4125$, $p=0.05$. There was an overall improvement. The results are significant enough to indicate that EL leads to improved reading speeds.

## Discussion and conclusions

The result from the t-test was significant; this is somewhat surprising given the small group sizes and the relatively short duration of the treatment period (eight weeks). These results indicate that EL does lead to improvements in reading speed. However, it might be best to view this study as a pilot given the extremely small sample sizes.

In regard to the amount of material required (the second research question), the results indicate that for EL some improvement in reading speed can be seen with around one audio book per week. This amount of material is similar to what Nation (2001) claims to be the absolute minimum for ER to be effective.

**Joshua Brook Antle** is a lecturer at Name University in Gunma. His research interests are extensive listening and collocations.

## References

Brown, R., Waring, R., & Donkaewbua, S. (2008). Incidental vocabulary acquisition from reading, reading-while-listening, and listening. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 20*(2), 136-163.

Krashen, S. D. (2004). *The power of reading: insights from the research* (2nd ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Mason, B. (2006). Free voluntary reading and autonomy in second language acquisition: Improving TOEFL scores from reading alone. *The International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, 2*(1), 2-5. Retrieved from <benikomason.net/articles/improving_toefl_scores/all.html>.

Nation, P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Quinn, E., Nation, P., & Millett, S. (2007). Asian and pacific speed readings for ESL learners: twenty passages written at the one thousand word level. *English Language Institute Occasional Publication.* Retrieved from <victoria.ac.nz/lals/staff/paul-nation.aspx>.

Table 1. Pre-test and post-test reading speeds for listening group members

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-test reading speed (in seconds) | 484 | 362 | 390 | 645 | 438 | 465 | 175 |
| Post-test reading speed (in seconds) | 407 | 335 | 395 | 543 | 388 | 435 | 189 |
| Difference | -77 | -27 | +5 | -102 | -50 | -30 | +14 |
| Number of audio books listened to | 14 | 12 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 |

Storey, C., Gibson, K., & Williamson, R. (2006). Can extensive reading boost TOEIC scores? In K. Bradford-Watts, C. Ikeguchi, & M. Swanson (Eds.). *JALT2005 Conference Proceedings*. (1004-1018). Tokyo: JALT.

West, M. (1953). *A General Service List of English Words*. London: Longman.

Wilkins, K. (2009). *The importance of reading fluency*. Retrieved from <earlytolearn.com/2009/speech-language-therapy/reading/the-importance-of-reading-fluency>.





# Student responses to alternative EFL evaluation

Mike Guest, University of Miyazaki

国立大学の1、2年生の医学生に対して、筆者がコミュニケーション英語の授業で取り入れてきた「代替評価」の手段・手法について、クラス調査 (593件) と個人面接 (56人) を過去6年間に渡って実施し、感想を求めた。調査と面接は、1年次はこの代替評価に関して肯定的、効果的は反応を示すのは困難であろうという筆者の認識に呼応したアクション・リサーチとして機能している。

実施と分析を重ねた結果、多用な代替評価の様式は、学生側にとって「表面的妥当性」に欠ける可能性があることが判明した。すなわち、効果的な学習や表現ストラテジーの選択を困難にする可能性がある。また、1年次のほうがより否定的な反応を示す一方で、これらの否定的コメントは、2年次になると、減少することも指摘している。

## The dilemma

Sometimes, English teaching research might be said to be accidental. For example, when a dilemma appears in a classroom the teacher naturally wants to discover the cause and, hopefully, correct it. In such cases, the teacher is not planning to carry out research but is merely trying to fix a classroom *bug*.

Teaching first and second year medical students at a university, I had been utilizing *alternative* methods of classroom assessment for several years. Alternative assessment encompasses almost any type of evaluation that deviates from traditional testing. This includes ongoing assessment of multiple competencies, open-ended task-based testing, a dynamic focus on production, allowing student topic/task choices, extended collaborative project work, open-book formats, and self/peer assessment with diagnostic feedback for revisions.

However, two things had struck my teaching sensibilities. One was that first-year students in particular seemed frustrated with the methods that I was employing for assessment in my *Communication English* course, especially in comparison to the second-year students. The other was that many of the first-year students whom I knew to be competent English communicators fared poorly on these tests. I wanted to find out why.

## Surveys and interviews

In order to find the cause of the dilemma I first utilized standardized university class surveys, focusing upon the open-ended commentary section, giving students sufficient time to respond (anonymously, and in either English or Japanese) to the following questions:

- Have you ever experienced this type of English evaluation before?
- Did you find the evaluation tasks and methods 1) helpful 2) interesting 3) challenging? Explain.
- How do you feel about these methods, as compared to traditional tests?
- Do you think that the tests helped you improve your English? Explain.
- Do you think the tests were a fair assessment of your English skills?

I carried out these surveys each semester over six years, n=592 in total. Beside the surveys, I also conducted office interviews with 56 first and second-year students again with the choice of language being flexible. Among the questions asked in the interviews were:

- Which test types were you familiar with before entering university?
- Were you surprised by any test type? Explain.
- Do you think having various test types helped to show your actual English ability and improve your English skills?
- How did you prepare for the tests?

## Significant results

The most immediate and significant result gleaned from the responses to the surveys was that only 23 of the 396 first-year respondents indicated any prior familiarity with the forms and methods of alternative assessment. Not surprisingly then, first-year students in particular expressed frustration based upon a lack of familiarity with these unusual (for them) testing methods.

These widespread negative responses gleaned from first year students in both the surveys and the interviews were classified as *affective* responses, that is, emotional reactions to the unfamiliarity of test forms, goals, purposes and criteria negatively impacting student study habits and test preparation. In short, students had little understanding of how to prepare for assessments and thus employed ineffective study methods—such as memorizing or copying chunks of the textbook—which do not lead to success with alternative assessment.

The responses indicated that I may have somewhat been testing *testwiseness*, the ability to respond to a test format appropriately, as opposed to actually measuring English skills, and this may lead to student frustration. After all, students who indicated familiarity with alternative types of assessment invariably performed better on these assessments than those who had no prior experience. So too did second year students, who had by that time become familiarized with the new methods of evaluation and had adjusted their study methods accordingly.

Responses also suggested that *face validity*, whether a test meets the students expectations of what a test should be, may have been a negative factor. Students who did not appear to view the evaluations as being formally legitimate, and thereby not meeting their framework of expectations, had trouble negotiating them.

These first-year responses stand in contrast to the more positive responses provided by second-year students. These latter responses indicated that they had adapted their study habits to suit the test content and format, saw the greater long-term educational value of alternative testing, adapted diagnostic feedback into their subsequent studies, and embraced the autonomous and productive elements of alternative testing.

## Implications for teachers

So, what are the implications for teachers who wish to use alternative forms of assessment for students unfamiliar with them? First, evaluation/task content must be made very clear (successful models, detailed explanations, and outlines should be provided). Grading criteria and skill/item focus must be made clear (text/study references and level of expectation should be made explicit). Feedback and chances for revision are also crucial to ensure fairness and skill development.

We cannot expect the benefits of alternative testing to be immediately apparent among students who are not yet used to this type of evaluation and thus we might feel inclined to discontinue such methods when faced with negative responses and performance. But the negatives can be minimized and benefits can appear gradually if the advice given above is applied.

# Breaking with the IRF and EPA: Facilitating student initiated talk

Chris Hale, International Christian University

ＥＳＬクラスにおいて、より主体的学びを学生に促進しようとすると、教師はＩＲＦ（Ｉ：声かけーＲ：返答―Ｆ：フィードバック）とＥＰＡ（明示的に前向きな評価）という選好されがちな授業会話モデルの枠を破るのに苦労することがよくある。教員主導型の授業内会話を止めることで、学生も教員も学生中心の学習アプローチに不慣れであるということを、証明することができるであろう。本研究では、筆者が担当するＥＳＬクラスで、ＩＲＦとＥＰＡの発話パターンをあえて止めたクラスから得られたデータを検証する。特筆すべきは、どの程度まで学生が自ら学生／教師の伝統的発話の役割を超え、社会認知的学習環境を教師と協働で作り上げるかである

The IRF pattern (Sinclair & Coultard, 1975), which consists of the teacher's *initiation*, a student's *response*, and the teacher's *feedback*, and the EPA (Waring, 2008), *explicit positive assessment*, are seen largely as a means for teachers to reward students for saying what teachers want to hear. Students come to rely on the third part of the triadic sequence (the *feedback*) for validation that they have performed as expected, and this third part is often an EPA, such as *good* or *well done,* which indicates to the class that the exchange has finished and the teacher is ready to move on. The IRF and EPA are safe and comforting because, in many ways, they are what both teachers and students expect in classroom discourse. It can therefore be disconcerting for them to attempt to move beyond the three-part sequence in favor of more autonomous, collaborative communicative exchanges.

The purpose for conducting this study was to investigate how effective I was in creating a classroom environment where meaning could be negotiated collaboratively among learners, rather than through the standard teacher-fronted IRF and EPA structures so prevalent in EFL / ESL classrooms. Particularly interesting in the data were instances where students initiated breaks from these structures themselves, which was surprising considering their preferred status in education-based institutional discourse.

## Methods

The 16 participants in this study spoke varying first languages and attended an intensive ESL program in a New York college. Six hours of classroom discourse data was recorded to video, and segments relevant to the research focus were isolated and transcribed.

## Results

### *Students taking control of the discourse*

Data segment two contained a lengthy string of talk that best exemplifies the class' attempts to break from the IRF format and work toward collaborative construction of meaning. The string contains over 100 turns, and of the 16 students, 11 contribute to the string in some way. By my withholding the closing EPA, and continually eliciting more information by feigning ignorance, the students continued the string well beyond what would have been possible in a typical three-part sequence. The string begins with a student responding to my initiation to the class about whether their countries are also *concerned with recycling*. She responds saying they recycle *food*, which led to some confusion. My role was to facilitate her own repair by asking clarification questions, but it became increasingly clear to the other students, and in particular the other Korean students who understood the meaning that she was attempting to convey, that she was having difficulty. Four other Korean students break from the IRF sequence and offered unsolicited comments to facilitate everyone's understanding.

At line 83 I pose a question to the whole class regarding the notion of recycling food: *Does that*

*sound overly concerned?* My goal was to bring the discussion full circle by having the class consider the original question that started this sequence. In response to this open-ended IRF, Student 9, who had remained silent through the preceding exchanges, speaks up at line 85 and clarifies everything:

***Data segment two** [Meaning made clear]*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 83 | T: → | Does that sound overly concerned? |
| 84 | S1: → | Ye::s. |
| 85 | S9: → | I think because the food is for pig or animal. |
| 86 | ALL: | O::::h |
| 87 | S2: | Yeah, yeah. |

At this revelation, all the students in the class come to understand what several students were attempting to explain for over 100 turns (in Korea food is recycled to feed to animals). The placement of Student 9's comment came where a teacher's closing third-part would normally appear, indicating that she was addressing the other confused students, not the teacher. Ironically, Student 9 is not even from Korea, but Taiwan, where they have a similar recycling system. Finally, at line 104, I initiate a three-part sequence with Student 2 to bring our discussion full circle, but the entire class ignores protocol by answering it with her (*Yes*), and Student 10 takes the teacher's role by providing the closing EPA for the entire 100+ line sequence (*Great*):

***Data segment two** [Student's EPA]*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 104 | T: → | So pigs eat your garbage. |
| 105 | ALL→ | Yes. |
| 106 | S10: → | Gre::at. |

## Conclusion

The collaborative exchanges presented here were facilitated not only by my continual prompts for further explanation, but equally by active student involvement in achieving meaning-focused output. Despite my attempts to focus on one respondent at a time, students took it upon themselves to reorganize the teacher-centered paradigm in order to autonomously engage the lesson content and co-create meaning. Though I understood what Student 2 meant about recycling food, had I instantly repaired the utterance, the lengthy segment, as well as the other students' opportunity to create and discover meaning, would have been closed-down. By refraining from this, I was able to create an atmosphere where other students felt an imperative need to take unsolicited turns and co-create the meaning necessary for everyone to understand.

## References

Sinclair, J. M., & Coultard, R. M. (1975). *Towards an analysis of discourse*. London: Oxford University Press.

Waring, H. Z. (2008). Using explicit positive assessment in the language classroom: IRF, feedback, and learning opportunities. *The Modern Language Journal,* 92, 577-594.

# Developing a growth mindset with Harry Potter

Naoko Harada, The Senior High School Affiliated with Japan Women's University

本論は外国語としての英語を学習する上での不安とその解消方法のひとつとしてドゥエック(2006)の提唱するしなやかなマインドセットの枠組みに焦点を当てる。しなやかなマインドセットとは固定観念的なマインドセットとは対象を成す、努力しだいで基本的な資質を伸ばすことができるという信念に基づくものである。しなやかなマインドセットを念頭に置きつつ、「ハリー・ポッターと謎の王子」の中で運に関する場面を本の一章を抜き出して教室で読み、同じ場面を映画で観た上で、生徒自身が自分の実例と結び付けながら、自分の道を切り開くことの意味を考察する機会を持った。

Mindset generally refers to the attitudes of people and the way they think about things. This paper highlights an episode on luck and making efforts in the sixth book of the series titled *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (Rowling, 2005, hereafter *The Half-Blood Prince*) and how this material was implemented in a third-year high school class through the frame of the concept of a growth mindset.

## Anxiety and the growth mindset

Previous research has shown that a distinctive complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors arise from the uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) in the classroom. Agawa, Abe, Ishizuka, Ueda, Okuda, Carreira-Matsuzaki, Sano, and Shimizu (2011) conducted research by surveying 122 Japanese university students and discovered that demotivated learners of English tend to make fewer efforts, which lowers their competence and may raise their anxiety (p. 13).

One solution to reduce anxiety is using the framework of a mindset, a type of intrinsic motivation, demonstrated by Dweck (2006). The growth mindset is based on the belief that our basic qualities are things we can cultivate through our efforts. Students with the growth mindset care about learning (Dweck, 2008) and correct mistakes (Nussbaum & Dweck, 2007, cited in Dweck, 2008). Effort is a positive thing and if they face failure, they will escalate their efforts and look for new learning strategies. Dweck states that when those students face challenges, they outperform their peers with fixed mindsets (Dweck, 2008).

## Growth mindset in Harry Potter's episode

In *The Half-Blood Prince*, the episode on liquid luck takes place in the class of Professor Slughorn who teaches potions, a subject similar to chemistry, to his students. Harry Potter won the potion brewing contest by secretly following the handwritten directions from a borrowed book. Those directions indicated practical shortcuts to brewing and they helped him make a high-quality potion with less effort compared to his classmates.

Sixteen students in my 2010 class had opportunities to learn from this episode by reading the chapter in the book as a summer assignment, answering a quick fact-check quiz with answer choices in the handout, and writing what they learned from this episode including their own experiences about luck. In September, they watched this episode on liquid luck from the movie *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (Heyman, Barron, & Yates, 2009) and self-checked their writing before handing in their assignments. In the following class, they received feedback from their teacher. Finally, they wrote their opinions about what they learned from the episode on luck during their term tests.

## Student reactions

In the summer assignments, the students wrote that merely counting on luck does not work. The following comment shows the willingness of one

student whose effort had inspired her peers and the teacher to actively support her learning so that she could accomplish a childhood goal.

> *Felix Felicis* is a great potion. I want it. But I am afraid of using it. If I depend on it, I would forget to work hard. I think that making efforts is more important than luck. When I was an elementary school fourth grader, I was poor at jumping long rope… I couldn't jump well. So I practiced very hard with my friends. My classmates and teacher tought[*sic*] me good way and timing. It was to jump at rope's center. And I could jump well. I did my best at field day. To jump long rope was a success. I thought that making efforts is very important then…

This episode tells us that the student's growth mindset had the ripple effect on people around her to share her problem and solve it with her. English essay writing over the summer made her recall that experience.

### Autonomous learning

Thinking about luck may spur the students' efforts to decrease their learning anxiety. In my students' case, they tend to think that in addition to luck, making their own efforts is essential to continue to be lucky. Applying this notion to Dweck's growth mindset, it shows they have a positive attitude towards learning. The concept of making efforts is familiar to them since they have to make efforts daily in studying and in club activities. The growth mindset helps them shift their minds from the fixed mindsets or stereotypes that dominate their lives. By knowing how to use the growth mindset, they have the option of taking the initiative of their own learning and experiences.

Nurturing the growth mindset takes on a new importance for Japanese students ever since the Great East Japan Earthquake in March. During a challenging time, I believe learning the concept of the growth mindset will give the students a strategy to face reality and improve their present state by making their own efforts.

### References


Agawa, T., Abe, E., Ishizuka, M., Ueda, M., Okuda, S., Carreira-Matsuzaki, J., Sano, F., & Shimizu, S. (2011). Preliminary study of demotivating factors in Japanese university English learning. *The Language Teacher, 35*(1), 11-16.

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Dweck, C. S. (2008). The perils and promises of praise. *Educational Leadership, 65*, 34-39.

Heyman, D. (Producer), Barron, D. (Producer), & Yates, D. (Director). (2009). *Harry Potter and the half-blood prince* [Motion picture]. United States: Warner Brothers Entertainment.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B, & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 70*(2), 125-132.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning, 39*(2), 251-275.

Rowling, J. K. (2005). *Harry Potter and the half-blood prince.* London: Bloomsbury.


## 10 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

# Practical steps towards task-based teaching

James Hobbs, Iwate Medical University

TBLT(Task-Based Language Teaching)の研究文献の数が増え続ける一方、「task」及び「TBLTを取り入れる」とは厳密には何であるか、といったことへのコンセンサスは依然として不十分なままです。さらには、特定の教育状況にTBLTを組み入れる、簡単で実用的なアドバイスが不足

していることや、商業的に生産されたTBLT教材の選択肢が限られていることで、PPP(Present-Practice-Produce)方法論で訓練された教師は、よく知っているやり方を捨ててTBLTを選択することを躊躇してしまいます。したがって、　教師に安心感を与え、かつ創造性や革新を生み出す自信を与えてくれるこれまでの方法、教科書、そしてレッスンプランの枠組みを捨て去らずにTBLTの中心的主義を組み入れるために、教師が取り入れられる実用的な手段にもっと注目させることが必要に思われます。ここでは、そういった手段の実例を取り上げます。その例として、taskに意味に焦点を当てた目標を加えること、ネイティブスピーカーのtask performanceの録音を使用すること、task outcomeを書面あるいは口頭でレポートさせることなどが含まれています。

## A new perspective on tasks

Influential works such as Nunan (1989; 2004) and Willis (1996) have helped popularize Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), but many teachers remain confused by conflicting opinions about exactly what *tasks* are, and how to use them. However, the core principles of TBLT can, in fact, be applied without adhering to any particular TBLT framework. Reports of TBLT in local contexts usually focus not on the importance of obeying someone else's rules, but on how to create or adapt tasks and frameworks to meet the needs of particular learners (e.g., Edwards & Willis, 2005). That is, teachers who report success with tasks typically view them as flexible tools. Many more teachers could benefit from considering TBLT not as an all-embracing method, but as a set of beliefs and assumptions that can also enhance courses built around Present-Practice-Produce (PPP) or other methodologies.

## Tasks within a non-TBLT framework

The first practical step for teachers reluctant to make wholesale changes to their teaching, but interested in the benefits of task-based interaction, is to familiarize themselves with the criteria proposed by Willis and Willis (2007) for determining how *task-like* an activity is:

### *1. Does the task have a goal/outcome?*

Tasks are more likely to focus attention primarily on meaning, and to produce authentic discourse in which learners are genuinely engaged, if they have clear, non-linguistic goals. Good tasks engage learners in actions such as ordering or sorting information, agreeing on a solution or course of action, creating a story, and so on.

### *2. Is success judged in terms of the outcome?*

What is the teacher's role during the task? Helping, facilitating, and supplying the odd word or phrase all reinforce the importance of the goal, whereas simply correcting errors does not. And what happens after the task? A genuinely goal-oriented task is usually followed by a discussion or report based on the task outcome.

### *3. Is the focus primarily on meaning?*

A meaning-focused task encourages learners to exploit any linguistic resources available to them to reach an outcome. Grammar boxes, lists of useful expressions, model dialogues, and so on, can all have their place, but can be counter-productive if presented at a time and in a way that directs attention primarily to language form during task performance.

### *4. Is there some relation to real-world activities?*

Classroom tasks need not be restricted to activities that literally occur in everyday life, but should elicit forms of discourse useful in the real world: stating opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, eliciting information, and storytelling among others. They should give learners chances to produce meanings useful in the target discourse community, not contrived to illustrate a grammar point.

### *5. Is the task interesting/engaging?*

Whether learners find a task interesting and engaging will depend on many factors, but what is certain is that "without engagement, without genuine interest, there can be no focus on meaning or outcome. Learners have to want to achieve an outcome, they have to want to engage in meaning" (Willis & Willis, 2007, p. 13).

### *6. Is completion a priority?*

In short, are students given enough time to finish, and are they encouraged to do so?

Drawing on these criteria to improve tasks, teachers should not restrict their attention to the main interactive activity of a lesson. Textbooks often also include many other task-like activities: for example, warm-up activities involving

quizzes, brainstorming, or sharing opinions; or comprehension questions following listening or reading passages. Some textbook activities are already tasks in the TBLT sense, and many others can easily be made so, for example by adding a goal, or by including a report stage. Ironically, often the only activities labelled as *tasks* in textbooks are ones that focus attention primarily on form (an instruction to *have a conversation like the one above* is not a task!).

Designing task-based lessons around PPP-oriented textbooks might thus require only tweaking instructions, changing the order of activities, or doing tasks with books closed to keep attention focused on meaning. Model language in textbooks can be given closer attention after the task, and compared with other ways of expressing similar meanings.

Teachers should also make room in lessons for a focus on the interactive lexical phrases that advanced speakers use to support fluent task interaction. Recordings of advanced speakers performing tasks can be used to draw attention to simple but useful phrases used to, for example, begin tasks (*OK, let's start*), sequence interaction (*Next…. / Now let's….*), or give feedback (*OK / Really? / Me, too*) (Hobbs, 2005).



## Conclusions

Teachers who take practical steps towards task-based teaching will find themselves moving in the same direction, but need not start from the same place or move at the same pace. Whatever your learners' needs, whatever restrictions are placed on you in terms of curriculum, textbooks, and exams, it is well worth considering what task-based teaching can offer you, and how you and your learners might benefit from those small, simple first steps towards TBLT.

## References

Edwards, C., & Willis, J. (2005). *Teachers exploring tasks in English language teaching*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Hobbs, J. (2005). Interactive lexical phrases in pair interview tasks. In C. Edwards & J. Willis (Eds.), *Teachers exploring tasks in English language teaching* (pp. 143-156). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

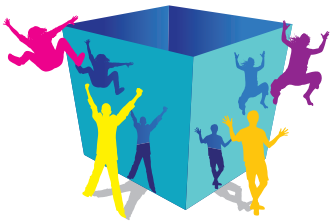
Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford: OUP.

Willis, J. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Harlow: Longman.

# 12 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS



# Re-entry: A teaching moment for intercultural communication awareness and skills

Adam Komisarof, Reitaku University

留学プログラムから学生が母国に帰国した後、効果的なリエントリープログラム（帰国後プログラム）があると、学生は自分の留学体験だけでなく、自国文化への再統合プロセスに関しても分析をすることができる。このような利点があるにもかかわらず、ほとんど教育機関ではこのようなリエントリープログラムが提供されていない現状がある。そのため、この論文の目標は下記の3点について述べるものである。その3点とは、1. リ

エントリープログラムの教育的目的と利点、2. フランスのリールにあるTelecom Lille1大学でのリエントリープログラム、3. そのリエントリープログラムの一環として、著者が教えた日本文化及び異文化コミュニケーション概念コースで使用した教育メソッドと演習である。

尚、3点目に挙げたこのコースは日本文化の理解と異文化コミュニケーションの理解を深めることを目的にデザインされたものであり、日本で働くということを疑似体験させるものであった。この論文では留学プログラム後、学生の異文化に関する学びをいかに促進していくかについての実践的なアプローチの詳細について述べている。

Study abroad programs are a mainstay at Japanese universities as a means of enriching students' educational experiences. Many such institutions take a proactive approach in preparing students for their sojourns, providing pre-departure orientations that cover logistical exigencies and, less commonly, intercultural communication awareness and skills training. However, no matter how wonderful the time passed abroad, if there are no opportunities after re-entry to their home countries for students to reflect upon their experiences or to integrate insights made abroad into their lives back home, then such sojourns may amount to nothing more than superficial cultural tourism. It is critical to provide not only pre-departure orientations before going abroad, but also programs after re-entry to students' home countries which encourage them to analyze their foreign experiences and the process of re-integration into their native cultures.

By leveraging the educational potential inherent in pre-departure and re-entry intercultural training, Bennett and Paige (2008, October) emphasized that educators can facilitate significant improvements in students' *intercultural learning*, which refers to acquiring increased awareness of the subjective world view of others, as well as oneself, and to developing greater ability to interact sensitively and competently across cultures. Intercultural learning—including the empathy, self-awareness, and culture-specific knowledge and skills that it encompasses—is, they contended, both transferable from one culture to another and can be generalized across cultural contexts.

Despite numerous potential benefits, few educational institutions provide re-entry education for their students. Therefore, the goals in this paper are to describe (1) the objectives and rewards of re-entry education, (2) how a re-entry education program was structured at the French university Telecom Lille 1, and (3) the educational methods and activities used in a course about Japanese culture which I, the author, taught as part of this program.

The literature described three goals of re-entry education. First, LaBrack (1993) argued that it is essential to "use the actual overseas experience as a behavioral/social text to be deciphered, analyzed, and finally melded with the student's ongoing pursuits and personal development" (p. 245). If students do not have the chance to integrate their foreign experiences with their present lives, or to lock in the advances in intercultural awareness and skills that they developed abroad, then such gains may be lost. Therefore, re-entry education is a golden opportunity to promulgate among students intercultural learning and the personal growth that it engenders.

A second goal of re-entry education is to help students cope with reverse culture shock—i.e., the transitional experience of readjusting to one's home culture—which can have a greater impact than culture shock (Adler, 1975). A third objective of re-entry education is for students to learn from the experiences and perspectives of other students who have studied abroad. By sharing stories of their sojourns as well as the struggles faced after returning home, students realize that they are not alone in feeling the challenges resulting from reverse culture shock.

Telecom Lille 1—located in Lille, France, is implementing a flagship re-entry education program in a European setting. Before studying abroad, students complete a thirty-hour introductory course in intercultural communication, thus receiving exposure to the basic concepts in the field. Then they spend two and a half months in one of 25 countries interning at companies and staying with host families. After returning to France, each student is required to take a one-week intensive class consisting of 25 contact hours at the Winter Institute of Intercultural Communication (WIIC).

The goals of my course, *Effective Intercultural Communication With Japanese People*, were that participants would (1) examine Japanese *subjective* (i.e., subconscious) culture (Bennett, 1998) and how to overcome common culture-based misunderstandings between Japanese and non-Japanese people, (2) reflect upon their previous experiences abroad and strategize how to use

the knowledge that they gained to improve their general intercultural communication skills, and (3) increase their self-cultural awareness by using concepts from the field of intercultural communication to explain French subjective culture.

The course was divided into a three-step simulation: pre-departure orientation, a one-week work trip to Japan, and re-entry to France. The simulation of working in Japan provided an opportunity for the students to experience Japan via their guided imaginations. Through the mutually-reinforcing processes of learning about Japan, reflecting upon their actual time abroad as well as their re-entry experiences in France, and acting as French cultural informants to the teacher, students had the chance to revisit and deepen their understanding of the concepts which they had learned in their original introductory course in intercultural communication. In other words, they could advance their mastery of concepts and skills that promote effective intercultural communication and actualize deeper self-understanding—thus helping to achieve the broader goals of re-entry education.

## References

Adler, P. S. (1975). The transitional experience: An alternative view of culture shock. *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 15* (4), 13-23.

Bennett, M. J. (1998). Intercultural communication: A current perspective. In M. J. Bennett (Ed.), *Basic concepts of intercultural communication* (pp. 1-34). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Bennett, M. J., & Paige, R. M. (2008, October). *Making cross-cultural intercultural: Conceptual history and current research of intercultural learning in study abroad.* Paper presented at the World Congress of the Society for Intercultural Training, Education, and Research (SIETAR), Granada, Spain.

LaBrack, B. (1993). The missing linkage: The process of integrating orientation and re- entry. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 241-280). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

# 14 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

# Seven: A collaborative creative writing activity

Christian Perry, Hokkaido University

本稿は、7人グループの英語学習者達がおこなう協働的物語創作の手法である「セブン」の概要を提示する。この手法は、グループの1人目の学習者から、100〜200単語から成る物語のチャプターをワープロ上で順次創作し、合計7人による創作文をもって1つの物語を完成させるというものである。そこでは外国語学習の現場では必ずしも最優先されない学習者間の協働、創造的思考、そして間違いを恐れずに書くことの練習・経験、という点が重視される。セブンでは、創作文の見直しや文法的な間違いの訂正が十分になされないという妥当な批判もある。しかしながら学習者達は、セブンを通じて他の学習者の文章や考えを注意深く読むだけでなく、失敗を過度に恐れずに作文する機会を得ることができる。したがって、他の学習方法で重視されるように、誤りのない言語を学習することも重要であるが、セブンでは学習者の間違いの訂正よりもむしろ、学習者の自由な発想による創作を通じた学習を促進するものである。

Collaborative Creative Writing (CCW) offers students the opportunity to tap their creativity and to practice composition on a word processor without encumbering the instructor with piles of paper to mark. In CCW, multiple authors create a story. Chapters are written by individual writers, each basing their chapter on the storyline of earlier chapters by other writers. This collaborative creative writing assignment is called *Seven*, a story of seven chapters, each 100 to 200 words, produced on a word processor. One story is written by seven students, who take turns adding a chapter. A class of 30 students would produce 30 stories,

each commenced by one student and completed by six others over the course of a semester.

For the beginning of the first chapter, students choose one of several prompts provided by the instructor, and continue with their own words. Here is a sample prompt:

> "I hate this family!" I yelled as I packed my bag. I had to get out of that house, but where could I go? I had saved some money, but not much. I needed a place to stay and a job.

The story then moves from student to student and grows chapter by chapter, as illustrated in Table 1.

CCW furthers pedagogical objectives that may get overlooked in the L2 classroom: collaboration, creative thinking, and written fluency.

### *Collaboration*

Collaborative writing has a clear advantage over solo authorship: the audience is larger and *more authentic* (Crusan, 2010, p. 140). One indicator of the authenticity of the audience is that CCW entails a close reading in order to continue the story.

A drawback of CCW is that its sequential format precludes revision, an essential part of the creative endeavor and of the writing process. Chapters are effectively written in stone since later chapters are based on earlier ones. If revision is a high priority in a class, then single-author creative writing would be more suitable but would lose the benefit of collaboration.

### *Creativity*

CCW is based on the believing game (also called *methodological believing)*, the disciplined practice of trying to be as welcoming or accepting as possible to every idea we encounter (Elbow, 2008). In the believing game, we temporarily withhold judgment, disagreement, and criticism, aspects of the doubting game. CCW asks writers to accept and build upon the ideas of others, who in turn have their ideas accepted unconditionally.

Creativity entails the search for something novel, as well as the concomitant risk of mistake and failure. As Ken Robinson observed, "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never produce anything original" (Robinson & Aronica, 2009, p. 74). This caveat notwithstanding, it may be hard for language students to embrace the pursuit of creative ends since school typically instills aversion to error first and foremost. An instructor can shift student focus by ignoring language error.

### *Fluency*

One striking feature of CCW is the absence of corrective feedback on student language. Many practitioners will be skeptical of the learning value of a non-assessed activity, but accuracy, albeit important, need not be the focus of every writing assignment. For example, teachers typically refrain from assessing student journals, common in writing and L2 classes. In this light, CCW could be regarded as a multi-author fictional journal.

CCW aims at promoting fluency, "writers' ability to produce a lot of language (or to read)

**Table 1. Progression of story from student to student**

| Assignment # | Student 1 | Student 2 | Student 3 | Student 4 | Student 5 | Student 6 | Student 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | | | | | | | **Chapter 7** |
| 6 | | | | | | **Chapter 6** | Chapter 6 |
| 5 | | | | | **Chapter 5** | Chapter 5 | Chapter 5 |
| 4 | | | | **Chapter 4** | Chapter 4 | Chapter 4 | Chapter 4 |
| 3 | | | **Chapter 3** | Chapter 3 | Chapter 3 | Chapter 3 | Chapter 3 |
| 2 | | **Chapter 2** | Chapter 2 | Chapter 2 | Chapter 2 | Chapter 2 | Chapter 2 |
| 1 | **Chapter 1** | Chapter 1 | Chapter 1 | Chapter 1 | Chapter 1 | Chapter 1 | Chapter 1 |

*Note*. This table shows students adding a chapter (in **boldface**) to the set of chapters that they receive from the previous student, then, passing the whole story on to the next student (arrows). Students also submit the chapter that they write to the instructor.

without excessive hesitations, blocks, and interruptions" (Casanave, 2004, p. 67). Because of the inverse relationship between fluency and accuracy, students cannot devote attention to both simultaneously. Accuracy usually takes precedence. Without the opportunity to work on fluency, students may not develop the ability to confidently generate prose. Moreover, corrective feedback underscores the shortcomings of a piece of writing. Assessing L2 work for accuracy may stultify creativity and motivation, and could make students more conservative in their creative expression. Within the context of one activity, students are freed of concerns over accuracy. Other writing assignments can promote accuracy.

**Christian Perry** has a penchant for eschewing bio data.

## References

Casanave, C. P. (2004). *Controversies in second language writing: Dilemmas and decisions in research and instruction*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Crusan, D. (2010). *Assessment in the second language writing classroom*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Elbow, P. (2008). *The believing game—methodological believing*. Retrieved from <works.bepress.com/peter_elbow/20>.

Robinson, K., & Aronica, L. (2009). The element: How finding your passion changes everything. London, England: Penguin.

# 16 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

# Ideological messages embedded in an EFL textbook

Misako Tajima, Seibi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School

本研究は日本の中学生用に作成されたある英語教科書のイデオロギー的メッセージをCritical Discourse Analysis (CDA)の手法を用いて明らかにすることを目的とした。分析対象は2005年に文部科学省から検定合格を受けた *Columbus 21 English Course* (C21) (東後他, 2006)である。この目的を遂行するために、C21の登場人物に焦点をあてた分析を試み、その後、「登場人物と題材選択によって確立されたアメリカ合衆国志向」と「日本文化と合衆国文化の対照的表象」という2つの特徴について議論した。最後に、C21における上述の志向や表象が実際の教室で特定の真実や知として正当化される危険性を指摘し、さらに、教室内言説実践を通じ、これらに挑戦し、抵抗することができるかもしれない可能性も探究した。

Although they may be in the minority in the fields of TESOL and applied linguistics, various researchers have investigated the politics of language education, specifically that of English Language Teaching (ELT) (Pennycook, 2001; Phillipson, 1992; Tollefson, 2000). It has also been maintained that textbooks used in education play a crucial role, not only in reflecting, but also in reproducing the social relations of power that exist outside classrooms (Blaut, 1993; Dendrinos, 1992; Gray, 2001).

This study aimed to reveal ideological messages embedded in an EFL textbook by using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1989, 1995). The textbook in question was *Columbus 21 English Course* (hereafter C21) (Togo, Ishikawa, Ota, Owada, Kanehara & Koizumi, 2006), which was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in 2005, and is currently used at junior high schools in Japan.

## Critical analysis of C21

The analysis here focused on the characters in C21. The findings were discussed in terms of the characters' (1) nationality and (2) personality, while occasionally making reference to the topics that appear throughout the texts.

### *Nationality*

C21 presents two main characters: a male student, Hiro, and a female student, Jenny. Hiro is Japanese, whereas Jenny is American. The inclusion of only Japanese and American nationalities among the main characters is reinforced by the existence of supporting characters; all of the supporting characters also come from Japan and the United States. The US-only orientation in establishing the main and supporting characters is closely connected to the subject matter in C21, which focuses on issues regarding Japan and the United States throughout the three volumes.

These findings showed that C21 provides students with exposure to "a limited section of the world" (Matsuda, 2002, p. 438), which may cause them to develop a biased viewpoint. It was also argued that the US-only orientation in C21 reflects the fact that in Japan *foreign country* is almost always equated with the United States (Nakamura, 1993). Simultaneously, there is a great possibility that this US-oriented discourse becomes *naturalized* (Fairclough, 1989, p. 92) through classroom discursive practice to the extent that students might assume that *foreign country* refers almost exclusively to the United States (Nakamura, 1993).

### *Personality*

The personality of each of the main characters is another feature that uncovered ideologies. In C21, Hiro and Jenny appear to have contrastive personalities. Hiro is described as being passive and poor at self-expression, whereas Jenny is active and good at self-expression. Moreover, while Hiro has a tendency to emphasize harmony, Jenny tends to fight for justice.

Such a contrast between the personalities of these characters is very similar to "the cultural dichotomization of the West versus the East" (Kubota, 1999, p. 15), which is often constructed in the fields of TESOL and applied linguistics. Referring to Foucault (1978), who suggests that "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (p. 100), Kubota (1999) points out that cultural dichotomies are constructed by discourses. Taking this argument into consideration, it can be said that contrasting Japanese and American personalities in an English textbook contributes to constructing and reproducing dichotomous labeling which promotes "the Othering, stereotyping, misrepresenting, and essentializing" (p. 15) of both cultures. Such cultural labeling in C21 may also result in its legitimation as particular truth and knowledge through classroom discursive practice, encouraging students to regard these labels as natural.

## Implications

As mentioned above, the discourse and cultural dichotomy in C21 might result in their legitimation as particular truth and knowledge in real classrooms. At the same time, however, the discourse and cultural dichotomy could be challenged and resisted by teachers' questioning them and providing their students with the opportunity to criticize them. According to Sunderland (1994), "[t]he most non-sexist textbook can become sexist in the hands of a teacher with sexist attitudes" (p. 64 in Sunderland, Abdul Rahim, Cowley, Leontzakou & Shattuck, 2000, p. 260). Conversely, *the most sexist* textbook can become *non-sexist* in the hands of a teacher with *non-sexist* attitudes. If this is taken into account, C21 can be used in alternative ways.

## Conclusion

This study, through the use of CDA, revealed C21's US-only orientation and dichotomous representation of Japanese and US culture. It was also pointed out that classroom discursive practice can either reproduce these features or challenge and resist them. Considering this, it can be suggested that research on a textbook is not sufficient without addressing the ways in which it is actually used in real classrooms. In brief, "[w]hat is done with a text is of equal importance" (Pennycook, 2007, p. 84). As the next step after critical analyses of a textbook, it is also important to explore teacher (or student) talk around the textbook. This would advance the project of challenge and resistance.

**Misako Tajima** is a teacher and the head of the English department at Seibi Gakuen Junior & Senior High School. Her research interests include sociology of language, critical applied linguistics and global Englishes. <tjm_misako@hotmail.co.jp>

## References

Blaut, J. M. (1993). *The colonizer's model of the world: Geographical diffusionism and Eurocentric history*. New York: Guilford Press.

Dendrinos, B. (1992). *The EFL textbook and ideology*. Athens: N.C. Grivas.

Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. London: Longman.

Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis*. London: Longman.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality, vol. 1: An introduction*. New York: Vintage Books.

Gray, J. (2001). The global coursebook in English language teaching. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalisation and language teaching* (pp. 151-167). London: Routledge.

Kubota, R. (1999). Japanese culture constructed by discourses: Implications for applied linguistics research and ELT. *TESOL Quarterly, 33*(1), 9-35.

Matsuda, A. (2002). "International understanding" through teaching world Englishes. *World Englishes, 21*(3), 436-440.

Nakamura, K. (1993). *Gaikokugo kyoiku to ideorogi* [Foreign language teaching and its ideologies]. Tokyo: Kindaibungeisha.

Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pennycook, A. (2007). *Global Englishes and transcultural flows*. London: Routledge.

Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sunderland, J. (Ed.). (1994). *Exploring gender: Questions and implications for English language education*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.

Sunderland, J., Abdul Rahim, F., Cowley, M., Leontzakou, C., & Shattuck, J. (2000). From bias "in the text" to "teacher talk around the text": An exploration of teacher discourse and gendered foreign language textbook texts. *Linguistics and Education, 11*(3), 251-286.

Togo, K., Ishikawa, K., Ota, H., Owada, K., Kanehara, M., & Koizumi, K. (Eds.). (2006). *Columbus 21 English course, 1-3*. Tokyo: Mitsumura Tosho.

Tollefson, J. W. (2000). Policy and ideology in the spread of English. In J. K. Hall & W. G. Eggington (Eds.), *The sociopolitics of English language teaching* (pp. 7-21). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

# 18 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

# Email exchange project in the college foreign language classrooms

Uchida, Ayumi, International Christian University

Mori, Sachiho, Aoyama Gakuin University

本稿では、米国州立大学の日本語コースの学生と日本の私立大学の英語コースの学生で行ったEメール交換の実践報告をし、その有効性と問題点を検証・考察する。本プロジェクトでは、両大学の学生をペアにし、興味のあることをそれぞれの学習言語で質問し、返信をもとに作文を書き、発表をした。終了時のアンケート調査によると、同世代の学生間のEメール交換がオーセンティックな外国語学習のためのコミュニケーションツールとなり、文化学習と自律学習を促すことが明らかとなった。一方、面識のない学生にEメール送信することへの不安やEメール交換が続かないなどの問題点もあった。これらの結果を踏まえ、今後の外国語学習におけるEメール交換の可能性と課題を考察する。

In recent years email exchange has been widely used in the foreign language classrooms (Greenfield, 2003; Muehleisen, 1997; O'Dowd, 2003; Sakar, 2001; Vinagre, 2005). Many studies reveal email exchange is effective to promote cross-cultural understanding and provide motivation to language learning (Greenfield; 2003, Sakar; 2001).

This paper reports the use and effects of an email exchange projects between American and Japanese college students. The purpose of this email project was to provide students with opportunities to communicate with speakers of their target language and have them realize that they can communicate using what they have learned.

This email exchange project was conducted between an American university and a Japanese university. Students at the American university were Japanese language learners in an intermediate level Japanese course. Students at the Japanese university were freshman in a CALL English course. Both the American university and the Japanese university basically followed the same procedure. Instructors paired an American student and a Japanese student by taking the topics they chose into consideration. First, students wrote a self-introduction essay in their target language, and brainstormed about what they want to ask their partner in class. After correcting the self-introduction essay and creating three questions to ask in their target language, they sent an email to their partner. After several email exchanges, each student wrote an essay based on the information they received from their partner, and they presented the essay in class.

After the project, a survey was conducted in both universities. The result of the survey at the Japanese university shows that most of the students enjoyed this project. The most common reason was because they were able to communicate with American students and learn about American people and culture. However, there were also some students who said they did not enjoy this project. The reasons were various, but those who did not like the project usually had technical problems. Some students preferred to send email from their mobile phones. Other students were not familiar with email and had difficulty typing English. Only a small group voiced these comments, but these technical problems are very important points that we need to consider. For the question *What was good for you about the email project?*, 40 students answered *can practice reading and writing English*; 46 students answered *can learn American culture*; and 12 students answered *can make an American friend*. For the question *Do you want to participate in an email project again?* 65 out of 81 students answered *yes*; 14 students answered *I do not know*; and 2 students answered *no*. The common reasons for *yes* were because they want to know more about the U.S., they want to communicate more with American people, and the email project motivates them to study English.

The result of the survey conducted at the American university shows that most of the students considered this project helpful in improving reading and writing skills. Students also answered that the project was effective to deepen their knowledge about Japanese culture and society. For the question *What was the most difficult part of this email project?*, the most common answer was writing and reading emails written in Japanese. The comments reveal that it took time for them to write emails respectfully and read emails including grammar and expressions they do not know. They also answered that it was intimidating to send emails and ask questions to unacquainted persons. For the question *What was the most enjoyable part of this email project?*, the number of students who answered communicating with Japanese students and reading emails from their partners was the largest. The most common comment about this project overall was that they consider this project effective to improve Japanese ability. There were also comments that said this project was a good opportunity to reflect on their Japanese learning and realize their improvement in Japanese.

In conclusion, according to the students' surveys and teachers' observations, this email project played an important role for students of authentic foreign language learning. The results of the survey show that students consider this email project helpful for improving their writing and reading skills while enjoying communication with their partners. This project was also successful in having students deepen their knowledge about their target language culture and society. In addition, this project was effec-

tive to make students reflect on their language learning and recognize their growth.

### References

Greenfield, R. (2003). Collaborative Email exchange for teaching secondary ESL: A case study in Hong Kong. *Language, Learning & Technology, 7*, 46-70.

Muehleisen, V. (1997). Projects using the internet in college English classes. *The Internet TESL Journal, 3*(6).

O'Dowd, R. (2003). Understanding the "other side": Intercultural learning in a Spanish-English Email exchange. *Language Learning & Technology, 7*, 118-144.

Sakar, A. (2001). The cross-cultural effects of electronic mail exchange on the Turkish University students of English as a Foreign Language. *CALL-EJ Online, 3*, 1.

Vinagre, M. (2005). Fostering language learning via email: An English - Spanish exchange. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 18*(5), 369-388.

# 20 | A TASTE OF JALT2010: EXCERPTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS

# Manga as a linguistic resource for learning

Giancarla Unser-Schutz,
Hitotsubashi University

近年において、マンガに対する関心が日本語学習を始める大きな理由となりつつある。その結果として、マンガを教材として活かそうとする動きが進んでいる。しかしながら、マンガが現実的かつ読みやすいと評価されている反面、マンガの言語的特徴の本格的な研究が行われてこなかったため、マンガを教材として活用するのに必要な知識が整っているとは言い難い。本論文は、著者が収集したコーパスで見た特徴を紹介することを通じて、マンガを教材として活用する長短を再び考える試みである。それに当たり、焦点を二点に置き議論を進める。第一はマンガの表記上の特徴とそれらがマンガ読書に及ぶ影響である。第二はマンガにおける女性語とステレオタイプとの関係である。マンガを教材として活用する動きを肯定的に捉えながら、マンガの言語的特徴を見直す必要性を訴える。

Japanese popular culture has increasingly become a reason for studying Japanese abroad, resulting in interest in using popular culture—and in particular, *manga* (comics) and *anime* (cartoons)—for language study (Kumano, 2010). This paper focuses on how *manga* has been presented as a possible tool, particularly given that their linguistic characteristics are largely to be examined, and offers context by introducing a popular *manga* corpus. Taking a critical stance towards the assumed ease of *manga*, this paper focuses on two points: unusual orthographic styles and gendered speech pattern. While supporting *manga* as a resource, this paper will argue that *manga*'s linguistic characteristics necessitate more consideration.

One observes two major approaches for using *manga* for educational purposes. The first is content-oriented, where *manga* are used to teach subjects like economics or history. The second approach is language-oriented, where *manga* are used for studying Japanese itself. While this paper concerns the latter approach, it still offers the chance to study Japanese within a cultural context. This is one of the advantages suggested for using *manga*, as they are assumed to reflect the "real" Japan. Other advantages include their low-cost, their entertainment value for students, sudents are not always positive about *manga* in the classroom, and with the number of words-per-page low, *manga* can be costly for their linguistic content. Their rich visual context also means linguistic dependency is low.

It is also unclear how to actually use *manga*, given the lack of comprehensive research on *manga*'s linguistic characteristics. One often

sees made-for-textbook *manga*, yet as controlled works, they are less complicated and less diverse than an authentic series. Made-for-textbook *manga* may also **miss an important point: students want the skills to read an authentic series.** More knowledge about language in *manga* is necessary for their effective use in the classroom, and real data—such as the corpus introduced here—is essential. The corpus includes the first three volumes of eight popular titles—four each from *shounen-manga* (boys' *manga*) and *shoujo-manga* (girls' *manga*)—for 579,261 characters. It includes all linguistic data found, categorized into lines, thoughts, narration, onomatopoeia, background text, background lines/thoughts, comments and titles.

Looking first at orthography, a characteristic of *manga* is how they describe spoken speech through the use of non-standard orthography, which may affect learners' processing (Cook & Bassetti, 2005). There are three major points to note. First, individual sentences are wrapped into small strings or fragmented over multiple bubbles, requiring readers to make accurate connections. Second, 22.08% of characters are orthographic symbols, with non-standard forms common (the space) and usually common forms uncommon (the *touten* "、"). Third, variation in scripts is common, with *hiragana* used most commonly (50.86%), and the same words are often written differently even within a series. While non-standard orthography is not unique to *manga*, its effect on how *manga* are read is yet unclear, and one cannot assume that *manga* will be easy. For example, while the higher use of the syllabaries may be easier for beginner readers, variation may make it difficult to recognize words derivable to single forms.

Second, **gendered language is a major characteristic** of Japanese and a point of argument in language education. While beginner students may find it difficult, advanced students may not seem natural without it. If language in *manga* is truly naturalistic, then they might be useful for learning gendered speech. To consider these points, the author conducted studies on personal pronouns and sentence final particles (SFPs) from lines, finding that gendered speech in *manga* paints a complicated picture. While personal pronouns patterned relatively realistically, SFP usages differed greatly by genre, especially for female characters. Female characters in *shoujo-manga* used neutral forms (42.42%/SFPs) and mildly male forms most commonly, similar to current young girls' speech. In comparison, female characters in *shounen-manga* used strongly feminine forms most commonly (45.64%), which are now largely in disuse (Okamoto, 1995). While *manga* may aim for realism, as fiction, one must expect some level of stereotyped speech forms, which may be important in character development (Kinsui, 2007). Genre appears to be an important factor, and it may need to be considered when choosing a series.

By looking at the above issues in detail, this paper aims to show that while using *manga* might get students engaged in new ways, their linguistic landscapes may not be as clear-cut as has been supposed. It may be necessary to actively consider how text is presented, and to reconsider its nature as a language model. Taking the time to talk about these points with students could be a good opportunity to think about how and why texts differ. Comics being an international medium, the points raised here may also be applicable to other languages, using either translated *manga* or non-Japanese comics.

## References

Cook, V. J., & Bassetti, B. (2005). *Second language writing systems*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Kinsui, S. (2007). Kindai nihon manga no gengo. In S. Kinsui (ed.), *Yakuwari-go kenkyuu no chihei* (pp. 97-108). Tokyo: Kurosio Shuppan.

Kumano, N. (2010). Nihongo-gakushuusha to anime/manga. In *Hiroshima Daigaku Ryuugaku-sei Sentaa Kiyou* (*20*), 89-103.

Okamoto, S. (1995). "Tasteless" Japanese: Less "feminine" speech among young Japanese women. In K. Hall and M. Bucholtz (eds.), *Gender Articulated: Language and the socially constructed self* (pp. 297-325). New York: Routledge.

**Advert**