

The Language Teacher

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

Feature Articles

- 3** Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions
About a Course Including Conversation
Practice with Teacher Training
Students from Abroad

Wendy Tada

- 9** The Mirage of Progress? A Longitudinal
Study of Japanese Students' L2 Oral
Grammar

Robert Long & Hiroaki Watanabe

TLT Interviews

- 17** An Interview with David Barker

Robert Swier

- 21** An Interview with Gregory Strong

Jeff Wastila

My Share

- 23** Classroom ideas from Claire Ryan,
Elizabeth J. Lange, David Shimamoto,
and Benoit Forgues

JALT Praxis

- 28** *TLT* Wired
29 Younger Learners
34 Book Reviews
37 Teaching Assistance
39 The Writers' Workshop
41 SIG Focus
42 JALT Focus



The Japan Association for Language Teaching

Volume 45, Number 2 • March / April 2021

ISSN 0289-7938 • ¥1,900 • *TLT* uses recycled paper

JALT Publications

JALT Publications Board Chair

Caroline Handley
jaltpubs.pubchair@jalt.org

TLT Editorial Staff

- ▶ TLT EDITORS
Nicole Gallagher
Paul Lyddon
jaltpubs.tlt.ed@jalt.org
- ▶ TLT SENIOR EDITOR
Theron Muller
- ▶ TLT ASSISTANT EDITOR
Peter Ferguson
- ▶ TLT JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDITOR
杉野 俊子 (Toshiko Sugino)
jaltpubs.tlt.ed.j@jalt.org
- ▶ TLT JAPANESE LANGUAGE ASSOC. EDITOR
植田麻実 (Mami Ueda)
jaltpubs.tlt.ed.j2@jalt.org
- ▶ TLT WEB ADMIN & EDITOR
Malcolm Swanson
jaltpubs.tech@jalt.org

JALT Praxis Editors

- ▶ TLT INTERVIEWS
Torrin Shiono & James Nobis
jaltpubs.tlt.interviews@jalt.org
- ▶ MY SHARE
Steven Asquith & Lorraine Kipling
jaltpubs.tlt.my.share@jalt.org
- ▶ TLT WIRED
Paul Raine
jaltpubs.tlt.wired@jalt.org
- ▶ BOOK REVIEWS
Robert Taerner & Stephen Case
jaltpubs.tlt.reviews@jalt.org
- ▶ PUBLISHERS' REVIEW COPIES LIAISON
Julie Kimura & Ryan Barnes
jaltpubs.tlt.pub.review@jalt.org
*School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences,
Mukogawa Women's University, 11-68 Koshien
Kyuban-cho, Nishinomiya, Hyogo 663-8179,
JAPAN*
- ▶ YOUNGER LEARNERS
Mari Nakamura & Marian Hara
jaltpubs.tlt.yl@jalt.org
- ▶ TEACHING ASSISTANCE
David McMurray
jaltpubs.tlt.ta@jalt.org
- ▶ THE WRITERS' WORKSHOP
Jerry Talandis Jr.
jaltpubs.tlt.writers@jalt.org
- ▶ OLD GRAMMARIANS
Scott Gardner
jaltpubs.tlt.old.gram@jalt.org

JALT Focus Editors

- ▶ SIG FOCUS
Robert Morel & Satchie Haga
jaltpubs.tlt.sig.focus@jalt.org
- ▶ CONFERENCE REPORTS EDITOR
Andy Tweed
- ▶ JALT NOTICES EDITOR
Malcolm Swanson
jaltpubs.tlt.focus@jalt.org

Production

- ▶ COPYEDITORS & PROOFREADERS
Rebecca Babirye, Casey Bean, Brian Birdsell, Brian Dubin, Robert Dykes, Jeremy Eades, Chris Edelman, Decha Hongthong, Zoe Kenny, Robert Kerrigan, David Marsh, Harmony Martin, Colin Mitchell, Michael Phillips, Nick Roma, Miho Tajima, Alexandra Terashima, Kevin Thomas
- ▶ 和文校正・翻訳者
(JAPANESE PROOFREADERS & TRANSLATORS)
宮尾 真理子 (Mariko Miyao)
中安 真敏 (Masatoshi Nakayasu)
阿部 恵美佳 (Emika Abe)
迫 和子 (Kazuko Sako)
伊藤 文彦 (Fumihiko Ito)
野沢 恵美子 (Emiko Nozawa)
- ▶ DESIGN & LAYOUT
Pukeko Graphics, Kitakyushu
- ▶ PRINTING
Koshinsha Co., Ltd., Osaka

Review

- ▶ TLT EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Eric Bray – Yokkaichi University
Steve Cornwell – Osaka Jogakuin University
Scott Gardner – Okayama University
Chiaki Iwai – Hiroshima City University
Todd Jay Leonard – University of Teacher Education Fukuoka
Robert Long – Kyushu Institute of Technology
Laura MacGregor – Gakushuin University
Bern Mulvey – Arizona State University
Tim Murphy – Kanda University of International Studies
Jonathan Picken – Tsuda University
Stephen M. Ryan – Sanyo Gakuen University
Dax Thomas – Meiji Gakuin University
- ▶ ADDITIONAL READERS
Dale Brown, Carol Bormann-Begg, Peter Clements, John Eidswick, Naomi Fujishima, Austin Gardiner, Philip Head, James Hobbs, Brandon Kramer, Aleda Krause, Gerry McLellan, Yoko Okayama, Donald Patterson, Greg Rouault, Vick Ssali, Toshiko Sugino, Jerry Talandis Jr., Blake Turnbull, York Davison Weatherford, Yoko Uchida, Jennifer Yphantides

JALT Journal

- ▶ JALT JOURNAL EDITOR
Gregory Glasgow
jaltpubs.jj.ed@jalt.org
- ▶ JALT JOURNAL ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Dennis Koyama
jaltpubs.jj.ed2@jalt.org
- ▶ JALT JOURNAL JAPANESE EDITOR
Yo In'nami
jaltpubs.jj.ed.j@jalt.org
- ▶ JALT JOURNAL JAPANESE ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Natsuko Shintani
- ▶ JALT JOURNAL REVIEWS EDITOR
Greg Rouault
jaltpubs.jj.reviews@jalt.org
- ▶ JALT JOURNAL ASSISTANT REVIEWS EDITOR
Bill Snyder

Post-Conference Publication

- ▶ EDITORS-IN-CHIEF
Peter Clements
Rick Derrah
Bern Mulvey
jaltpubs.pcp.ed@jalt.org
- ▶ INCOMING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Peter Ferguson

JALT Publications PR

John Gayed
jaltpubs.pr@jalt.org

Peer Support Group

- ▶ PSG COORDINATORS
Rich Bailey
Anna Husson Isozaki
jaltpubs.peer.group@jalt.org
- ▶ PSG MEMBERS
Rich Bailey, Paul Beaufait, Steve McGuire, Theron Muller, Brandon Kramer, Dawn Lucovich, Anna Husson Isozaki, Joshua Myerson, Jarwin K. Martin, Brian Gallagher, Jean-Pierre J. Richard, Vikki Williams, Daniel Bates, Adam Pearson, Daniel Hooper, Hanon Junn, Amanda Yoshida, Veronica Dow, Suwako Uehara, Jerry Talandis Jr., Nathaniel Carney, Prateek Sharma, Kinsella Valies

JALT Central Office

Urban Edge Bldg. 5F, 1-37-9 Taito,
Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016
t: 03-3837-1630; f: 03-3837-1631
jco@jalt.org

Contents

In this month's issue . . .

Feature Articles

- ▶ Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions About a Course Including Conversation Practice with Teacher Training Students from Abroad 3
- ▶ The Mirage of Progress? A Longitudinal Study of Japanese Students' L2 Oral Grammar 9

TLT Interviews

- ▶ An Interview with David Barker 17
- ▶ An Interview with Gregory Strong 21

JALT Praxis

- ▶ My Share 23
- ▶ TLT Wired 28
- ▶ Younger Learners 29
- ▶ Book Reviews 34
- ▶ Recently Received 36
- ▶ Teaching Assistance 37
- ▶ The Writers' Workshop 39
- ▶ SIG Focus 41
- ▶ JALT Focus 42

Other

- ▶ JALT Membership Information 44

JALT Publications Online

Material from *The Language Teacher* (TLT) and *JALT Journal* (JJ) published in the last six months requires an access password. These passwords are only available to current JALT members. To access the latest issues of *TLT* and *JJ*:

<https://jalt.org/main/publications>
To explore our unrestricted archives:
<https://jalt-publications.org>

Follow us for the latest information and news on JALT Publications:

 facebook.com/jaltpublications

 [#jalt_pubs](https://twitter.com/jalt_pubs)

*Learning to Teach
Teaching to Learn*

Greetings, everyone. Welcome to the March/April issue of *The Language Teacher*. As this is my first issue since becoming Co-editor, please allow me to briefly introduce myself. My name is Paul Lyddon, and I teach in the School of International Relations at the University of Shizuoka. I have been an active member of JALT since 1997, most recently serving as an Additional Reader for *TLT* for the past 7 years. While I still have much to learn in my new position, I want to thank former Co-editor (now Senior Editor) Theron Muller, continuing Co-editor Nicole Gallagher, and the rest of the *TLT* editorial and publishing staff for their patient efforts to make my transition as smooth as possible.

It is now my honor to introduce to you the current issue of *TLT*. Rather than the standard one Feature Article and one Reader's Forum article, this issue instead contains two Feature Articles. The first is from **Wendy Tada**, who reports on the potential of informal conversation practice with foreign exchange students to improve Japanese pre-service English language teachers' preparation for more actively communicating with non-Japanese assistant language teachers in their eventual teaching practice.

Our second Feature Article this issue is from **Robert Long** and **Hiroaki Watanabe**, whose corpus-based discovery of lackluster longitudinal development of Japanese university learners' grammatical accuracy in L2 oral English suggests a need for greater teacher and learner awareness of persistent grammatical errors and conscious efforts toward their correction.

In addition to these two articles, this issue includes an interview with David Barker by **Robert Swier** and another with Gregory Strong by **Jeff Wastila**. Don't forget to check out our many regular JALT Praxis columns, such as My Share, *TLT* Wired, Book Reviews, Teaching Assistance, Writers' Workshop, and SIG Focus, as well.

In closing, I would like to thank the content authors, reviewers, copyeditors, proofreaders, translators, and all the many other *TLT* volunteer contributors, without whose untold time and energy this publication would not be possible. Finally, to all our readers, I hope you enjoy the issue and find it useful.

Paul Lyddon, TLT Co-editor

Continued over



TLT Editors: Nicole Gallagher, Paul Lyddon
TLT Japanese Language Editor: Toshiko Sugino

皆さま、こんにちは。TLTの3月4月号へようこそ。今回が共同編集者に就任して初めての号になりますので、少し自己紹介をさせていただきます。私はPaul Lyddonと申し、静岡県立大学の国際関係学部で教鞭をとっております。1997年からJALTで活動の場を広げてきて、7年前からはTLTの査読者の一人としても活動して参りました。この場をお借りして、共同編集者として学ぶべき事の多い私の就任に、スムーズな橋渡しをして下さった前共同編集者(現編集長)のTheron Muller、共同編集者のNicole Gallagher、そしてTLTの編集・出版スタッフ全員に、お礼を申し上げます。

TLTの最新号を読者の皆さまに紹介できることを大変うれしく思います。Feature ArticleとReader's Forum Articleが1本ずつという従来の号とは違い、本号は、Feature Articleを2本掲載しています。1本目のFAでは、Wendy Tadaが英語教育の場で、ALT(外国語指導助手)とより積極的にコミュニケーションを取れる日本人英語教師を育成するために、日本人の教育実習生と交換留学生との即興の会話練習に焦点を当てたクラスの有効性について報告しています。

2本目のFeature Articleでは、Robert LongとHiroaki Watanabeが、日本人大学生の英語の発話には文法の正確さの長期的発達が鈍いという点に関してコーパスを使用して調査しています。その結果、持続する文法エラーへの意識とその訂正への意識的なゆめぬ努力が、教師も学習者も今以上に必要であると示唆されています。

これら2本の論文に加えて、本号ではRobert SwierによるDavid BarkerへのインタビューとさらにJeff Wastilaに

よるGregory Strongへのインタビューも掲載しています。通常のMy Share、TLT Wired、Book Reviews、Teaching Assistance、Writers' Workshop、SIG Focus、そしてOld GrammariansなどのJALT Praxis columnsも忘れないで下さい。

最後に、著者、査読者、編集者、校正者、翻訳者さらに多くのTLTボランティアの皆さまに改めてお礼を申し上げます。皆さまのご尽力がなければ本号は出来なかったことでしょう。読者の皆さま、本号をお楽しみに、お役に立てますことを願います。

Paul Lyddon, TLT Co-editor



The JALT Peer Support Group (PSG)

aims to collaboratively assist writers in working through the writing process in order to develop their manuscripts to a (hopefully) publishable level. Our experienced Peer Readers will do their best to provide you with feedback and suggestions to improve content, clarity, and organization. However, they do not usually edit for grammar, punctuation, etc. as part of the process.

Submitting a Paper for Review

Please visit <https://jalt-publications.org/contact> to start the process. Once a paper is submitted, it may take a month or more for two rounds of feedback.

Becoming a PSG Peer Reader

PSG is always recruiting new Peer Readers! Benefits include: improving your writing skills, learning more about the academic publishing process, networking, and providing a valuable service to the academic community.

Please contact PSG at jaltpubs.peer.group@jalt.org to find out about becoming a Peer Reader.

Submitting material to The Language Teacher

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. For specific guidelines, and access to our online submission system, please visit our website:

<https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/submissions>

To contact the editors, please use the online contact form listed below, or use the email addresses listed on the inside front cover of this issue of TLT.

<https://jalt-publications.org/contact>

JALT Publications Copyright Notice

All articles in our publications and on this site are copyright© 1996-2019 by JALT and their respective authors and may be redistributed provided that the articles remain intact with referencing information and the JALT copyright notice clearly visible. Under no circumstances may any articles be resold or redistributed for compensation of any kind without prior written permission from JALT.

All other content in our publications, including complete issues, is copyright© 1996-2019 by JALT, and may not be redistributed without prior consent.



JALT2021 – Reflections and New Perspectives

Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions About a Course Including Conversation Practice with Teacher Training Students from Abroad

Wendy Tada

Hyogo University of Teacher Education

<https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT45.2-1>

This study aimed to identify pre-service teachers' views and experiences after participating in a compulsory communication course including impromptu conversation practice with exchange students as well as to make recommendations for future courses by understanding their views through their prior experiences. Their past experiences are extremely likely to influence their ability to communicate with assistant language teachers (ALTs) in Japanese schools especially in relation to impromptu conversations. Thus, in 2019, a communication course was developed for first-year pre-service teachers that included impromptu conversation practice for three lessons with six teacher training students (TTSs) on MEXT scholarships and two exchange students. After the course, Japanese students completed a survey and the results indicated that due to the conversation practice many students grasped a better understanding of their language ability, gained motivation to communicate with foreigners, and most students felt three or more lessons are suitable for such practice. The results underscore the need for classes focusing on impromptu conversation practice to better prepare pre-service teachers to work with ALTs.

本研究は、交換留学生と即興で行う会話練習を含む、必修のコミュニケーションコースを受講した教育実習生たちの経験や見解等を調査し、その調査結果から得られる教育的示唆を明らかにすることを目的としている。教育実習生たちの事前の学習経験は、実際の教育実習で彼らが外国語指導助手 (ALT) とコミュニケーションをとることができる能力、特に即興でやりとりすることができる能力に、きわめて大きな影響を与えると予想される。それゆえ、筆者は、2019年に交換留学生2人と日本の文部科学省 (MEXT) の資金援助を受けている教員研修留学生 (TTS) 6人が参加する3コマ (1コマ90分) の会話レッスンを含むコミュニケーションコースを開設し、同コースに参加した1年生の教育実習生27人に対して調査を行った。その調査結果によれば、留学生との会話練習は、多くの学生に自分の言語能力をより良く理解させ、外国人とコミュニケーションを図ろうとする意欲を向上させるものであった。また、大部分の学生は3コマ以上の会話レッスンが適切であると感じていた。この調査結果は、ALTと将来一緒に授業をする教育実習生のレベルを向上させるためには、即興で行う会話練習に焦点を当てたクラスが必要であることを強く示している。

Current Level of English Teachers' Communicative Skills

Due to changes to the Course of Study Guidelines (MEXT, 2018) and the introduction of additional points for English skills by 42 boards of education when they recruit new elementary school teachers

(Minetoshi & Doi, 2017), pre-service and in-service teachers have been encouraged to re-examine their English proficiency levels. Illustrating this trend, a 2016 study reported that 32% of junior high school English teachers and 62% of high school English teachers had passed Grade Pre 1 level of Eiken (CEFR B2 level), indicating a small increase compared to the previous year (MEXT, 2017a). However, the same study also showed that, across all types of high school English courses, an average of roughly 55% of teachers used English for less than half of their class time, and only 11% of them used it for more than three quarters of the time (MEXT, 2017a). In short, greater teacher test proficiency does not necessarily correspond to an increase in in-class English usage. To this end, what Japanese classroom teachers really need is teacher training programs that provide opportunities to use English as a medium of communication rather than a mere target of instruction.

Currently, English teacher training courses mainly aim at providing pre-service teachers with teaching expertise. However, Tsuji and Swanson (2017) claim that for many non-native teachers "acquiring a sufficient level of speaking proficiency is a primary issue" (p. 131). They go on to suggest that teachers need to practice improvisation to develop speaking skills, and recent research (e.g., Yoshida et al., 2020) has tended to focus on developing impromptu conversation skills of students, mainly due to the new guidelines (MEXT, 2017b) that clearly require teachers to include impromptu communication practice from junior high school. Consequently, English teacher training should also include more opportunities to practice impromptu communication, especially to reduce anxiety and to increase teachers' confidence to speak in front of classes with ALTs.

Pre-service Teachers' Opportunities to Practice Impromptu Communication

Unlike students in other types of courses, pre-service teachers of English have a genuine need to

use English to communicate with ALTs. However, without opportunities to practice their English use, teachers at various levels often lack confidence, feel anxious about impromptu conversations, and worry about the appropriateness or accuracy of their English (Tanabe, 2011), and such factors can become language barriers that make it difficult to establish good team teaching relationships (Fukuda et al., 2013). Since communicative language teaching (CLT) techniques are often not effectively implemented in English classrooms in Japan (Rushton, 2019), students often have limited opportunities to regularly experience both controlled and free communication practice within their classes, for a variety of reasons, such as pressure to complete textbook content, frequent testing, and language practice focusing on accuracy more than fluency. This means impromptu communication practice is often either relegated to short tasks not linked to the main content of English classes or else focused on in classes with native English-speaking teachers, rather than implemented as a regular activity aimed at fostering impromptu speaking skills. Thus, pre-service teachers need to learn ways to teach communication including impromptu conversation practice and to experience impromptu conversation practice either during their education courses or by studying abroad.

Japanese Students' Interest in Studying Abroad

Opportunities to communicate with English speakers occur not only within courses but also during study or travel abroad. According to the OECD, only 1% of university students from Japan study abroad (OECD, 2018), and this percentage is not increasing even with the 2013 launching of the government-sponsored Tobitate! (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad Initiative (MEXT, n.d.). This may be linked to a variety of factors, such as safety concerns, the perceived value of studying abroad, financial limitations, timing of job hunting, views of educators, and language ability concerns (Kobayashi, 2018). However, many universities have invested an increasing amount of time in developing partnerships with universities abroad, international exchange programs, special events, and language exchange opportunities within their universities to support the government's aim to internationalize universities (MEXT, 2012). One of the best ways to ensure that large numbers of students experience real opportunities to communicate in English is by including opportunities within compulsory courses. If conversation practice with students from abroad within compulsory communication courses increases, a larger number of pre-service teachers will be

able to experience more spontaneous communication practice in English even if they are unable to study abroad.

TTS Exchange Students Doing Research in Japan with Teaching Experience

Every year MEXT provides scholarships for graduate-level exchange students to carry out research at approximately 50 designated universities in Japan. These exchange students are referred to as *teacher training students* (TTSs). TTSs are required to have at least five years of experience as teachers or as teacher trainers in their home countries. They must also be under 35 years of age as well as meet certain other conditions (MEXT, 2019). The MEXT scholarship allows them to attend a Japanese university to conduct research on a predetermined research topic. Since one of the aims of the scholarship is to “foster human resources who will become a bridge of friendship between the grantee's country and Japan” (MEXT, 2019, p. 1), these visiting students have the potential not only to build relationships with pre-service teachers but also to become valuable contacts for arranging cultural exchange activities after returning to their home countries. Hence, due to their knowledge, experience, teacher-like qualities, the potential to be useful future contacts for international exchange, and proficiency in English, TTSs are ideal interlocutors to interact with Japanese students studying to be teachers. An additional benefit is that many of these exchange students come from developing countries that have diplomatic relations with Japan. For Japanese students, who are often unaware of the education systems in those countries, such an opportunity enables them to learn about different education systems, which fosters more authentic communication. However, the potential to include TTSs in compulsory English communication courses has been surprisingly overlooked. Unlike regular exchange students, who must earn a set number of credits, TTSs have more flexible schedules, which means they can join a limited number of English communication courses with relatively little difficulty. On the other hand, arranging their participation in courses does require the cooperation of university staff who can inform TTSs of such courses. With these factors in mind, the aim of the present study was to design and implement a compulsory communication English course with mainly TTSs and to determine its impact on pre-service teachers' communication skills and on their views of engaging in impromptu English speaking practice with exchange students.

Research Questions

This study was guided by three research questions:

- RQ1. What background factors regarding Japanese pre-service teachers should be known before developing conversation classes with TTSs?
- RQ2. What are Japanese pre-service teachers' perceptions of their experiences with TTSs within a compulsory English course?
- RQ3. How can courses be improved according to Japanese pre-service teachers' perceptions of their experiences with TTSs?

Participants

For this study, 27 first-year undergraduate students at a national university for teacher education participated in a specially designed course and then completed a survey. According to their responses, approximately two-thirds of the students were female, and approximately half were considering a career in elementary school education. Furthermore, most respondents considered reading to be their strongest English skill, and two-thirds of them indicated that they had passed the 2nd grade of Eiken.

Implemented Course

The participants enrolled in a compulsory English communication course for first-year undergraduate students. The course was designed by the researcher and aimed to (a) improve the English level of students who may need to work with ALTs; (b) practice a range of speaking activities on useful themes for teachers; and (c) improve their ability to ask and answer questions. For three lessons, one teacher training student (TTS) joined the class from each of the following six countries: Malawi, Morocco, Guatemala, Myanmar, Indonesia, and Gabon. Two regular exchange students, one each from Taiwan and the Czech Republic, also participated in the study. At least one regular exchange student and all six TTSs were present in each class, and all attended on a voluntary basis. In the first lesson, the Japanese students were divided into groups, the membership of which was kept the same for all three lessons. Each group talked to two students from abroad for approximately 40 minutes each, during weeks 5, 10, and 11. Thus, each group was able to talk to a total of six students from abroad by the end of the three lessons. Each time they met a new exchange student or TTS, everyone was required to introduce themselves and talk about the positive and negative aspects of education within his or her own country

and to ask questions. In the lessons leading up to the three lessons, the Japanese students had practiced self-introductions and received information about the JET Programme and team teaching with ALTs to develop their understanding about why they needed to be able to speak English in an impromptu way. To facilitate conversation, all students were provided with paper for taking notes and a list of 23 useful words related to education in Japanese and English. Words on that list included "compulsory education," "school uniforms," "school events," "club activities," "discipline," "bullying," "teaching practice," "homework," and "cram schools." For assessment purposes, the Japanese students were required to record information about the good and bad points of education in three countries, which they then used to complete a chart to show if they were able to gain information in English successfully or not. Thus, several lessons in the course focused on preparatory and practice tasks, and these preceded the impromptu conversation practice and the assessment task.

Data Collection and Analysis

At the end of the first semester in 2019, the Japanese students completed a survey in Japanese. The survey covered basic personal information, previous experiences with foreigners, future teaching level, perceptions of their conversation experiences with TTSs and opinions regarding future courses. Nine of the survey questions comprised a 4-point Likert scale including responses for "agree," "somewhat agree," "somewhat disagree," and "disagree," and four were open-ended.

The data were analyzed in three stages. First, the survey results were calculated as percentages. Next, the comments from the open-ended questions were organized into categories to clarify general patterns in students' perceptions. Finally, benefits and recommendations for such classes were categorized and ranked.

Results and Discussion

Three questions aimed to obtain information about the pre-service teachers' past experiences using English with foreigners in order to plan suitable classes with TTSs. As can be seen in Table 1, roughly half of the students agreed or somewhat agreed that they had experienced a sustained conversation privately with a foreigner for more than 10 minutes. Although the first two items on the survey could have been worded as yes/no questions, to avoid potential student difficulty judging the length of a 10-minute conversation, a 4-point Likert scale was used. Also, it is important to note that this survey was carried

out at the end of the course, which means that some respondents may have been referring to the new experiences and friendships they had gained during the course since at least two groups of Japanese students were observed exchanging LINE information at the end of the classes.

Table 1. Experience Talking to a Foreigner Privately for More Than 10 Minutes (N=27)

Response	% of Responses
Agree	37%
Somewhat agree	11%
Somewhat disagree	22%
Disagree	30%

Secondly, information was requested about the students' experiences speaking directly with a foreigner for more than 10 minutes during high school. Table 2 shows that one-third of the respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with this statement. This result implies that their conversations with ALTs during high school were generally limited, which means they may feel uncomfortable or have some trouble maintaining communication with foreigners in English.

Table 2. Experience Talking to a Foreigner Privately for More Than 10 Minutes During High School (N=27)

Response	% of Responses
Agree	22.2%
Somewhat agree	11.1%
Somewhat disagree	22.2%
Disagree	44.4%

Additionally, only four respondents had experienced studying in a foreign country. This result is not particularly surprising, but the overall findings of this study indicate that most respondents had few opportunities to engage in sustained conversations with a foreigner. However, this study did not include questions about foreign travel or English lessons outside of school time, which may be an additional factor worth considering.

To investigate the second research question, several survey questions aimed to obtain information about pre-service teachers' perceptions of their experiences communicating with the students from abroad. Firstly, the survey results showed that all

respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that they enjoyed working in small groups with individual international students, which shows that the activity was fun. They also revealed that it was a valuable learning experience and that it helped them improve their confidence and attitude towards using and learning English. For example, students wrote that:

Up until now, I was concerned with whether or not my English was correct or not when I talked, but I became able to talk without being concerned. (Female Student A)

I was happy because I could communicate with the exchange students using English and it made me want to study more. (Female Student B)

Within the limits of my knowledge, there were many chances to speak about various things which made it a good experience. (Male Student A)

Overall, the respondents indicated reduced anxiety and successful communication were the key factors that had a positive effect on their motivation, confidence, and overall mindset.

Furthermore, the survey also revealed that over two-thirds of the respondents believed that their awareness regarding their English skills had changed from the three conversation classes. For example, two responses are provided below:

Unlike the other members in my group who were able to properly communicate their opinions with the exchange students, I was unable to do so. I want to improve my English ability. (Female Student C)

I am confident about my reading skills but I felt my listening and speaking skills are not sufficient. (Female Student D)

Despite many respondents indicating greater motivation to practice speaking in English, a few noted that they continued to find spontaneous conversations challenging for their English level. Thus, they ended the course with greater awareness of their English language proficiency and understanding of the need to practice speaking more.

The final research question aimed to determine how such courses can be improved according to students' perceptions of their communicative experiences with TTSs. To start with, the pre-service teachers were asked about the kind of activities they would like to do with TTSs, which are outlined in Table 3. Clearly, most respondents were interested in simply communicating with TTSs, but it is unclear whether they would have preferred topics other than self-introductions and discussions about

education. Nevertheless, the results strongly confirm that pre-service teachers are keen to practice English conversation with students from abroad in compulsory communication courses.

Table 3. Preferred Activities with Teacher Training Students (N=27)

Activities	Total Number of Responses
Conversation	22
Short trip	2
Language Games	1
No comment	2

The survey also included a question on the preferred number of times in a 15-week course pre-service teachers would like to have conversation lessons with TTSs. Thirteen respondents indicated that five or more lessons would be ideal and 11 answered that they would like at least three. In short, Japanese pre-service teachers appear to be keen to have impromptu conversation practice with students from abroad. Unfortunately, the respondents' request for three or more lessons may be difficult to achieve since TTSs are volunteers, who may be less willing to join more than three classes or classes in the second semester due to their scholastic commitments. Thus, despite Japanese pre-service teachers' expressed interest in communicating with TTSs, providing them with the desired number of such opportunities may be challenging.

In addition to the number of lessons to include, the topics for discussion with TTSs also require careful consideration. In this study, the conversation lessons focused on two key topics: self-introductions and education. Most respondents commented that they were able to express themselves sufficiently within the allocated conversation time, which made some students feel they had experienced successful conversations. Also, most students did not appear to struggle much despite the relatively long duration of each conversation. Several students remarked that this was partly because the TTSs, who are experienced teachers, regularly supported the flow of the conversations. Furthermore, the list of education terms provided in Japanese and English probably helped the groups move smoothly from one topic to another. If these points are taken into consideration, the topics were arguably ideal for this group of students.

Conclusion

Preparing Japanese pre-service teachers for their future workplaces and especially for team-teaching with ALTs can be challenging. Opportunities for Japanese students to interact with foreigners in Japanese universities has increased since most universities have tried to implement internationalization programs, which have often proved to be successful with the limited number of Japanese students who choose to participate in them. Also, over the past 10 years, the number of international students at higher educational institutions in Japan has increased to the point of reaching 208,901 in 2019 (JASSO, 2019), largely due to the Japanese government's efforts to internationalize universities (MEXT, 2012). However, if only a limited number of students participate in such initiatives, then the number of pre-service teachers who have had authentic interaction in English while studying at university will also continue to be limited. Thus, university educators need to find ways to ensure pre-service students can gain experiences to not only better understand and develop their language skills but also expand their understanding of other cultures and develop friendships too.

If university educators are interested in involving TTSs or other types of exchange students in their lessons, several points should be considered. Firstly, as the results of this study suggest, small group conversation practice with TTSs over three or more lessons can provide students with a good opportunity to practice using English in a spontaneous way, and such interaction can be enjoyable and motivating for the students. Secondly, courses providing opportunities for Japanese students to speak to foreigners should include preparatory lessons to enhance confidence and review communication strategies to facilitate maximum participation. Furthermore, preparing students by preselecting topics and providing a word list can assist both the Japanese students and the TTSs since they can refer to the word list to initiate or maintain conversations. Finally, teachers who implement conversation lessons with TTSs may need to substitute and talk about education from their country if a TTS is absent in order to maintain the prearranged rotation order of TTSs with the groups.

The results of this study suggest that few first-year undergraduate students studying to be teachers have had sustained shared conversations with foreigners, but they could clearly benefit from authentic conversation practice with TTSs. For example, by experiencing successful communication with non-native English speakers using English, the participants in this study developed an awareness of

their English skills that helped many of them develop a more positive mindset. By including such experiences in compulsory courses, more pre-service teachers will be better prepared for communicating with ALTs before they start teaching in schools.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Takeyoshi Takashima, who was previously appointed to the Global Education Center of Hyogo University of Teacher Education, as well as Joan Kuroda for checking the original manuscript, and Hiroshi Oshima for checking the original abstract. Furthermore, I am also grateful for Tatsuhiro Yoshida's insightful comments, too.

References

- Fukuda, S., Fennelly, M., & Luxton, R. (2013). Team-teaching Relationships in Japanese English Classrooms: An attitudinal survey. *SELES Bulletin*, 32, 1–15.
- JASSO (2019). *International Students in Japan 2018*. https://www.jasso.go.jp/en/about/statistics/intl_student/_icsFiles/afiedfile/2019/04/19/data18_brief_e.pdf
- Kobayashi, A. (May 29, 2018). Why Are Fewer Young Japanese Studying Abroad? *Nippon.com*. <https://www.nippon.com/en/currents/d00390/why-are-fewer-young-japanese-studying-abroad.html>
- Minetoshi, I. & Doi, S. (2017, July 30). 小学校教員採用、英語力で優遇 68教委中、42教委で (Shōgakkō kyōin saiyō, eigoryoku de yūgū, roku jyū hachi kyōichū, yon jyū ni kyōi de) [*Elementary School Teacher Recruitment, Preferential Treatment from 42 out of 68 BOEs*], *Asahi Shinbun*. <https://www.asahi.com/articles/ASK7P64P5K7PUTIL05H.html>
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). (2012). *Higher Education in Japan*. https://www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/highered/title03/detail03/_icsFiles/afiedfile/2012/06/19/1302653_1.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). (2017a). 平成28年度「英語教育実施状況調査」(中学・高等学校関係)(Heisei 28 nendo “eigo kyōiku jissai jōkyō chōsa” chūgaku kōtō gakkō kankei) [2016 Survey into the Status of Implementation of English Education]. http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/detail/_icsFiles/afiedfile/2017/04/07/1384236_01_1.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). (2017b). 中学校学習指導要領 (平成29年告示)解説 外国語編 (Chūgakkō gakushū shidō yōryō “Heisei 29 nen kokukji” kaisetsu gaikokugohen) [*Junior High School Course of Study Guidelines*]. http://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/_icsFiles/afiedfile/2019/03/18/1413522_002.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). (2018). 小学校学習指導要領 (平成29年告示)解説 (Shōgakkō gakushū shidō yōryō “Heisei 29 nen kokukji” kaisetsu) [*Elementary School Course of Study Guidelines* (2017)]. Kairyukan.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). (2019). *Application Guidelines Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship for 2020 (Teacher Training Students)*. https://www.mext.go.jp/content/1423052_7_2_1.pdf
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). (n.d.). *About Tobitate! (Leap for Tomorrow) Study Abroad Initiative*. <https://tobitate.mext.go.jp/about/english.html>
- OECD (2018), “Japan”, in *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-54-en>
- Rushton, A. (2019). Matching communicative language teaching to a Japanese EFL context with the Principled Communicative Approach. *Kobe Kaisei Review*, 57, 33–41.
- Tanabe, N. (2011). High school teachers' impressions about their use of English in classes: A questionnaire survey after the announcement of the New Course of Study. *JACET Chūgoku-Shikoku Chapter Research Bulletin*, 8, 27–39.
- Tsuji, S., & Swanson, M. R. (2019). Developing the speaking proficiency of non-native English teachers. *Shitennoji University Bulletin*, 67, 131–146.
- Yoshida, T., Kondo, A., Tada, W., Narumi, T., & Yamamoto, D. (2020). 文部科学省委託事業「中学校・高等学校における英語教育の抜本的改善のための指導方法等に関する実証研究」最終報告書 (Monbu kagakushō itaku jigyō “chūgakkō kōtō gakkō niokeru eigo kyōiku no bappon teki kaizen no tame no shidō hōhōtō nikansuru jissshō kenkyū “saishū hōkokusho) [*The Final Report of a MEXT Commissioned Project on Empirical Research into the Radical Improvement of English Education in Junior and Senior High Schools*]. Center for R&D in Innovative English Language Teaching, Hyogo University of Teacher Education.

Wendy Tada is an Associate Professor at Hyogo University of Teacher Education. She earned a Master in Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers from Monash University, a Graduate Diploma in Education from the University of Adelaide, Australia, and completed a CELTA certificate at Language Resources, Japan. Her research interests include early EFL literacy development and second language acquisition. She is also busy raising a bilingual 8-year-old girl.



The Mirage of Progress? A Longitudinal Study of Japanese Students' L2 Oral Grammar

Robert Long

Hiroaki Watanabe

Kyushu Institute of Technology

<https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT45.2-2>

This study examines the grammatical errors in Japanese university students' dialogues over an academic year. The L2 interactions of 15 Japanese speakers were taken from the JUSFC2018 corpus (April/May 2018) and the JUSFC2019 corpus (January/February 2019). The corpora were based on a self-introduction monologue and a three-question dialogue; however, this study examines the grammatical accuracy found in the dialogues. Research questions focused on a possible significant difference in grammatical accuracy from the first interview session in 2018 and the second one the following year, specifically regarding errors in clauses per 100 words, the frequency of global errors and local errors, and the five most frequent kinds of errors. Results showed that error-free clauses/100 words decreased slightly from 8.78 clauses to 7.89, while clauses with errors/100 words increased by nearly one clause, from 3.16 to 4.05 clauses. Global errors showed a remarkable decline from 22 to 15, but local errors increased from 76 to 112. A t-test confirmed there was not significant difference between the two speech corpora in regard to global and local errors. The five most frequent errors were (a) lexical phrasing (71), (b) article omissions (41), (c) plural errors (19), (d) preposition omissions (19), and (e) verb usage (9). This data highlights the difficulty in having students self-edit themselves.

本研究は、日本人大学生の英会話における文法上のエラーを、1学年間追跡調査したものである。15名の日本語話者の第2言語でのやり取りは、JUSFC2018コーパス(2018年4月/5月)と JUSFC2019 コーパス(2019年1月/2月)から取得された。これらのコーパスは、自己紹介の独白と3つの質問に答える会話に基づいているが、本研究は会話における文法上の正確さに焦点を当てて調査をした。研究課題は、2018年の最初のインタビューと翌年の2回目のインタビューとの間に、文法上の正確さにおいて有意な相違があるかどうかを焦点を当てた。特に、100単語ごとの節におけるエラー、グローバル・エラーとローカル・エラーの頻度、そして最も頻度の高い5つのエラーに注目した。調査結果は次の通りである。100単語ごとのエラーのない節は、8.78 節から7.89節へと若干減少した一方、100単語ごとのエラーのある節は1節以上増加し、3.16節から4.05節となった。グローバル・エラーは22から15へと著しく減少し、ローカル・エラーは76から112へと増加した。t-テストによると、グローバル・エラーとローカル・エラーに関しては、2つのスピーチコーパスに有意差は認められなかった。5つの最も頻度の高いエラーは次の通り、語彙の言葉づかい(71)、冠詞の省略(41)、複数形の違い(19)、前置詞の省略(19)、そして動詞の使い(9)、である。このデータは、学生が彼ら自身で校正することの難しさを浮き彫りにしている。

The issue of students' poor English speaking and writing skills has repeatedly gotten the attention of local media (Osumi, 2019) with an annual test conducted for sixth-grade students and third-year junior high school students across the nation; students attained an average score of 68.3% in listening and 56.2% in reading, but they scored only 30.8% in speaking and 46.4% in writing. The survey that followed this test data found that 90% of the students reported having lessons on reading, listening, and writing skills, with speaking skills being addressed only through presentations. Only 65.6% reported that they had learned how to express their thoughts and deliver speeches without notes. The attitudes of these elementary and junior-high students likely reflect the attitudes of many first-year university students.

Part of this dissatisfaction stems from the fact that, as teachers, we naturally assume that students are benefiting from our lectures, assignments, projects, and weekly classroom interactions. Moreover, it only seems logical that from a sound and coherent syllabus, carefully chosen textbooks, MEXT directives, meaningful homework, and an engaging and motivated teacher, students would eventually produce more coherent L2 speech and writing over an academic year. However, test or quiz scores that measure reading comprehension, listening skills, or grammatical forms often do not provide a robust picture of student performance and output; furthermore, educators often do not understand and monitor the rate of improvement of students' oral output and pragmatic and interactive competence over time. The reason for this is related to the difficulty of objectively recording, gauging, and evaluating students' output as well as giving adequate and meaningful feedback. Students will have little chance to improve unless they receive this feedback and are aware of their errors or know how to correct them. Error identification, however, is vital. As Corder (1967, p. 167) notes, "learners' errors can also provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures

the learner is employing in the discovery of the language.”

In short, this paper will focus on the issue of grammatical errors and repetition in spontaneous speech, as it is perhaps one of the most critical issues for educators. This kind of feedback on oral accuracy shows students which language forms they are effectively able to use in their L2 conversations and which ones they consistently use incorrectly. The focus of the study is to examine the production of grammatical accuracy over an academic year: How (if at all) do students improve in their level of accuracy, in particular with global and local errors? More specifically, do error-free clauses and clauses with errors in students’ output significantly become more or less frequent over one year, and do global and local errors improve over this time?

Review of Literature

Reasons for Errors

Error correction in interlanguage has a long history within applied linguistics, with two types of errors being distinguished: performance errors (which are made by learners who are rushed or tired) and competence errors (i.e., mistakes that are caused by inadequate learning). Selinker (1972) was the first to discuss the learner’s interlanguage and the problem of fossilization, mainly how the L2 can be influenced by the learner’s native language, interlanguage, and target language. This interlanguage, however, can result in errors that can—to various degrees—impact understanding. Gefen (1979) later termed performance errors as mistakes.

Shumann and Stenson (1974) compiled only three reasons for errors: (1) incomplete acquisition of the target grammar, (2) exigencies of the learning/teaching situation, and (3) errors due to the typical problems of language performance, such as both inter- and intra-lingual difficulties. The beginning stages of learning a second language are characterized by a good deal of interlingual transfer from the native language. Xie and Jiang (2007) observed that in the early stages, the native language is the only linguistic system upon which the learner can draw, so these kinds of errors can be found in all aspects of language learning. Similarly, Touchie (1986) postulated that these interlingual errors occurred due to the simplification of a rule, overgeneralization, hypercorrection, faulty teaching, fossilization, avoidance, inadequate learning, and hypothesizing false concepts. The overall problem with such categorization is that it is very subjective, so other researchers have provided other conceptualizations of error formation.

Identification and categorization of errors

Burt and Kiparsky (1978) made a distinction between global and local errors, with global errors being defined as those that hinder communication and prevent the learner from comprehending some aspects of the message. On the other hand, local errors, or mistakes, were seen as impacting a single aspect of a sentence but not adversely affecting comprehension. According to Hendrickson (1978), local errors need not be corrected so long as the message is clear, whereas global errors do need to be corrected if they interfere with meaning. While Vercellotti (2012) recommended that identifying *any* and *all* types of errors is more beneficial than identifying specific examples of errors, there has been a great deal of dispute on this one issue regarding the ability of students to process too much feedback and to use it properly. Research on error correction then begins to focus on the number of error-free T-units and the number of errors per T-unit (Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998), as T-units are viewed as meaningful for written language. In short, errors relevant to in-class tasks and pedagogical issues should be highlighted; however, the issue of teacher correction has been divisive. It becomes clear from these studies and from experience that while students can be classified as higher proficiency students based on a test score, in actuality, the accuracy of their spoken and written output is still in question.

The Study

Preliminary Research

Preliminary research by Long and Hatcho (2018) focused on the grammatical accuracy of Japanese EFL learners. One aim of the previous study was to investigate the prevalence of L2 errors and which, if any, gender had more grammatical accuracy in their English output. A second aim was to see whether English teachers can identify errors as being intralingual or interlingual and which type of error was more common. The database for the errors came from the Japanese University Student Corpus (JUSC 2016), comprising 61 transcripts containing 51,061 words (Long, 2016). An inventory of errors was compiled based on this corpus, which included 400 sentences containing local and global errors that were shown in context to teachers. The primary errors in these sentences were as follows: incorrect use of articles (381), incorrect verb tense form (162), incorrect use of prepositions (158), verbs omission (152), modifier errors (111), and incorrect subject-verb agreement (76). The results highlighted the commonality of particular errors and the issue of fossilization. Furthermore, the results related

to the impact of L1 on error formation showed that 35% of the 400 errors were deemed as being intralingual, 51% were seen as interlingual, and 12.5% were undetermined. When categorizing these errors, teachers showed a high level of agreement in categorizing the misuse of articles, plurals, subject-verb agreement, and prepositions as being interlingual due to the grammar of Japanese. As for the types of errors that Japanese EFL learners make in speaking and writing, research shows articles, verb tense, prepositions, modifiers, and subject-verb agreement to be the most frequent.

Rationale

This study aimed to examine the issue of student improvement in grammatical accuracy in actual spontaneous output over a school year. This paper investigates the issue of grammatical accuracy in L2 dialogues to determine how error-free clauses, clauses with errors per 100 words, and global and local errors change over an academic year. The aim of presenting this longitudinal data is to help teachers better understand the nature of spontaneous speech and the challenge of actually improving students' output. In short, does the battery of tests, tasks, and homework assignments that students often receive over a school year have any positive impact on actual student output?

Research Questions

- RQ1: Is there any change in the number of error-free clauses and clauses with errors per 100 words?
- RQ2: Is there any significant change in the number of global and local errors over the year?
- RQ3: What are the five most frequent kinds of errors that students make over the entire year? What should teachers be focusing on?

Participants

Although there were 28 participants in the 2018 Japanese University Student Fluency Corpus (JUSFC) (Long, 2018), only 15 of them also participated in the 2019 JUSFC (Long, 2019), so the data for this study are limited to those from these 15 students. Of these participants, six were female. All of the participants were Japanese, aged 18 to 19, and all had agreed to be interviewed and to have their conversations transcribed and studied; university and national procedures (and documentation) for obtaining student permission in this regard were all followed. The participants were all first-year university students (at a national university that focuses

on engineering); the participants came from various majors and were selected based on their TOEIC scores.

For sorting purposes only, TOEIC scores were used to identify these participants so as to represent beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels in order to see how errors might possibly change with increased proficiency. The first group had scores that ranged from 150 to 370, the second from 371 to 570, and the third from 571 to 770. In the interview, each student was asked to give a self-introduction monologue, which was then followed by a three-question dialogue. Student consent was obtained with the aims of the study being reviewed by a university committee beforehand. The purpose of the research and permission forms were written in both Japanese and English. Students were aware that their monologues and dialogues were to be videotaped, transcribed, and used for research purposes. Participants knew they had the right to withdraw from the research once it started and that, by learning about their fluency and grammatical accuracy, it would benefit them in future interactions. The names of the students were abbreviated in the final corpora that were uploaded to the research website (Long, 2018).

Discussion Topics

Each student's self-introduction monologue ranged from two minutes to twenty (depending on the student's proficiency) and covered issues like school, family, friends, and goals, whereas the dialogue was based on three questions and prompts: (1) Have you made any friends here at this university? (2) Tell me about your family, and (3) What is your major, and why did you choose it? In order not to repeat the exact questions at the end of the academic year, the questions were slightly altered to (1) Have you made many new friends here at this university? (2) What is new about your family? (3) What is your major, and how do you like your studies?

While the students were able to read these prompts out beforehand, they were given no time to prepare statements; the reason for showing the prompt was to avoid any communication breakdown due to incomprehension, which would then affect fluency ratings. For purposes of this study, only the data from the dialogues was used in order to focus on the interactive proficiency of the students.

Transcripts

The interactions were videotaped and transcribed, and the transcriptions make up the JUSFC2018, which has 12,796 words, and the JUSFC2019 (see Ap-

pendix for sample dialogues), which has 8,142 words. The dialogues (without analysis) were extracted to form two smaller corpora—a 2018 corpus of 3,275 words and a 2019 corpus of 3,532. These videotaped interviews were started in April and May 2018, with the second session in January of the following year.

For this study, only the transcripts of students who participated in both interview sessions were used, limiting the data to 15 students. Furthermore, these data are based only on the dialogues that took place after the self-introductory monologues to investigate the students' interactive competence. These students did not know of the contents or questions of any topics beforehand. Students were only able to familiarize themselves with the questions for a few seconds before the interactions. Students were not paid for their interviews; the coding of the transcripts reflects the Conversational Analysis Conventions. The dialogues included questions about their friends at the university, followed by information regarding their family and, finally, about their major and why they chose it.

Procedures

To identify both global and local errors, the transcripts were examined twice by both authors; global errors were identified as errors interfering with meaning. A web-based L2 syntactic complexity analyzer (Haiyang, 2010; Haiyang & Xiaofei, 2013; Xiaofei, 2010, 2011; Xiaofei & Haiyang, 2015) was used to count the number of clauses. The challenge was to separate dysfluency forms and issues from identifiable grammatical errors.

Global error examples

1. Interviewer: What is your major and how are you liking in your studies this year?
Participant: Ah, my major is Chemical, Um, Um . . . (1.8) my major is Chemical, so I have to study Chemical harder, so **I fear Chemical is different**, Un, Yea, Chemical is, (.) Chemical is, Ah, . . . (5.3). I now I . . . (3.4) I have two experiment. Experiment? Experiment class, and Chemical experiment class is little bit dangerous because, Ah, medical, I have to use a lot of medical, so medical is little bit dangerous. Ah, Um, . . . (3.6). Un, **if I touch dangerous medical subscribe?** Ah, sub, medical . . . (2.9) if I touch **dangerous medical**, Ah, **my skin death**, so medical experience ex . . . (2.2) medical class is little bit dangerous. Un.
2. Interviewer: Have you made many new friends at this university?

Ah, yes. Uh (4.2) When I, **when live in this school** I don't have a lot of friends, but ↑ but they are friendly and sometimes speaking to me. Uh (13.2) To me ↓, and I have a lot of friends in now. ↓

3. Interviewer: Ok, let's go on to the next issue I'd like to know. What is your major and why did you choose it?
Participant: My my major is (3.2) machine intelligence. Uh: (.) The reason is (5.0) **I like control machine** and (.) think (3.9) why this machine is moving, and so I want to make new machine which which ↓ (4.5) surprising many people. Uh: (10.9) so I want to study this major.

Local error examples

1. Interviewer: Have you made any new friends? (Japanese)
R: Uh, I have three three (.) three friends. Uh. (6.3) Hm: (5.5) Um: (7.3) We go, we went to uh, **we went to (.) game center** with **their uh** and (.) uhm: (6.0) eat lunch **with there**. (7.6) watching baseball game.
2. Interviewer: OK. Tell me about your family. (12.2)
K: Uhm: (11.6) uh I have a sister and (3.5) and **I and my sister** are very close. (2.3) and (.) uh for example last week we went **to shrine**. ↑ (2.3) And and we prayed (4.6) for (5.6) **not to occur traffic accident**. (1.8) (laughter).
Interviewer: That's important.
3. Interviewer: Ok, tell me about your family.
A: Eto I have a mother and father and **two brother**. Um: (5.9)
Interviewer: The oldest.
4. Interviewer: Tell me about your family.
H: Ah:, my (4.1) eh four four people. Eh eh: old sister, one older sister, **eh she is (4.1) Shimonoseki (Japanese) University**, (3.1) eh: (11.6) my father works (16.2) to (Japanese). (3.1) **I have (.) cat**. Eh:.

Results

To answer the first and second research questions, as the descriptive statistics in Tables 1 and 2 show, error-free clauses per 100 words decreased slightly from 8.78 clauses to 7.89, while clauses with errors per 100 words increased by nearly one clause from 3.16 to 4.05 clauses. While global errors showed a remarkable decline from 22 to 15, local errors increased from 76 to 112. Participants with higher TOEIC scores tended to make fewer global errors, as would be expected. For errors related to parts

of speech, a paired-samples t-test confirmed there was a significant difference between the two speech corpora, with more error frequency occurring in the 2019 corpus (see Tables 1 and 2, and Appendices A, B, and C); thus, no significance was noted for both global errors ($t(14) = 1.13$, $p < 0.28$) or local errors ($t(14) = 1.60$, $p < 0.13$). It was also interesting to note that there was minimal change in errors concerning verb phrases and noun phrasing and modifiers. As for the final research aim, relating to the five most frequent errors, they were as follows: (a) lexical phrasing (71), (b) article omissions (41), (c) plural errors (19), (d) preposition omissions (19), and (e) verb usage (9).

Table 1. *Phase 1 Analysis: Clause Analysis*

	2018 Interview Total clauses: 281	2019 Interview Total clauses: 283
Total clauses with errors	75	96
Error-free clauses per 100 words	8.78 clauses	7.89 clauses
Clauses with errors per 100 words	3.16 clauses	4.05 clauses

Table 2. *Phase 2 Analysis: Global / Local Errors*

Subjects	TOEIC Score	2018 Interview 2,901 words		2019 Interview 2,369 words	
		Global Errors	Local Errors	Global Errors	Local Errors
H.A.	375	3	6	1	5
C.N.	490	3	4	4	20
T.N.	290	2	2	2	9
S.T.	295	2	6	0	4
W.H.	290	2	0	1	0
K.T.	705	1	8	3	11
M.A.	280	3	4	0	6
N.I.	475	2	6	0	16
S.O.	575	1	7	0	6
K.O.	470	2	5	0	10
A.S.	770	0	3	2	4
K.M.	385	1	3	0	10
S.M.	470	0	6	1	4
Y.T.	620	0	6	0	4
Y.A.	470	0	10	1	3
Total		22	76	15	112

Discussion

This longitudinal study examined the grammatical errors of Japanese university students' dialogues with a native speaker over an academic year. As shown by data related to error-free clauses per 100 words and global errors, it is apparent that grammatical errors continue to be made with little awareness on the part of the student (and often the teacher), thus pointing out the importance of helping students to become more aware of their output

and of the errors that they continue to make. The data suggest that many of the types of repeated errors are interlingual, and so teachers need to continually highlight this issue throughout the year, particularly the need for subject/verb agreement and the use of articles. It should be pointed out that the frequency of error *rates* can easily impact how the message is viewed, which in turn can affect issues related to the speaker's status and the acceptance of the message. Thus, the impact of

both global and local errors cannot be understated, as they can cause the most confusion.

Recommendations for raising awareness and improving students' self-editing include techniques such as videotaping and showing pair or group discussions, commenting on error formation, using second-person realistic gambits (e.g., directed role-plays with students writing down their partner's responses to various questions and opinions), and using multiple-choice responses to hypothetical discussions. In short, this analysis shows that educators and students need to develop greater understanding as to what kinds of errors are being made in L2 output. More focused feedback to students is also needed, as knowledge itself does not necessarily improve self-awareness or impact day-to-day usage. These data, in short, indicate the importance of error awareness and analysis based on actual L2 output. Finally, because oral grammatical accuracy worsened over the academic year, it seems that the issue of fossilization requires far more attention, with educators more effectively monitoring their students' output to see if actual gains are being made.

Conclusion

While the field of error analysis has not gained much attention in the overall spotlight on second language acquisition, educators need to become far more aware of learners' psychological process in language learning and how much progress, if any, their students are making. The overall lack of progress in grammatical accuracy in these students' speech can mostly be attributed to a lack of awareness of their spoken errors, the teachers' inability to catch and highlight those errors in classes of more than 30 students, and the fact that most English classes in Japan (at the university level) are generally held once a week and often have to address other skills such as grammar, reading, presentation, listening, and grammar. The results indicate the need for teachers to help students become more aware

of their output and the errors that they continue to make. It is essential that teachers be more aware of their teaching objectives, techniques, and reviews as well as their students' linguistic competence, output monitoring ability, and affect. Indeed, these data highlight the difficulty in getting students to self-edit and to pay more attention to being more accurate with their speech.

References

- Burt, M., & Kiparsky, C. (1978). Global and local mistakes. In J. Schumann & N. Stenson (Eds.), *New frontiers in second language learning*. Newbury House Publishing, Inc.
- Corder, S. P. (1967). The significance of learners' errors. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5, 161–170.
- Gefen R. (1979). The analysis of pupils' errors. *English Teachers' Journal*, 22, 16–24.
- Haiyang, A. (2010). Web-based L2 Syntactical Complexity Analyzer. <http://aihaiyang.com/software/l2sca/>
- Haiyang, A., & Xiaofei, L. (2013). A corpus-based comparison of syntactic complexity in NNS and NS university students' writing. In A. Díaz-Negrillo, N. Ballier, & P. Thompson (Eds.), *Automatic Treatment and Analysis of Learner Corpus Data*, pp. 249–264. John Benjamins.
- Hendrickson, J. (1978). Error correction in foreign language teaching: Recent theory, research, and practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, 62(8), 387–398.
- Long, R. (Ed.). (2016). *The Japanese University Student Corpus (JUSC)*, Kyushu Institute of Technology. Available at <http://genderfluency.com>
- Long, R. (Ed.). (2018). *The Japanese University Student Corpus (JUSC)*, Kyushu Institute of Technology. Available at <http://genderfluency.com>
- Long, R. (Ed.). (2019). *The Japanese University Student Corpus (JUSC)*, Kyushu Institute of Technology. Available at <http://genderfluency.com>
- Long, R., & Hatcho, Y. (2018). The first language's impact on L2: Investigating intralingual and interlingual errors. *English Language Teaching*, 11(11), 115–121. <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/view/0/37174>
- Osumi, M. (2019). Nationwide test results highlight Japanese students' poor English speaking and writing skills. *The Japan Times*. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/01/national/nationwide-test-results-highlight-japanese-students-poor-english-speaking-writing-skills/#.XdOaGy-B3Hc>
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 10, 209–231.
- Shumann, J. H., & Stenson, N. (Eds.). (1974). *New frontiers in second language learning*. Newbury House Publishers, Inc.



JALT2021 – Reflections and New Perspectives

Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

- Touchie, H. (1986). Second language learning errors: Their types, causes, and treatment. *JALT Journal*, 8(1), 75–80.
- Vercellotti, L. M. (2012). *Complexity, accuracy, and fluency as properties of language performance: The development of the multiple subsystems over time and in relation to each other* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh]. http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/12071/1/Vercellotti_CAF_v3.pdf
- Wolfe-Quintero, K., Inagaki, S., & Kim, H. Y. (1998). *Second language development in writing: Measures of fluency, accuracy, and complexity*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Xiaofei, L. (2010). Automatic analysis of syntactic complexity in second language writing. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 15(4), 474–496.
- Xiaofei, L. (2011). A corpus-based evaluation of syntactic complexity measures as indices of college-level ESL writers' language development. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(1), 36–62.
- Xiaofei, L. & Haiyang, A. (2015). Syntactic complexity in college-level English writing: Differences among writers with diverse L1 backgrounds. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 29, 16–27.
- Xie, F., & Jiang, X. (2007). Error analysis and the EFL classroom teaching. *US-China Education Review*, 4(9).

Robert W. Long is a professor at Kyushu Institute of Technology where he has taught for 24 years. Aside from having published 16 EFL textbooks, he has researched student attitudes / motivation, innovative curriculums, international exchange programs, discourse analysis, pragmatic tasks, fluency, and grammatical accuracy. His hobbies include hiking, yoga, and creative writing.



Hiroaki Watanabe, professor at Kyushu Institute of Technology (Institute of Liberal Arts), has been teaching English in Japan since 2005 and holds a PhD in Near Eastern Studies from the University of Arizona. His research interests include Near Eastern archaeology, e-learning, discourse analysis, fluency, and English educational policies.



Appendix A

Phase 3 Analysis: Lexical Phrases, Article Errors, and Preposition Errors

	Lexical Phrase Choice		Article Errors				Prepositions			
	Phrasing		Incorrect Insertions		Omissions		Misuse		Omissions	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
H. A.	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
C. N.	3	10	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	1
T. N.	2	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
S. T.	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0
W. H.	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. T.	5	6	0	1	1	3	0	0	1	1
M. A.	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
N. I.	2	3	0	0	3	4	1	1	0	3
S. O.	3	1	4	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
K. O.	3	2	0	0	3	4	0	0	1	2
A. S.	1	4	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
K. M.	3	2	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	1
S. M.	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Y. T.	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Y. A.	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	30	41	5	2	16	25	2	3	6	13

Appendix B

Phase 3 Analysis: Verb Formation Errors

	Tense		Omission		Agreement		Form		Omission Inc.		Verb Usage	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
H. A.	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
C. N.	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
T. N.	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
S. T.	0	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
W. H.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. T.	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
M. A.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
N. I.	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1
S. O.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
K. O.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
K. M.	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. M.	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Y. T.	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y. A.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	3	8	0	1	10	3	4	3	0	1	2	7

Appendix C

Phase 3 Analysis: Noun Phrasing/Modifiers

	Plural Errors		Subject Formation		Adjective Errors		Adverb Errors		Personal Pronouns	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
H. A.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C. N.	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
T. N.	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. T.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. H.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. T.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M. A.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
N. I.	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
S. O.	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
K. O.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A. S.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
K. M.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S. M.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y. T.	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Y. A.	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8	11	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	4



Torrin Shimono & James Nobis

TLT Interviews brings you direct insights from leaders in the field of language learning, teaching, and education—and you are invited to be an interviewer! If you have a pertinent issue you would like to explore and have access to an expert or specialist, please make a submission of 2,000 words or less.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.interviews@jalt.org

Welcome to the March/April edition of TLT Interviews! For this release, we are excited to bring you an informative double issue with two expert and highly respected language educators. The first interview is with David Barker. David Barker is from Wales and became a teacher after working for two years as a police officer. He has a PhD in language education and has taught in Singapore, New Zealand, and Japan, where he has lived for 23 years. He is the founder of BTB Press and the author of a wide range of textbooks and Japanese language books for learners of English. He is currently the director of the English Center at Gifu University. He was interviewed by Robert Swier, a member of the Faculty of Literature, Arts, and Cultural Studies at Kindai University. Robert Swier has studied language education at Kyoto University and computational linguistics at the University of Toronto. So, without further ado, to our first interview!

An Interview with David Barker

Robert Swier

Kindai University

Robert Swier: *I saw one of your talks years ago, and it was called something like, “What English Teachers Should Know.” I think about it often because I saw it before I started teaching at a university and it was one of the first things that got me thinking about what university English teaching should be. You basically said that you don’t like to call yourself “just” an English teacher, as if that’s a position that doesn’t deserve very much respect. As a first question, why do you think professionalism in language teaching is so important, and what are the things that make a language teacher a professional?*

David Barker: That’s a good way to start. First, my take on this is a bit different. I think I’m quite unusual in that I was a language teacher before I came to Japan. I think most people are not. I had worked in an environment with a lot of English teachers. I had also done the CELTA and been trained by

proper teachers. It wasn’t so much that I was on a crusade about this or anything, but when I got to Japan, I was appalled by how unprofessional it is here. For example—and I talked about this in the plenary—when I worked in Singapore, you couldn’t be employed as an English teacher or get a visa unless you had CELTA. You had to have some kind of qualification. Whereas in Japan, it was basically any foreigner that was qualified to teach English. I think Japan was just way behind the times on that. In any other country, you would have had to be qualified, but in Japan you didn’t. So, there are a lot of what I call “backpackers who stayed.” They never had any intention of becoming an English teacher—they didn’t know anything about English teaching—it’s just that they got to Japan, they liked it here, and English teaching was the only thing they were qualified to do, even though they weren’t qualified. But in Japanese people’s eyes, just being a foreigner and a native speaker of English made you qualified to teach here. So, my claim—my rant, I guess—is that this is a job for which there are proper qualifications. The fact that nobody asks about them in Japan doesn’t mean they don’t exist. I would say that the majority of people who teach English in Japan wouldn’t even be employed in another country because they’re not qualified. They don’t have a basic TESOL qualification.

It’s certainly true, at least in the context of Japanese universities, that English teachers are really the only people that haven’t studied anything related to what they teach. Well, at least for native English teachers. Because native English teachers get the English language for free. They learn it natively. So, it’s not something they have acquired through deliberate study. That is unlike any other teacher. If you go over to visit the engineers, they became engineers by studying engineering.

In a way. You asked what it means to be a professional teacher. I don’t like the word “professional” so much because you can get an image of someone who must wear a suit and tie and always be polite to the students. That’s not what I mean. What I’m talking about are qualifications. There’s a big difference between someone who can speak English and

someone who can teach it to somebody else. The same is true with Japanese. The fact that you speak a language doesn't mean that you know how to teach it to other people. The purpose of the qualification is to learn how to teach it to other people. Why do we say that? What's the difference between this and this? That's what a qualified English teacher is. So, I prefer that word rather than "professional." "Professional" does include that, but you also get other things, like never being late and filing your reports on time. I don't mean that exactly. The point I was making in the plenary was that in Japan, the only requirement for a teacher at a university is a master's degree, and it doesn't have to involve any practical element at all. So, you could have a master's degree in English literature, or history, or politics, or something like that.

My degrees are in computer science!

Sure. My point is that in other subjects, this doesn't happen. I'm sure that what you're teaching in the classroom isn't computer science, is it? It's English as a foreign language.

Yes, exactly.

So, we have this kind of fuzzy area, where even though there are real qualifications for this, they're not required in Japan. It's treated like anybody can do it.

I don't know much about the English teaching world outside of Japan. Is this state of affairs unique to Japan?

I've only seen it in Japan. Maybe in China or some other places in Asia? But in Singapore, definitely not. You wouldn't get a visa if you didn't have a TESOL qualification.

Your plenary talk was about efficacy, or self-efficacy of teachers. Do you think that language teachers who have studied language education specifically or who have some sort of qualification get better results on average than teachers who don't have that background?

That's an interesting question. First, self-efficacy has nothing to do with the results. In the talk, I was talking about teacher efficacy, which is the teacher's belief in their own ability to achieve their goals. But yes, I think in general, that would be the case. Because you have more tools in your toolbox. Because the basic training teaches you to do the job that you're doing. If you look at what teachers are actually doing in Japanese universities, most people haven't been trained for that. It's just common sense that if you have been trained for that, you're going

to be better prepared to do it. Whether you would get better results or not, I'm not sure about that. Because the teacher is only one part of the puzzle. If you've got students who are unmotivated, and they're doing two classes a week, and they've got just 15 weeks, I would say it wouldn't matter. You could have the dog teaching and it wouldn't make any difference. I guess it depends on what you mean by getting better results.

I mean in some sort of measurable way.

In that case, yes. I would say that I would get better results than a teacher who doesn't know how to do what I know how to do. Definitely. I've seen this time and time again. I'll do what I'll do, and we'll show the results to other departments, and they'll say, "Oh my god, how did you get them to do that?" It's just basic language teaching. It's not rocket science. It's just that they don't know how to do it. So, I wasn't trying to have a downer on teachers who don't know how to do this. What I was saying is that teacher efficacy is low in Japan and one of the reasons is that people haven't been trained to do the job that they're actually doing. So, a good idea is to go and get trained in doing exactly the job that you're doing. That's why I was pushing the CELTA because it's only a one-week course. It's not a huge thing. It's very intense. But it's specific training for exactly the job that you're doing in the classroom. I said that teacher efficacy is quite low in Japan, and there are three areas that we could look at to improve it. One of them is training and qualifications. Because we have a lot of teachers who are doing a job that no one has ever actually taught them how to do—you do get teachers who are spectacularly talented, and you also get other teachers who just figure it out over the years. But even in those cases, it would be much easier to be trained. Because when you get trained, you're getting the benefits of fifty years of experience from everybody—all that is known about ELT. And you get observed. You get someone who observes you and gives you feedback. My point in mentioning that is that we are in a slightly unusual situation because we have a lot of people doing a job that they are not qualified to do. And when I say someone is not qualified to do something, it has a very negative feeling—like saying a doctor is unqualified or something like that. I don't mean that these people are not qualified—they are—they just aren't qualified to do what's being asked of them. So, what they are qualified for is different from what's being asked of them.

That's not to say that they are not able to do it, but they just haven't been trained.

They haven't had that specific training. Well, some people have, and I think Americans, particularly. America doesn't have the CELTA. In America, a master's degree sometimes includes a practical component. If you have an MA in TESOL from the states, very often it will have a practical component. But the Japanese don't make any distinction about that at all. They just view it as an MA. They won't say "an MA with practical component" because it's not even asked for.

I know that a lot of universities ask for a master's degree for part-time teachers, but there is no stipulation that the degree needs to be in any particular subject.

Which is weird. Like, in any other subject, you couldn't do that. You couldn't employ someone in the medical department and say that. The presumption is that just because someone is able to speak English, they'll be able to teach it. It's just that we need to check the "master's" box.

It's part of saying that we're in the world of education, and we want someone who has shown some success in that area.

Exactly. It's not that Japanese universities are taking in unqualified people off the street. I'm not suggesting that. They're taking in often very highly qualified people who are just not qualified for the job that they are doing. It's a different thing. And it's just this huge fuzzy idea about what teaching English is. This is not a criticism of any of the teachers. It's a criticism of the system, of the fact that even though these qualifications exist, no one ever asks for them. If we ask for them and if we treat those qualifications as worth getting, people will go and get them. If people go and get them, they'll come back better.

What is it about English teaching that, at the university level, English teachers are the only people that study educational techniques to do their classes? What is it about English teaching that makes it different from everything else?

Because it's a skill. It's a practical skill. You're teaching someone how to do something, not passing on knowledge. You know, there is another group of people that do what we do, and that's the folks who teach the international students Japanese. They have to be qualified. There is a specific qualification in teaching Japanese as a second language, and all of the teachers who do it—certainly at our university—are qualified. You wouldn't take a teacher who had a master's degree in Japanese literature, and say to them, okay, you can go and teach Japanese to foreigners.

You mentioned that in your talk, that there have been comments in the past about language teaching not being particularly academic. I myself often feel that way. In my own classes—I take academics pretty seriously—but in fairness, most of what I would do in a communicative English class is not particularly academic.

But if you think about what they're trying to do, that's quite academic. The word "academic" means "with no practical purpose" doesn't it? That's the main meaning when you say, "that's purely academic." It's a different thing.

I sometimes think it's helpful for English teachers to think of themselves not so much as teachers, professors, or lecturers, but rather as coaches.

Yeah, I like that analogy. But the point is that we would get better quality education in Japan if we had more people doing the training for the job they're actually doing. You just said it: when you go into the classroom, it's not an academic thing. It's something that you're not trained for. It's a different field. The problem is that we don't respect it as a field. Are you familiar with the CELTA?

Actually, I'm not!

Well, there are various levels. There's a higher level one called the DELTA, and that takes a year, and you've got two months of practical teaching. Now, I've done that as well, and that was one of the most difficult challenges I've ever done intellectually. It was really, really difficult. Because you really have to know the background stuff. When your students make a mistake, you have to know why they're making the mistake, and how to explain it, and how to teach it in such a way that they won't make the mistake anymore. What's actually happening in the classroom might not be particularly academic, but the skills that you're bringing to it are very academic. Well, not academic, perhaps intellectual. There's a high degree of intellectuality to it. If a student says to you, what's the difference between "I've written three books" and "I've been writing"? It's the present perfect continuous and the present perfect simple. If you went to Singapore and asked 40 teachers that question, 40 teachers would be able to answer it. If you asked it in Japan, I'd be surprised if 10 percent could answer it. But you should be able to answer it because that's what we're doing. That is ELT. It's the same when learning Japanese. When I'm learning Japanese, I want to know, what's the difference between this and that. When do I use one and when do I use the other?

If you were to ask a random person on the street about a language they speak natively, they would know which

is which, but the process of learning a language native-ly doesn't require an ability to explain the grammar or semantics.

Right. In the process of learning to teach your own language, there is a process of learning to break down all of the things that you know unconsciously.

In your talk about teacher efficacy, you talk about this idea of having a belief in your own ability to be effective.

To meet your own goals in your own context.

The motivation for looking at that—you even quoted Henry Ford about this—is that there seems to be a relationship between one's own beliefs about the ability to achieve goals and the actual ability to do so. Is that right?

Well, it's a general tendency, yes. Generally speaking, you're more likely to have a positive outcome if you go in with a positive attitude.

Do you think we would see better outcomes in Japan, and even perhaps more focus on teacher training, if there was more focus on actual efficacy? That is, if there was more focus on objectively measuring the actual gains (or lack thereof!) from language education programs?

I'm very much against that. I think, in theory, exactly what you said is right. If we could quantify what was working, it would make it much clearer. But there are two problems. One is that if you quantify it by means of tests, then the quickest way to achieve results is to teach to the test. So, you end up teaching TOEIC techniques. This is why I'm against it at Japanese universities.

That happens in high school certainly, where teachers are teaching to university entrance exams.

That may very well be true. The way you would get the best results would be to have Japanese teachers teaching in Japanese about how to take the test. You'd get better numbers, but that's not the goal that you're really looking for. The second reason that I would be against it is because ETS—the company that makes the TOEIC—they estimate that for an Asian student to make any significant improvement in their score, they would need 100 hours of study. Consider that a one semester course is about 22 hours of study. Even if you had four classes a week for a year, that would be just at the level where you might start to see an improvement. And even then, in a class of 30 or 35 students, it would be extremely unlikely to see any clear improvement. I think that we would really shoot ourselves in the

foot if we tried to do that because I don't think we'd see much change.

My background is quite quantitative and when I first learned about private language schools in Japan, I was surprised that they often don't do any type of objective assessment at all. I came to suspect that is because it would show that no one was improving. It would show to people who have been coming to the school for years—and who have been told by the teachers that they're doing a great job—that they are not actually getting any better.

Yeah, absolutely. An hour once a week when you're tired at the end of the day doesn't make a bit of difference. One might enjoy doing it, which is great, but... We don't have perfect language tests, anyway. They're always trying to make them better, but they're not perfectly suitable. There are alternatives, though. For instance, at my university, we have a speaking test. And it's a very narrowly defined test. And every teacher watches videos to calibrate themselves about what's an A, what's a B, what's a C, etc. We watch the videos, and if it's a fail, it's re-graded by someone else to confirm it. So, it is quantifiable. We're not really attaching a number to it, just using the letter grades. And we're using can-do statements, so just looking at what the students are able to do at the end of the year. That has a much better effect than just having some sit-down chat with the teacher at the end of the year. It's not that at all. This is a very structured test. So, tests are important, but it's hard to put precise numbers on them.

Grading speaking performance out of 100 is kind of like scoring the results of wine tasting. It implies a level of precision that just doesn't exist.

Exactly. We try to avoid that. In our system, we carefully define what someone at each grade level should be able to do, but we don't go beyond that. The other thing that we need to do in Japan is proper goals, and the goal should not be a test. We have to make these assessments keeping in mind the situation in which we're teaching. What's possible to achieve in 15 weeks? We might not be able to make a TOEIC score much better, but we can find some things that students are able to do now that they weren't able to do at the start of the semester.

I once saw, as part of a description of a university program, that one of the goals was to give students a positive experience in English. I liked that because it's certainly an achievable goal, and I agree that it's basically impossible to make big improvements in language ability given the time and other resources that we devote to these programs.

Well, we may disagree there. There can be big improvement if you set the program up properly. We were talking about speaking, but writing is an even better example. What we do with our students is we have them write a self-introduction on the first day of class. We say, that's for us to get to know you. And we collect it. We spend a whole semester teaching them how to write in English. At the end, we have them write it again. It's chalk and cheese. The two are completely different. They are demonstrably able to do something in July that they couldn't do in April. It's the same with speaking. We'll have questions that they couldn't even understand in April that they can now understand and answer at length the end of the semester. You just have to be very specific about what you're trying to do. You have to narrow it down. In the literature on self-efficacy, one of the things they talk about is that being successful at something gives you motivation to do it more. If you define things very tightly and give people something specific that they're going to be able to do, that can be very successful. Although this isn't what we do, an example would be, here are ten questions that we want you to be able to answer by the end of the semester. And if I ask you now, you can give very basic answers, but by the end of the semester you'll be able to answer them at length. I agree that giving students a positive experience is important, but I think a lot of teachers misunderstand it. A key to having a positive experience is the success. It's the feeling of success. It's not like being at Disney for a day. It's not having a teacher who is a clown and makes you laugh all the time. Whether it's positive or negative is whether you feel you were successful at it or not. In one program that I used to run, by far the best feedback came from the repeaters—people who had failed and were brought back in during the summer to try again. They had to keep doing it until they got it right. Some of them walked away in tears because they were so moved. They genuinely didn't think it was possible for them to succeed, but they did.

*For our second interview, we feature a discussion with Gregory Strong. Gregory Strong, a professor and language coordinator at Aoyama Gakuin University (Tokyo) English Department for the past 26 years, now works as an educational consultant with research interests in curriculum design, faculty development, and online learning. He has presented widely internationally, as both teacher and educator of teachers in Japan, China, and Canada. His numerous publications include the edited volume, *Adult Learners: Context and Innovation*, chapters in TESOL books on intercultural communication, task-based learning, curriculum design, and EAP, a biography, works of fiction, graded readers, and in *The Language Teacher* in 2019, *EAP as a Bridge to EMI*:*

Learning from the UK. He was interviewed by Jeff Wastila. Jeff Wastila has been teaching in Japan for ten years and holds an MA in Education. He currently teaches at several universities including Aoyama Gakuin University. His research interests focus on task-based learning, specifically the impact of team-based, team-assessed task-based learning and teaching in university classrooms in Japan. Now, to the second interview!

An Interview with Gregory Strong

Jeff Wastila

Aoyama Gakuin University

Jeff Wastila: *What are some of the challenges in English language education in Japan?*

Gregory Strong: One great challenge in language education has always been to operationalize current theory and research into classroom practice, and more recently, to harness some promising new technologies to language teaching. In Japan, we have the further challenge of adapting strategies and published materials such as textbooks and media, developed for the U.S. and Europe for students of mixed culture and ethnicity, who may be college-bound, with the context here of a largely homogenous group of students, many of whom will not be using English after they graduate and have a very different level of engagement. I must say that JALT, its many sigs, its annual conferences and mini-conferences, and *The Language Teacher* have served us very well over the years in developing curriculum as praxis, that meeting of the theoretical, the practical, and the actuality of a classroom. A final, often overlooked challenge though is to provide more professional outreach and support of part-time teachers—I would prefer the term “adjunct” here—because for most, their commitment is total. They teach the bulk of language education courses in Japan and many are very active in publishing and presenting.

You mentioned adapting language teaching theory and practice to a Japanese context. I know you've done research in this area and you have practical experience as well. How would you compare language teaching in Japan with overseas?

In Japan, our language teaching at universities is embedded within departments and faculties; in my case, an English department, where our colleagues

seldom have much awareness of our field and sometimes little sympathy for it. On the other hand, in the UK, Canada, and the US, and elsewhere, language educators are often placed in separate institutes or in colleges attached to universities, but with much less support. There are economic reasons for this, mainly, that it's cheaper for universities to provide language education by non-tenured personnel. So those of us who are on university faculty in Japan are very lucky to have the resources and support that we do. In part, this may be why so much good research, resources, and teaching practice have come from Japan.

Can you share your insights on how English learning and teaching has improved over the years here?

Very briefly, there is an impressive level of professionalism today compared with 25 years ago when a post-secondary degree and native speaker status were sufficient qualifications. In 1993, even course evaluations were a novelty, administered by only a handful of universities. As for improvements in the field, for myself, a long-term program administrator, two touchstones have been the work of Jack Richards and H.D. Brown, both speakers at JALT numerous times. Their very readable books on teacher education, program design, and administration have gone through so many editions because they tackle curriculum development so effectively, things like providing support in terms of curricular materials, pre-service orientations, and professional development. The whole thrust of task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been so helpful as well. In our program, it enabled us to identify several very important communicative tasks, the most popular with students being the small group discussion task which engaged students in choosing news items to read of interest to them individually, writing summaries, then leading small group discussions, and developing questioning strategies. Finally, the action research paradigm, that valuable intersection between theory and practice, has been a great fit for many educators. It offers us a systematic approach, often a collaborative one, to improving classroom practice.

What developments are you seeing now in classrooms in Japan?

Among the many I could mention are the impact of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) which has helped us to think more contextually about language teaching. Then, there is the growing influence of the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) for languages as a benchmark for assessment and setting curricular goals. It's now

being integrated into the next generation of language textbooks for Japanese high school students, and ultimately, it will appear in testing. More recently, English as a medium for instruction (EMI) in Japan is having an impact in improving instruction in content courses, in attracting foreign students, in the hiring of more foreign faculty, and forming part of a trend toward globalizing education in Japan.

You mentioned promising new technology earlier. Which ones seem to hold the most potential?

For a long time, I think many people, myself included, felt computer-assisted language learning (CALL) was expensive and often overrated. But in the last few years, through combinations of the Internet, apps, and the ubiquity of smartphones, we can now provide individualized instruction, maximum student learning time outside the classroom, and target essential vocabulary. Sometimes we lose track of our accomplishments as a community here in Japan. So much good work has been done by people here on extensive reading like Tom Robb and Rob Waring, or Charlie Browne on vocabulary. In turn, their work has assisted the development of some great educational technology and locally developed companies such as EnglishCentral and Xreading. What thrills me about them is that students on their smartphones can access online libraries of texts, audio, and video that are of interest to each student respectively. These platforms offer individualized vocabulary study, the work can be done extensively outside of class time, and that teachers don't have to mark or read anything; simply monitor student use. This is a very exciting time, especially when I think back to learning French in university through the audio-lingual method; everybody sitting in a language lab, endlessly parroting the same phrases.

You touched on the challenge of outreach to adjunct faculty, something very important to me as a part-time teacher. What do you think should be done?

It should start with recognition of the excellent work some adjunct teachers are doing which so often goes unnoticed. Adjuncts should be encouraged to publish in school journals. Outreach also means building relationships between full-time and adjunct faculty; full-timers simply getting to know all the people who work in their programs or departments much better. More fundamentally, we need to bridge the professional development gap between adjunct faculty and full-time teachers who have the resources and motivation to attend conferences, present, and publish. The same problem exists everywhere, but at least in the U.K. and Canada, professional organizations such as BAELAP

and TESL Canada offer teachers additional certification which can lead to peer recognition and better employment opportunities. The certification is based on experience as measured by contact hours of teaching, and through professional development such as presenting at conferences and publishing. JALT could be offering the same and perhaps institutional memberships that would cover adjunct teachers. However, tenured faculty can also take more substantial initiative, too. For example, professional development grants at our university are not available for adjunct faculty. However, we found we could hire teachers to assist us in action research projects and find educational publishers to sponsor them by paying their conference fees. These were win-win situations. The adjunct teachers in our projects became co-researchers, co-presenters, and co-writers. Later, they mentored other teachers when we introduced innovations in our program and teaching practice.

A last concern I have for adjunct as well as full-time teachers is a general lack of preparation for retirement. Overseas, public school and college teachers have robust pension plans; at the very least, adjunct faculty will have contributed to national pension plans. The national pension is very modest in Japan and many adjunct teachers have

not even paid into it or worked long enough in their home countries to qualify for much there. There is some interest in JALT toward establishing a SIG for retired JALT members, and Ben Tanaka is doing some excellent work with his Retire Japan website. Moving forward, I hope that more teachers will think about this problem.

Thank you very much for offering to share your insights on English learning and teaching in Japan. I appreciate it.

My pleasure.

References

- Brown, H. D. (2014). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (6th ed.). Longman.
- Richards, J. (2014). *Curriculum development in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Strong, G. (2010). Talking it up: A small group discussion task for the classroom. In A. Shehadeh & C. Coombs (Eds.), *Applications of task-based learning in TESOL* (pp. 11-20). Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
- Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford University Press.

[JALT PRAXIS] MY SHARE



Steven Asquith & Lorraine Kipling

We welcome submissions for the My Share column. Submissions should be up to 600 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see the guidelines on our website below).

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.my.share@jalt.org • Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>

Hello, and welcome to our latest installment of My Share, where TLT readers support each other by sharing practical and original classroom activities. Steven and I hope that the start of the year has been kind to you and your students, and that you are refreshed and ready to embark on a new academic year. The past year was challenging, to say the least, and many teachers found themselves thrown into the deep end with teaching online. It was a steep learning curve, we know! However, adversity also fosters creativity and resourcefulness, so if you have developed an interesting, fun, and original activity, we welcome you to share with the TLT community by submitting to our new email address:

jaltpubs.tlt.my.share@jalt.org

In this issue, we have four articles that each motivate students to participate more actively in the classroom, whether online or in-person. First off, Clare Ryan offers

a fresh take on show-and-tell as a versatile online warm-up that gets students talking and having fun together. Next up, Elizabeth J. Lange introduces an activity that asks students to focus on authentic local news stories to practice key summarizing, paraphrasing, and describing skills. In the third article, David Shimamoto outlines a vocabulary-learning activity that combines practical study skills with collaborative learning methods. This could easily be adapted to an online setting using break-out rooms or chat groups. This also applies to Benoit Forgues' physical comedy writing activity, which combines a variety of skills practice and partner work, to make English class fun and engaging. We hope you find some of these ideas useful, and wish you all the best for the semester ahead!

—Lorraine Kipling

Show-and-Tell—Within Reach

Claire Ryan

claire.ryan34@gmail.com

Quick Guide:

- » **Keywords:** Warm-up activity, online lesson, show-and-tell
- » **Learner English level:** All levels
- » **Learner maturity:** Elementary and above
- » **Preparation time:** 0-2 minutes
- » **Activity time:** 5-10 minutes
- » **Materials:** Show-and-tell item

Recent times have brought unprecedented changes, and nowhere is that more apparent than in education. As lessons move from in-class to online and participants struggle to get a handle on new technology, it can feel difficult to create a connection through a screen. In my experience, modifying some common classroom warm-up activities to be suited for an online environment has been invaluable in getting students engaged and motivated to learn online.

This activity is a variation on the classic kids' game where students choose an item to present. The goal of the activity is to get students speaking English freely in a fun and relaxed environment before getting down to the day's lesson topic. It can work well for both children and adult learners, and it is easy to introduce and play along with for all ability levels.

Preparation

No preparation required.

Procedure

Step 1: Have students choose an item that is within reach of their computer. They should not leave their seat to do this.

Step 2: Set a timer for a duration of your choice. One minute is enough for younger students; older teens and adult learners could be challenged to speak for longer.

Step 3: Ask students to show their item on screen and describe it to the other participants. Whether it's a mousepad, coffee cup, or the family's pet cat

who happened to wander into the frame, having students speak on the topic for a set time will provide a fun way to get warmed up and keep everyone's attention.

Step 4: (Optional) For higher level students, they can be encouraged to provide additional details, such as why they like or dislike the item, where they bought it, or how long they have had it.

Step 5: At the end of the allotted time, choose other students in the group to share one fact about the item that was presented.

Variations

Option 1: The activity could be extended by playing a memory game. When the first student has finished describing their item, other students could be called on to tell as much as they can remember about it.

Option 2: Another fun option could be to create a guessing game. The student describes their item as before, but without showing it on camera or saying what it is. The other participants can guess what they think it is, with the winner earning a point.

Option 3: Twenty questions. The presenter chooses an item but doesn't show it to the class. Participants ask closed questions about the item, for example, "Is it a household item?", "Can you eat it?" and so on. When a total of 20 questions have been asked, the participants must make their guess about what the item is. The winner with the correct guess then takes a turn at presenting their item next.

Conclusion

A relaxed and engaging warm-up activity is always a great way to get the ball rolling in a lesson, especially for students who may be reluctant to speak up. The added element of the new online environment means that students need a push to speak more than ever, if we are to create a good connection. This activity makes it easy to create a fun learning environment, with the many variations offering the possibility of tailoring it to suit kids or adults, and beginner or advanced students. In my experience, the question-and-answer style of the 20 questions game really gets students engaged with each other, with participants vying to ask the *best* question that will help win the round.

News Relay

Elizabeth J. Lange

Kaichi International University

elizabeth.lange@kaichi.ac.jp

Quick Guide:

- » **Keywords:** *Local news, fake news, authentic learning*
- » **Learner English level:** *Intermediate and above*
- » **Learner maturity:** *University*
- » **Preparation time:** *About 20 minutes*
- » **Activity time:** *1 class period*
- » **Materials:** *Students' homework*

A quick survey with a show of hands to ascertain if students read the news in English regularly may result in blank looks and negative responses. One way to get students interested in reading the news is to have them share local news stories (either from their hometown or current residential area), which they can more easily relate to as it pertains to the community they are acquainted with and connected to. Through this activity, students not only practice summarizing, paraphrasing and describing news verbally and in writing, but they also gain an appreciation of how news changes in the retelling.

Preparation

Step 1: In a prior class, present an interesting news story from the teacher's hometown to provide a scaffolding example for the students. In addition, discuss differences between local, domestic, and international news. Also, ask the students how their local news is relayed and why that news is important to their community. Another focus of discussion can be on how accurate/true the stories are with so much fake news around.

Step 2: For homework, have students summarize a local news story. Stress the need to include a description of the locality related to the story so listeners can be better informed about that area and appreciate it from a more local perspective. They should also add their own opinions and ideas about the story and any connection or involvement with the story that they might have.

Step 3: Tell the students to practice talking about the story so they can speak about it during the next class without looking at what they had written.

Procedure

Step 1: Begin the class by giving the students about five minutes to refer to the local news stories they had written for homework. This will refresh their memories of the content.

Step 2: Seat the students in pairs and then ask them to tell their story in turn without referring to what they had written (except for quick peeks). Encourage the listeners to ask follow-up questions and repeat back what they heard for clarification. For confidence building in telling their stories, repeat this step several times with different partners before moving on to the next step.

Step 3: Now, ask students to tell the story they heard from their last partner to their next partner, instead of telling their own story. Repeat this step 3 to 4 times.

Step 4: Have the students sit in a circle and then choose a student to stand and tell the class the last story they heard before asking for the original version to be told by the student who first told the story. Ask the class about differences in the two versions. Repeat this step for as long as time permits. Students will surely realize the importance of accuracy in relaying stories and how fake news may originate.

Step 5: Display the students' local news stories that they had written for homework along with images so that all the students in the class may read and enjoy one another's stories.

Conclusion

This authentic learning activity activates real-world, news-related language. Whilst practicing summarizing, paraphrasing, checking and correcting for accuracy, students gain greater confidence in sharing local news as it relates to something of interest, concern, and relevancy to their own lives. This activity is easy to recreate for the teacher and students enjoy it.

Task-Based Learning SIG

The TBL SIG are planning a special issue for the Winter 2021 issue of our *Taking It to Task* publication on the connections between CALL and TBLT. Expressions of interest are invited, and full details can be obtained from our Publications Chair, Rick Derrah at:

tbltsigpublications@gmail.com

Vocabulary Votes: Blending Creativity with Cooperative Learning

David Shimamoto

Graduate Student, Akita International
University

davidrshimamoto@gmail.com

Quick Guide:

- » **Keywords:** Cooperative learning, guessing words from context, dictionary use
- » **Learner English level:** Intermediate and above
- » **Learner maturity:** High school and above
- » **Preparation time:** 20 minutes
- » **Activity time:** 60 minutes
- » **Materials:** Printouts of reading material, dictionaries (or list of definitions/translations)

Cooperative learning facilitates the exchange of ideas, development of shared knowledge, and group camaraderie. This vocabulary activity encourages students to collaborate as a group while focusing on key study skills. Students work together to guess words from context and practice using dictionaries, then get creative in using new vocabulary items in sentences. To add excitement and motivation, students then vote on each other's most creative sentences.

Preparation

Step 1: Look ahead in your class reading material and find five short paragraphs that contain one important vocabulary word each.

Step 2: Underline the target vocabulary word in each paragraph. Compile the paragraphs onto a handout. Ensure that the selected paragraphs contain a minimal number of unknown words to aid in guessing from context. Edit if necessary.

Step 3: Prepare dictionaries or printed lists of target vocabulary definitions and translations.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into groups of four students. Select a leader for each group (new leaders will be selected for each round of the activity).

Step 2: Use the first round of the activity as a demonstration round. Put the first paragraph on the board, and ask each group to guess the meaning of the underlined word. Have students confirm their guesses in the dictionary.

Step 3: Give groups some time to think of a sentence using the target word. Encourage students to create unique sentences, as the whole class will vote on the best one. Instruct group leaders to submit their group's sentence in written form to the teacher.

Step 4: Once all sentences have been collected, write them on the board, making corrections where necessary.

Step 5: Ask students to vote for the best sentence. Remind students that they cannot vote for their own sentence. The sentence with the most votes wins, and that group is awarded one point.

Step 6: After the completion of the demonstration round, tell students to look at the second paragraph on the handout. Instruct each group leader to elicit guesses for the meaning of the target vocabulary word. Model some useful phrases for elicitation, as necessary.

Step 7: Tell students to confirm their guesses in the dictionary, work together to write a creative sentence with the word, and finally, submit their sentence to the teacher.

Step 8: Write each sentence on the board, and ask students to vote for the best sentence.

Step 9: Repeat steps 6 through 8 for four rounds, ensuring each student has a chance to be group leader. The group with the most points wins.

Conclusion

While this lesson incorporates several different vocabulary learning strategies, the core of the activity is intended to develop structured group interaction. Repeating this lesson several times throughout a semester will help students become comfortable with each other, and hopefully, show them the benefits and pleasure of cooperative learning.



JALT2021 – Reflections and New Perspectives

Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

Physical Comedy Writing

Benoit Forgues

Waseda Saga Junior and Senior High School

buzzyaiki@gmail.com

Quick Guide:

- » **Keywords:** *Writing, past tense*
- » **Learner English level:** *Beginner and above*
- » **Learner maturity:** *Junior high 2nd grade and above*
- » **Preparation time:** *30 minutes*
- » **Activity time:** *1 class/45 minutes*
- » **Materials:** *Physical comedy video clip (10 minutes maximum), AV equipment, worksheet (see Appendix), whiteboard and marker*

This is a fun writing activity that involves students writing up scenes from a video clip of physical comedy. This lesson can be tailored to any grade from J2 and up and to any writing level. It's a great way for students to develop both their descriptive skills and the use of past tense in writing. Any type of short, non-verbal comedy video such as Mr. Bean clips will do just fine.

Preparation

Step 1: Choose and prepare a short video clip that involves physical comedy. Clips can be accessed by legal download, online streaming, or on DVD.

Step 2: Make a note of any difficult vocabulary and unfamiliar cultural content that students might not know or recognize when writing about the video.

Step 3: Prepare your writing worksheets (see Appendix).

Step 4: Make sure that your equipment is working well.

Procedure

Step 1: Explain to students that they will be watching a video today. Tell them to turn their mental English switches "ON," because for the next 45 minutes, they will be fully immersed in the English world.

Step 2: Tell students that they will need to pay attention to what happens in the video, as they will be writing about it afterwards. Tell them that

they should make notes of what they see using key words, as this will help them with their writing assignments.

Step 3: Give out the worksheets, and point out that the boxed sections are for vocabulary and brief notes only, while the lined area is for writing later on.

Step 4: Explain that you will help with some useful vocabulary before you begin, and students should make notes in the "Useful vocabulary" section of the worksheet. Elicit the relevant words (including past tenses of verbs), and write on the board for students to check spelling.

Step 5: Play the video, pausing after each scene.

Step 6: Monitor students' reactions while the scene is playing. You should pay attention to areas that seem to cause confusion, so you can clarify later, if necessary.

Step 7: Once each scene is finished, get the students to pair up and share the notes they have written about the clip.

Step 8: Review each scene with the students as well as the key verbs and vocabulary encountered, to check that all students understand the clip.

Step 9: Give students the remainder of the lesson to work in pairs and write. Encourage them to discuss each scene with their partners and to collaborate on writing about them. Walk around the classroom to check on the writing and help out. Remind students to focus on past tense forms, as necessary.

Step 10: Collect the papers for correction and feedback.

Conclusion

This activity has always been a favourite of mine. Students who usually dislike or are uninterested in more traditional English class settings are often more engaged in this activity. It helps them to focus on descriptive writing skills and is a great way to refresh the use of past tense verbs. I find that all students try to write about what they have seen. They are not "studying English," but simply retelling what happened in a physical comedy video clip they have enjoyed.

Appendix

The appendix is available from the online version of this article at <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare>



Paul Raine

In this column, we discuss the latest developments in ed-tech, as well as tried and tested apps and platforms, and the integration between teaching and technology. We invite readers to submit articles on their areas of interest. Please contact the editor before submitting.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.wired@jalt.org

Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/tlt-wired>

Paul Raine has been a Japan-based teacher and coder since 2006. He has developed the web-based language teaching and learning platform *TeacherTools.Digital*, and many other web-based tools.

Using “Fakebook” for Writing Practice

Mark Goodhew

Asia University, Tokyo

Overview

Designed to resemble Facebook, “Fakebook” (<https://www.classtools.net/FB/home-page>) is an online resource that can be adapted for language teaching. Users can choose almost any famous or historical person of their liking, or even choose themselves, and create a fake Facebook page. As with most social media platforms, users can build a profile by filling in their personal information, posting comments, uploading links, and adding friends, and then save their progress with a password-protected account. Although designed to teach history, its versatility enables students to practice their writing skills in a general or more targeted language context. It can be used for just one lesson, or the account can be saved and built upon throughout the term.

Advantages

It is by saving the account and building upon it throughout the term that the strengths of this website are found. Students can do their writing

practice somewhere other than in their textbook or university-provided online platform. The use of authentic materials for enhanced language learning is well documented (Gilmore, 2007; Wong et al., 1995). Transitioning a writing class from the classroom to an online and asynchronous format can perhaps make the writing practice more realistic, as most writing today is accomplished online or on a computer rather than by hand.

One issue with online writing classes is that the majority of the writing is often completed on the university's student management system; for example, students write a Microsoft Word document that is embedded within Teams. While instructors usually need a single place to collect classwork for class management and grading purposes, this is clearly not an authentic context. Though Fakebook cannot be said to be truly authentic, the way that it imitates a standard social media platform format makes it familiar and intuitive to its users.

Another strength is that it provides a place where students can see all of their coursework on one page, which is not usually possible with student management systems such as Teams or dotCampus. More convenient access to prior work can allow students to more easily draw on previous assignments for current ones, as well as act as a motivating factor as students see improvement (hopefully!) in their writing as the course progresses.

Disadvantages

One predictable problem is the lack of interest that students will have if the website is used only once. A writing course may have a social media unit or lesson plan, and creating a Fakebook page as the post-lesson assignment for that lesson may seem like a logical choice. However, if students know they will only need to use this website once, they will not be invested in learning its various features and understandably will do the minimum to complete the assignment.

Another weakness, due to the website's design, is that after the Fakebook accounts have been created

and saved, each student will need access to every other student's account URL and password in order to view their pages and comment on any posts. This is not an issue if the account is used as a private repository of writing accessed primarily by the student and the instructor, but if the intention is to encourage dialogue and students commenting on each other's posts, this information will have to be provided to all.

Another problem—one shared by all online resources not provided by the university—is the danger of losing login and password information. If the account is made without registering an email, there is no recourse if login and password information is forgotten, so it is advised that instructors collect and store this information in a secure way.

Conclusion

Fakebook is an online resource that can be utilized for general and target language writing practice. By being aware of its strengths and weaknesses, instructors can use the website in a way that best serves their course and provide a more familiar and intuitive place for students to accomplish their

writing. Those interested can email the author to receive an initial student handout with instructions on how to set up and save a Fakebook account. The official Fakebook Startup Guide can be found here: https://www.classtools.net/_FAKEBOOK/docs/fakebook_startup_guide.doc and an official Generic Marksheet can also be found here: https://www.classtools.net/_FAKEBOOK/docs/fakebook_marksheet.doc

References

- ClassTools.net. (2020). *Fakebook*. <https://www.classtools.net/FB/home-page>
- ClassTools.net. (2020). *Fakebook Marksheet*. https://www.classtools.net/_FAKEBOOK/docs/fakebook_marksheet.doc
- ClassTools.net. (2020). *Fakebook Startup Guide*. https://www.classtools.net/_FAKEBOOK/docs/fakebook_startup_guide.doc
- Gilmore, A. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 40(2), 97–118. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0261444807004144>
- Wong, V., Kwok, P., & Choi, N. (1995). The use of authentic materials at tertiary level. *ELT Journal*, 49(4), 318–322. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/49.4.318>

[JALT PRAXIS] YOUNGER LEARNERS



Mari Nakamura & Marian Hara

The *Younger Learners* column provides language teachers of children and teenagers with advice and guidance for making the most of their classes. Teachers with an interest in this field are also encouraged to submit articles and ideas to the editors at the address below. We also welcome questions about teaching, and will endeavour to answer them in this column.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.yl@jalt.org

Simple Ideas and Strategies for Promoting Intercultural Understanding in Schools and L2 Classes

Gaby Benthien

Shumei University

gabybenthien@yahoo.com.au

Intercultural understanding is one of the aims of foreign language (L2) study in Japanese schools, and we can find images, videos, dialogues and passages related to culture in most textbooks from year 3 of primary school and upwards. Larger proj-

ects and virtual exchanges have been introduced in previous *TLT Younger Learners* articles this year. However, there are also strategies and activities we can implement in our everyday L2 classes to enhance intercultural understanding and create an overall learning environment that fosters cultural awareness. Thus, the focus of this article is to share activities, ideas, and resources for younger learners to extend and complement the culture content of textbooks without inviting speakers, designing big projects or events, or participating in virtual or real exchanges.

Intercultural Understanding and Awareness

Norms, behaviors, and beliefs within our own cultures are acquired from the surrounding socio-cultural environment, internalized, and passed along from one generation to the next. Intercultural understanding involves knowing one's own culture

and having an awareness of other cultures. What do we consider normal and familiar? This question is difficult to answer until we experience a reaction during intercultural encounters—at home or abroad—and realize that while some things are similar, other things are done differently. As we are interconnected on numerous levels, intercultural understanding is required in order to understand, reconcile, and respect these differences to function effectively in our complex global society.

Hill (2006) defines intercultural understanding as a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, pointing out that schools should go beyond simply teaching knowledge of a language or culture. Rather than viewing intercultural understanding as merely a means of conducting business across borders effectively, intercultural education in schools should educate young people to be willing to learn and benefit from each other, and ultimately, become adept at living together (Hill, 2006; Neuner, 2012). Thus, intercultural education in schools and L2 classes should be directed towards the following in our day-to-day lives or when we encounter people from other cultures:

- fostering awareness of how one's own culture and other cultures operate
- encouraging a willingness to seek and participate in cross-cultural encounters
- building communication and interpersonal skills
- promoting critical awareness
- encouraging curiosity, and open-mindedness about other cultures
- developing empathy, flexibility, tolerance, and the ability to see things from different perspectives
- being mindful of cultural differences

We should ensure that these aspects are built into our lessons and curriculum, and that we encourage students to create connections between their worlds and the worlds of others.

Culture Content Found in Textbooks

The iceberg analogy put forward by Hall (1976) is frequently used to highlight the visible and hidden aspects of culture, and can be used as a starting point to consider the complexity and dynamic nature of culture. Culture includes architecture, literature, and food at the visible or material level, whereas the deeper or invisible level includes behaviors, communication styles, interaction and thought patterns, along with beliefs and values.

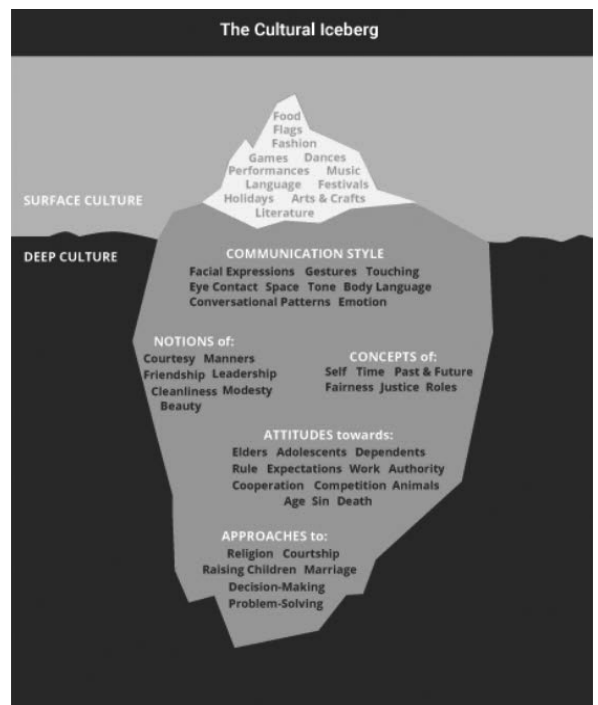


Figure 1. The Iceberg of Culture. Adapted from Ashman (2018). Creative commons.

At first glance, most of the cultural content in the textbooks seems to concentrate on the visible level; that is, aspects of culture we can see, touch, taste, hear, and feel. Examples of these include flags, festivals, architecture, food, traditional clothing, and sports. Some of the video contents in the primary school resources also offer visual input on how things are done in different cultures; for example, how to greet and to count in other languages. Secondary textbooks include a wide variety of content that is related to culture through text passages, dialogues, and images. It is important to provide links between linguistic or visual content and the deeper and dynamic features of culture. This can be achieved by first of all building awareness and subsequently encouraging discussion and reflection through careful selection of tasks.

Ideas and Strategies

The following sections introduce some ideas and strategies to enhance intercultural understanding. Regardless of the activity or strategy implemented, it is important to allow students to give their own opinions and views and to encourage reflection. Links for resources helpful for implementing the following ideas and strategies can be found in the online appendix.

The School: Displays, Signs, and Books

The classroom, school walls, and library provide an ideal space to promote intercultural understanding. A permanent culture corner could feature a world map or an iceberg of culture, while culture-related projects could be displayed. Classroom and school signs in different languages reflecting the nationalities of the school community can give students of non-Japanese background a sense of inclusion. Pins or notes on the world map can highlight community demographics while both the iceberg and map could be used to reinforce textbook content. Library books could be selected for cultural diversity. Kikuchi (2018) showcases how a public primary school in Kanagawa has built on its multicultural student population to make the school culturally inclusive. There is also a documentary about the school titled 10カ国の児童が学ぶ 驚きの多国籍小学校 on YouTube (Every 6:15, 2019).

Raise Awareness of Increasing Cultural Diversity in Japan

Japan is becoming more diverse, with the number of foreigners at an all-time high of over 2.8 million people (Yamashita, 2019). We can facilitate inclusive discussions about the presence of people and things from different cultures within the school, community, and Japan. If students from different cultural backgrounds are happy to talk about their own knowledge and experience of culture, this is a good opportunity to learn and benefit from each other. School lunches sometimes feature non-Japanese dishes, which could encourage a lunchtime/after-lunch discussion about food from different countries, while a photo of a multilingual sign can raise awareness of non-Japanese residents or tourists in the area. News items or documentaries pertaining to multicultural Japan or global issues can function as a warm-up activity, and asking questions like: *If you were...how would you feel? What would it be like to...?* can foster empathy and hopefully aid in developing an inclusive attitude towards others.

Realia

Realia from any country brought into class by students or teachers can initiate classroom discussions and raise curiosity and awareness. Many items can be incorporated into daily “small talk” or “show and tell” type activities or be matched to textbook content.

Adding Interest to Textbook Content

There are different ways in which teachers can add interest to textbook content. *Google Maps* and *Street*

View can add an interactive component to textbook content. You can take a virtual walk around the Taj Mahal or the Statue of Liberty and comment on what people are doing and wearing. *Google Earth* and *Google Expeditions* are further options for a virtual experience. There are also a number of web sites dedicated to enhancing cultural awareness and understanding, including *Empatico*, the *Peace Corps*, *Kwintessential*, and *World Vision*. These sites often provide visuals, ready-made worksheets, or stories which can be used as is, or scaffolded and adapted to suit the class.

Textbook contents often focus on students from other countries visiting Japan or vice versa, and the life of children in different countries. This content can be supplemented by suitable YouTube videos or websites. For example, the documentary 世界がもし100人の村だったら (Nakamura, 2009) looks at the life of children in various countries, and the bilingual picture book of the same title (開発教育協会, 2020) also features worksheets. The website for the documentary 世界の果ての通学路 (世界の果ての通学路, 2013) has photos and stories to discuss schooling, and is a good match for units in *New Horizon 5 and 6* (Allen-Tamai et al., 2020). However, it is important to draw the students' attention not only to differences, but also to similarities. For example, when looking at videos or photos of school life in different cultures, we can point out that students carry a bag, walk or ride a bicycle, use a textbook or blackboard, and maybe eat a school lunch, just like children in Japan. Lastly, it is important to encourage students to consider why there are similarities and differences in the way things are done, and their cultural significance.

Ideas and Strategies for Primary L2 Classes

Intercultural understanding can be implemented from an early age, and classes can include materials from around the world to supplement any designated resources at the lower level or textbooks at the upper levels. We can help children make connections between the ideas conveyed in these and their own world.

Students can be encouraged to look up different countries and cultures to match textbook content. For instance, the “*Over the Horizon*” section in *New Horizon Elementary 5 and 6* (Allen-Tamai et al., 2020) and certain units, for example, Unit 3: *I want to go to Italy* in *New Horizon Elementary 6* lend themselves to projects, posters, or card-based activities related to different cultures.

Carefully chosen picture books, folktales, songs, visuals, and games provide a wealth of opportunities

to support the development of intercultural understanding at the primary level. Picture books and folktales use oral/aural/visual/cultural elements, while songs add a melody. Two examples are the Sesame Street picture book *“We’re different, we’re the same”* (Kates & Mathieu, 1992) and the Sesame Street song *“We all sing in the same voice”* (Fun English, 2014). The picture book focuses on parts of the body and feelings and goes well with Year 3 and Year 4 content. As the students will be familiar with most of the language, it does not require much pre-teaching. During the reading, actions like touching the relevant part of the body or expressing feelings reinforce the language content. Students can also be encouraged to predict or add to the answers, for example, the line *“Our hair is different”* can be expanded by students adding various adjectives like long, short, brown, black, or blond. The song is similar to the book in the way it draws attention to similarities in the refrain *“My name is you.”* However, the language is possibly more suited to the upper primary level. There are numerous versions of this song on YouTube. Folktales from different countries are available on *World of Tales* or on *FairyTalez.com*. While these sites do not have picture books, students could be encouraged to make their own illustrations in groups. *Google Earth* has interesting resources in the culture section, for example *Google Earth Folktales* from around the world. Lastly, similar games are played throughout the world, but often with different names. For example, *Piñata* / スイカ割り and 福笑い / *Pin the tail on the donkey*. The message is: We are different, but we are also the same!

Ideas and Strategies for Secondary L2 Classes

As students’ language skills and social awareness increase, a greater variety of authentic resources and activities can foster intercultural understanding.

Design Sample Sentences and Worksheets with Cultural Awareness in Mind

Many of us give students additional handouts, focusing on the sentence structures taught within units. These can be designed to stimulate different aspects of intercultural understanding. For example, Lesson 1 in *New Crown 2* (Negishi et al., 2016) focuses on what students did in the spring vacation. A worksheet could include information and a gap-fill activity on worldwide spring vacations. Lesson 5 in the same textbook focuses on Uluru, a rock formation in the center of Australia sacred to the Anangu people, and sentence structures related to expressing feelings. Since emotions can transcend language, regional, cultural, and ethnic differences

(Gudykunst & Kim, 2003), a worksheet could include faces from different cultures expressing these feelings to highlight the existence of universal emotions. A simplified worksheet or flashcard version could also be used in primary school classes.

The use of modals, for example, in Lesson 5 of *Vision Quest* (Nomura et al., 2012), lends itself to reflecting about cultural norms while practicing the structure of modals through readings, true/false or gap-fill type activities or writing of skits. For instance, if practicing the modals “must/have to” or “should/had better,” a worksheet could include *Choose the correct option / True False* sentences like: “You have to/don’t have to take off your shoes when visiting someone’s house in Japan.” “You should not touch a stranger’s head in Thailand.” A skit could include the reasoning behind these norms in different cultural contexts, for example, a skit where a Japanese student explains to an Australian homestay student why Japanese take off their shoes when entering a house.

TED Talks and Songs

Both TED Talks and songs can offer additional cultural content. TED Talks are a very useful resource for higher-level students, and the textbook *Perspectives* (Landsford et al., 2018) gives some ideas for how to scaffold TED Talks. There are many culture-related TED Talks to choose from, but I recommend *“See how the rest of the world lives, organized by income”* (Rosling Rönnlund, 2017). The message can be easily understood from the photos and visuals used, and the Talk has Japanese subtitles if needed. Another great TED Talk is *“Cross cultural communication”* (Riccardi, 2014). Even though this talk only has English subtitles, there are some interesting comments and visuals that can act as discussion topics for lower to higher secondary levels.

Songs with more complex themes and melodies are suitably challenging and interesting for older learners. Most secondary textbooks feature songs, and while students may not be too keen on singing these in class, they do like listening to music (or singing karaoke). Some of the featured songs are related to culture and can also be linked to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, which have become quite prominent in Japanese schools lately. For example, *“Do they know it is Christmas?”* by Live Aid and *“We are the world”* by USA for Africa are songs from the 1980s, but the message has remained essentially the same, and students can discuss what part of the songs relates to which SDG. *“Where is the love?”* by the Black Eyed Peas has powerful lyrics and video images and can

be linked to current issues, including the Black Lives Matter movement and the role of the media in terms of how countries and cultures are portrayed.

Most TED Talks and songs can be used in L2 classes in the following ways:

- Elicit a student response about the title, and if available, the cover. What do they think the Talk/song is about? Also, ask questions related to the topic.
- Show students the video/Talk or get them to listen to the Talk/song. Ask for their initial reaction and check their understanding.
- Give students a copy of the script/lyrics and ask them to highlight important words/themes.
- Watch or listen. Discuss and reflect. How can students link the content/lyrics to their own experiences or to current issues?
- In their shoes: How would you feel if...? writing activity.
- Gap-fill, True/False type activities: These can be used for predicting words or grammar patterns or as listening practice and for checking comprehension.
- Vocabulary quizzes (paper-based or PowerPoint). Students can also make their own quizzes or word searches based on the song.
- Students could also write and record their own TED Talk or culture song.

In Conclusion

Opportunities to go beyond language content and delve into different concepts and issues abound in L2 classes. As illustrated above, there are myriad things we can do to promote intercultural understanding in schools and classes, ranging from minor tweaks to more substantial additions. Nevertheless, we do need a creative, informed, and proactive mindset, and it is essential to take into account the students' linguistic repertoire, interests, and cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development before augmenting textbook content. In this increasingly interconnected world, it is important for all to develop an informed and positive outlook towards other cultures. Let's do what we can to support this in our teaching. After all, the world is like a mosaic, created from different pieces to make a beautiful whole.

References

- Allen-Tamai, M., Ano, K., & Hamanaka, N. (2020). *New horizon elementary English course 5 and 6*. Tokyo Shoseki.
- Ashman, M. (2018). *Professional communications*. BCcampus. <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/professionalcomms/chapter/8-1-intercultural-communication>
- Every 6:15. (2019, January 13). 10カ国の児童が学ぶ驚きの多国籍小学校 [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gk3nj7M3SeM>
- Fun English. (2014, October 9). *We all sing in the same voice* [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCMO7Oluloo>
- Gudykunst, W. B., & Kim, Y. Y. (2003). *Communicating with strangers: An approach to intercultural communication*. McGraw-Hill.
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. Garden Press.
- Hill, I. (2006). Student types, school types and their combined influence on the development of intercultural understanding. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 5(1), 5-33. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1475240906061857>
- 開発教育協会[Education Development Association] (2020). ワークショップ版 世界がもし100人の村だったら<第6版 [If the world was a village of 100 people workshop edition (6th ed.)]. Tankopon.
- Kates, B. J., & Mathieu, J. (1992). *We're different, we're the same*. Random House.
- Kikuchi, S. (2018). 〈超・多国籍学校〉は今日もにぎやか! [The super multinational school is full of life!]. Iwanami Junior Shinsho.
- Landsford, L., Barber, D., & Jeffries, A. (2018). *Perspectives*. National Geographic Learning.
- Nakamura, Y. (Producer). (2009). 世界がもし100人の村だったら [If the world were a village of 100 people] [Film]. Pony Canyon.
- Negishi, M., Hidai, S., Matsuzawa, S., Takeuchi, O., Imai, H., Sakai, H., Takahashi, S., Hardy, T., Kitagawa, T., Horita, T., Aoyagi, Y., Arao, H., Ikeno, O., Oshima, K., Kashiba, M., Kudo, H., Sakamoto, R., Sannomiya, H., Shina, K. ... Watari, Y. (2016). *New crown 2 English series*. Sanseido.
- Neuner, G. (2012). The dimensions of intercultural education. In J. Huber (Ed.), *Intercultural competence for all: Preparation for living in a heterogeneous world*, (Council of Europe Pestalozzi Series, No. 2), pp. 11-49. Council of Europe. <https://rm.coe.int/intercultural-competence-for-all/16808ce20c>
- Nomura, K., Yamazaki, N., Uchida, S., Shimabara, K., Takahashi, M., Caraker, R., & Smith, R. (2012). *Vision quest English expression 1 standard*. Keirinkan.
- Riccardi, P. (2014, October 21). Cross cultural communication [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMofREc5Jk>
- Rosling Rönnlund, A. (2017, April). *See how the rest of the world lives, organized by income* [Video file]. https://www.ted.com/talks/anna_rosling_ronnlund_see_how_the_rest_of_the_world_lives_organized_by_income

世界の果ての通学路 [On the way to school] (2013). 世界の果ての通学路[On the way to school] [Film website]. <http://www.sekai-tsugakuro.com/>

Yamashita, M. (2019, October 26). *Foreigners in Japan hit record as Tokyo rolls out welcome mat*. Nikkei Asia. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Japan-immigration/Foreigners-in-Japan-hit-record-as-Tokyo-rolls-out-welcome-mat>

Gaby Benthien (B.Ed., M.Ed., Ed.D.) was born in Germany and immigrated to Australia when she was 12 years old. She began her teaching career teaching Japanese as a foreign language and P.E. at a secondary school in Australia before spending six years as an ALT in Yamanashi. Gaby now



teaches a variety of subjects at tertiary level, including primary school English, primary school teaching methodology and cross-cultural understanding. Her research interests include L2 motivation, study abroad, and teacher development. Gaby enjoys any outdoor activity including cycling, hiking and skiing, as well as various creative pursuits.

Appendix

An appendix of links to resources mentioned in this article and other culture-related resources can be found in the online version of this article at <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/younger-learners>

[JALT PRAXIS] BOOK REVIEWS



Robert Taferner & Stephen Case

If you are interested in writing a book review, please consult the list of materials available for review in the Recently Received column, or consider suggesting an alternative book that would be helpful to our membership.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.reviews@jalt.org

Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/book-reviews>

This month's column features Peter Ferguson's review of *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan*.

Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan

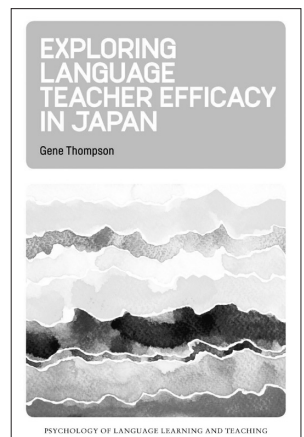
[Gene Thompson. (2020). Multilingual Matters. pp. xv + 183. ¥4,644. ISBN: 1788925386.]

Reviewed by Peter Ferguson, Kindai University

Exploring *Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* is an indispensable book that combines a comprehensive review of the theoretical framework of language teacher efficacy (LTE) with up-to-date research in one volume. The book is one of nine in the series *Psychology of Language Learning and Teaching* by Multilingual Matters, and constitutes an essential volume which provides a clear and concise investigation into the complexities of measuring LTE in an English as a foreign language context.

Self-efficacy refers to the belief a person has towards their ability to successfully complete certain tasks, both individually and collectively in groups. This self-assessment is influenced by both experience and environmental factors, along with perceptions of failure, anxiety, and self-doubt. In terms of education, "teachers' beliefs in their efficacy affects their general

orientation toward the educational process as well as their specific instructional activities" (Bandura, 1997, p. 241). With the increasing demand for communicative language teaching and the use of English as a medium of instruction, there is an expanding interest in teacher efficacy in the fields of applied linguistics and teacher education. Nevertheless, teacher efficacy and collective efficacy remain complex constructs to measure (e.g., Tschanen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Walter & Sponseller,



2020), which is why *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* is such an important contribution.

Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan is divided into eleven chapters with chapter 1 orienting the reader to the topic of LTE. Chapter 2 then provides a well-written summary of Bandura's social cognitive theory, showing how efficacy beliefs are conceptualized within the theory, before describing how self-efficacy beliefs differ from other self-constructs, while also dispelling some more commonly held misconceptions. Chapter 3 outlines the growing field of LTE research to provide the reader with a clear understanding of this expanding area of research before focusing on Japan. Chapter 4, entitled *Approaches for Investigating Language Teacher Efficacy*, introduces the survey utilized, with chapter 5 then describing the complexities of designing an effective survey with which to accurately measure LTE. Readers unfamiliar with LTE research will probably find these two chapters particularly noteworthy, as the author provides a very accessible account of the key issues and challenges of measuring language teacher efficacy beliefs. The next two chapters present the findings of the study and discuss the connection between LTE and teachers' English proficiency. In chapters 8, 9, and 10, the author explores the topics of LTE and English as a means of classroom instruction for high school teachers, the importance of collective efficacy in LTE, and the development of LTE beliefs. *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* concludes by looking toward the future and identifying where more research is needed.

Overall, *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* not only contributes greatly to our understanding of LTE, but also provides an excellent framework for readers who might be interested in researching this increasingly important subject. The book is skillfully written, and covers complex concepts with succinct prose, making it very accessible for language teachers and others interested in this topic. Another strength is that it explains in detail the rigors involved in designing a Likert-scale questionnaire to effectively measure a complex construct within a particular context. Policymakers, researchers, educators, and postgraduate students interested in LTE or education in Japan will find this book extremely informative.

One possible shortcoming is that, although broadly titled "in Japan," readers should be aware that the research focuses solely on high schools and does not cover universities, junior high schools, or elementary schools. In addition, while the fairly concise nature of each chapter might be a positive aspect for some readers, it may also leave other readers wanting a little more. A list of suggested

readings and a few discussion questions at the end of each chapter might have increased the book's practical reach and created more opportunities for use in both undergraduate and graduate classrooms on general education and second language acquisition. Another point of criticism is the author's over-generalization of the relationship between collective efficacy and culture. Bandura accurately warns against oversimplifying cross-cultural comparisons that mistakenly equate collective-efficacy beliefs with collectivism, then incorrectly attribute those psychosocial properties to culture (Bandura, 2002). A more detailed and in-depth analysis of collective efficacy would have surely strengthened the book's overall conclusions.

These are, however, minor criticisms that do not greatly remove from what is an extremely informative and well-written book on a complex topic. *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* is, in my opinion, a must-read for anyone interested in either teacher education, both pre- and in-service, or language education in Japan.

References

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social cognitive theory in cultural context. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 51(2), 269-290. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00092>
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2007). The differential antecedents of self-efficacy beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23, 944-956. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.05.003>
- Walter, B. R., & Sponseller, A. C. (2020). ALT, JTE, and team teaching: Aligning collective efficacy. In P. Clements, A. Krause, & R. Gentry (Eds.), *Teacher efficacy, learner agency*. Tokyo: JALT. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTPCP2019-04>

Teaching Younger Learners Call for Submissions

The TYL SIG is looking for submissions for our publication, *The School House*. We accept different types of articles pertaining to young learners, up to and including high school students. Please refer to our website for publication guidelines. Also check out our forum at the 2021 PANSIG and JALT Junior events at the international JALT conference.

<https://jalt-tyl.net/>

Recently Received

Julie Kimura & Ryan Barnes

jaltpubs.tlt.pub.review@jalt.org



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

Recently Received Online

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

* = new listing; ! = final notice — Final notice items will be removed on April 30. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

Books for Students (reviews published in *TLT*)

Contact: Julie Kimura — jaltpubs.tlt.pub.review@jalt.org

ELT Training Library — Language fuel. <https://www.eltrainlibrary.com/> [This library of interactive training courses is for novice teachers. Topics covered include pedagogy, classroom management, and intercultural awareness.]

! **In hot water: Stories of surprise, adventure, and (mis)communication in Japan (2nd ed.)** — Shea, D. P. Perceptia Press, 2020. [A collection of 26 short stories along with discussion questions and activities that introduce cross-cultural views of life in Japan.]

* **Japanese English: A descriptive grammar** — Olagboyega, K. Shumpusha Publishing, 2020. [This book is a descriptive guide to English as it is used in Japan. The author begins with an introductory overview of English in Japan, and continues with descriptions of grammar and vocabulary as they are used by Japanese users of English.]

! **Linguistic soup: Recipes for success** — Caraker, R. Perceptia Press, 2020. [A seven-unit applied linguistics coursebook written for English as a second language classes. The text integrates the content of teaching methodology with language acquisition theories.]

Longman preparation series for the TOEIC® test: Intermediate course (6th ed.) — Loughheed, L. Pearson, 2018. [This new edition is suitable for students at the B1-B2 CEFR levels and includes three practice tests, over 1000 practice items, as well as test taking, grammar, and vocabulary tips.]

Kobe JALT Journal

JALT Kobe is accepting submissions for the next issue of *Kobe JALT Journal*.

We are currently looking for research articles, articles about teaching methods, curricula design, and about navigating the teaching industry. More details at:

<https://kobejalt.org/submission-guidelines>

Pocket readers — The following are edited by A. Boon.

Halico Creative Education, 2019. [“Good grades are not enough. To be successful in life, students need to learn how to deal with real-world problems.” This series provides learners with advice, skills, and strategies to deal with problems they encounter in life.]

Ten ways to be assertive — Ito, L.

Ten ways to be healthy — Takeuchi, C.

Ten ways to be productive — Boon, A.

Ten ways to be successful in love — Ito, L.

Ten ways to manage money — Boon, A.

Ready to present: A guide to better presentations — Bartelen, H., & Kostiuik, M. Cengage, 2019. [This text was written to help learners develop skills needed to create content and deliver it. The teachers' manual includes answer keys, teaching tips, supplementary comprehension questions. Students have online access to classroom audio and video.]

! **Writing a graduation thesis in English: Creating a strong epistemic argument** — Smiley, J. Perceptia Press, 2019. [This book helps students prepare for the main task of their academic careers. Students will develop an understanding of argumentation and develop a robust relationship between themselves and knowledge. The teacher's guide is available through the publisher's website.]

Books for Teachers (reviews published in *JALT Journal*)

Contact: Greg Rouault — jaltpubs.jj.reviews@jalt.org

* **Interaction, feedback and task research in second language learning: Methods and design** — Mackey, A. Routledge, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108589284>

* **Teaching listening and speaking in second and foreign language contexts** — Bailey, K. M. Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Write an article for CUE Circular

The newsletter/magazine-style
publication from the
College and University Educators SIG



Share your
ideas and
experiences
as a teacher
in Japan's
university
sector.

jaltcue.org/cuecircular
cuecircular@gmail.com





David McMurray

Graduate students and teaching assistants are invited to submit compositions in the form of a speech, appeal, memoir, essay, conference review, or interview on the policy and practice of language education. Master's and doctoral thesis supervisors are also welcome to contribute or encourage their students to join this vibrant debate. Grounded in the author's reading, practicum, or empirical research, contributions are expected to share an impassioned presentation of opinions in 1,000 words or less. Teaching Assistance is not a peer-reviewed column.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.ta@jalt.org

In this issue's Teaching Assistance column, Wang JiaYue, a graduate student of literature, reflects on a voyage of self-discovery during her struggle to travel abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic. Locked down in China for months before being quarantined on reentry to Japan, she had the chance to read and reflect on an inspirational memoir.

Reflections on the Chinese Translation of Tara Westover's *Educated*

Wang JiaYue

International University of Kagoshima
Graduate School

COVID-19 kept me from my graduate studies in Japan from February to October 2020. Every day, I was locked at home in Chengdu, China. I did not have any freedom to go out. My family is traditional. For example, my parents believe that girls should be cute and beautiful, and that girls should not be too busy because they ought to spend most of their time at home. During that time, I began to read books in bed. Tara Westover's autobiography, *Educated*, immediately caught my attention. It is the story of her journey from a childhood dominated by her extreme anti-government, anti-science, Mormon fundamentalist parents, to becoming a scholar, holding a PhD, who studied at both Cambridge and Harvard. Her story inspired me immediately: I got up from bed and started studying. Then, I began to communicate more with my parents. But this book inspired me in many other ways as well.

During my time in lock down, I was saddened by the lives of people who I had never even met. I saw the despair of the citizens of Wuhan over the internet; many people who had caught the disease couldn't be treated because there were not enough supplies. To prevent the spread of the disease, people couldn't go home to their families. The hotels

and hospitals were full. I saw videos of them crying and begging for help. I couldn't believe that I was living in the midst of a global pandemic. Although I can understand this despair, I don't think that I will ever be able to comprehend the agony of Westover's life. Until the age of 16, she was forbidden to make her own decisions, being forced to follow her father's rigid beliefs.

The Chinese Title

The Chinese translation of this book is excellent. For instance, the title *Educated* is a concise and powerful word in English, but its literal Chinese equivalent, 受教育 (*shou jiao yu*), would be lost in crowded bookstore shelves. As a Chinese student majoring in language and literature, such a title would have implied to me an inspirational story about how to enter Cambridge University. However, Westover's intention is not merely to showcase her academic success.

The memoir's Chinese title was rendered beautifully as 你当像鸟飞往你的山 (*ni dang xiang niao fei wang ni de shan*) meaning, "To flee as a bird to your mountain." This expression was borrowed from The Book of Psalms, a collection of sacred songs from the Old Testament of the Bible. The title implies two meanings—escape, or, to find a new faith. This complements the story of the author escaping like a bird from the mountains of her hometown in order to seek education. It also matches the cover of the book, the image of a pencil shaved into the shape of a mountain (see figure 1). Let's open this book cover and turn to the first page of the memoir. There are three parts to this story. Part 1 is about her tragic childhood. Part 2 is about how she escaped her family. Part 3 is about her gains and losses in the process.



Part 1. Tragic Childhood

Westover was born in a small town in the mountains of Idaho, USA. Her father, Gene, believed that public schools were tools of the “Socialist” American government aimed at “brainwashing” people. Thus, he had his wife homeschool their children. Gene was also deeply hostile to what he termed the “Medical Establishment.” As a result, the family used home-made medicine to treat bruises, burns, and even severe cuts and concussions. When she was a teenager, she began to be abused by her older brother Shawn. He dragged her across rooms by her hair, and forced her face into the toilet. Her parents turned a blind eye to Shawn’s violence and refused their daughter’s requests to intervene or protect her.

Part 2. Escape

By 16, Westover could see that her home was unsafe. Thankfully, she was accepted into Brigham Young University, despite having no formal education. As a student, she began to learn just how deep her ignorance ran. In one class discussion, she inadvertently revealed that she had never heard of The Holocaust:

The professor called on me, and I read the sentence aloud. When I came to the word, I paused. “I don’t know this word,” I said. “What does it mean?” There was silence. Not a hush, not a muting of the noise, but utter, almost violent silence. No papers shuffled, nope I was a freak, and I knew it, but I didn’t understand how they knew it. (p. 176)

She felt out of place everywhere. She lacked even basic knowledge about hygiene. For example, she had never been taught to wash her hands after using the toilet. Although she was in college, some parts of her were still trapped in her hometown. It would take time for her to break away from the so-called “truth” of her parents, and to start a new life. With her unrelenting efforts, she started to get A’s and B’s in her courses. She began to shed the ideological baggage of her father’s beliefs. She began to dress as her peers, whose outfits her father would still call “frivolous” or even “whorish.” Eventually, she became Dr. Westover.

Part 3. Gain and loss

During her graduate studies, she discovered that her brother had other victims. She decided to tell everything to her parents. No one believed her. They accused her of lying and of attempting to destroy the family. Ultimately, she was left with no choice but to break off contact with her family. She knew that she needed to sever ties with them in

order to break the cycle of abuse, paranoia, and control. Now she understood. Her education had been more than the acquisition of titles and degrees. It was a revolution. It was self-emancipation. It was liberation from the bonds of ignorance and control.

Westover’s mother was an educated woman. She wanted her children to be educated. She had her own story of struggle, overcoming her fear of childbirth to becoming a well-known midwife. She built all of the family businesses. Several times, she nearly escaped from the family. However, in the end, nothing changed. She remained as she was.

In our lives, we often face two roads. One is easy, but unfulfilling; the other is difficult, but fulfilling. Westover’s mother’s choice is an agonizing one. To break free of her constraints, she would need to separate herself from her family and community. The alternative is to remain in her simpler, brain-washed, existence, forcing herself to be content. During my time locked at home in Chengdu, this tragic story motivated me to study.

Reflections

Westover’s life, as presented to us in three stages in *Educated*, affords the opportunity to question the meaning of education. Once, this woman lived under her father’s strict rules and actively sought education to discover herself. In this education, she discovered that the world was not black and white, nor was it merely shades of gray. It is vibrant and colorful. Although Westover’s experience is unique to her, her story reflects universal queries. What does education mean? What is the proper balance between self-will and family responsibilities? By writing her own story, she found an answer. Education, she says, means self-creation. “You could call this selfhood many things. Transformation. Metamorphosis. Falsity. Betrayal. I call it an education.” (p. 356)

Although governments may brainwash students through education, I believe that by studying, people can find truth. As for me, my brother suggested to me that life is not about how to avoid the rain, but learning to dance in the rain. So, the story of Westover’s mother motivated me to choose the way which is difficult. I pray that every difficult choice promotes my growth. And it wasn’t until I educated myself and read more that I was able to see things with my own eyes, and not through the eyes of my parents. This may be the re-creation of education for me.

References

Westover, T. (2018). *Educated*. Random House.



Jerry Talandis Jr.

The Writers' Workshop is a collaborative endeavour of the JALT Writers' Peer Support Group (PSG). Articles in the column provide advice and support for novice writers, experienced writers, or nearly anyone who is looking to write for academic purposes. If you would like to submit a paper for consideration, please contact us.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.writers.ws@jalt.org • Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/psg>

The Structured Abstract Method

Abstracts are, without question, one of the most critical elements of a research paper. They have been likened to movie trailers (albeit with spoilers) because they provide previews with highlights that help viewers decide whether they wish to see the entire work (Alspach, 2017). However, despite their crucial role in communicating the essence of a research paper, abstracts are frequently riddled with common errors (see Appendix).

If it is indeed true that “a poor-quality abstract rarely summarizes a high-quality manuscript” (Alspach, 2017, p. 12), what can be done to avoid such common mistakes? Since abstracts are highly structured texts, highlighting key points to include, via a simple and clear method, can do wonders for helping authors improve overall quality. Over the years, we’ve covered a few such techniques in *The Writer’s Workshop*¹. In this column, I’ll introduce the *structured abstract*, a format commonly used in medical journals, and show how it can be easily adapted for use with ELT-related research and academic papers via Mack’s (2012) *structure method* for abstract writing.

What is a Structured Abstract?

According to Hartley (2003), structured abstracts contain sub-headings that organize information clearly and systematically, such as *background*, *aim(s)*, *method(s)*, *results*, and *conclusions*. Of course these subheadings can be modified to fit a variety of research styles to summarize virtually any academic

article. Compared with traditional abstracts, the structured format has several advantages:

- Contains more information
- Easier to read
- Possibly easier to recall
- Facilitates peer-review for conference proceedings
- Generally welcomed by readers

Despite these advantages, however, structured abstracts are not common in the field of ELT and would not be accepted in most journals, which tend to favor a single-paragraph style. However, awareness of this format can be helpful for writing abstracts that avoid many common weaknesses.

A Structured Approach

Mack (2012) breaks down a very simple three-step method that utilizes a structured abstract to compose a typical one in a single paragraph:

1. Write a structured abstract with the following five sub-headings: *Background*, *Aim*, *Approach*, *Results*, and *Conclusions*. In general, try to write two sentences for each section, more or less to fit within the required word limit. In *Background*, the goal is to situate your research or topic within a larger field, to touch upon any relevant issues that led to your project. This sets up your *Aims*, which are the specific focus of your investigation, i.e. your research question(s). *Approach* covers the methodology you used to collect data; *Results* presents the key findings (including numbers, if possible); and *Conclusions* consists of a key takeaway or two.
2. When you finish and are satisfied with your work, delete the subheadings and combine all the lines into a single paragraph.
3. (Optional) Reread the abstract and make small tweaks to increase readability and flow.

Covering each of these steps will ensure that the abstract is a thorough and effective summary of your paper. To improve the prose, be sure to avoid

1 See Edwards & Moore (2015) for a four-sentence technique for writing short conference presentation abstracts and outline-based approaches for article abstracts. In addition, Muller & Talandis Jr. (2019) recommend using Hoey’s (1983) SPRE (*Situation, Problem/Puzzle, Response, Evaluation*) discourse model for writing quality presentation proposals.

unnecessary phrases such as *in this paper, we report* or *will be discussed* and avoid use of the first person (*I, we, the author*). Keep the focus on your work, not on the paper. Avoid including citations, abbreviations, or acronyms if at all possible, and do not refer to any figures or tables found in the main text. Finally, to ensure greater accuracy, write the abstract last, after you've completed your final draft and are fully in control of every detail.

Essential Elements of an Abstract

Even though a structured approach to writing abstracts can help in many ways, remember to do a final check to make sure you have not left anything out. The following checklist, from Alspach (2017), can help you accomplish this important task:

- ✓ My abstract is a succinct summary of the most important content in my paper.
- ✓ The writing is clear and concise.
- ✓ Abbreviations (if any) are fully spelled out with first use
- ✓ There are no reference citations
- ✓ There are no grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors
- ✓ The format and word count meet all target journal requirements

Final Thoughts

The abstract is a key element of any academic article, as it plays a vital role in drawing readers in.

Along with the title, abstracts help sell your paper to a larger audience and get the right people to read it: "Nothing works better than a well-written title and abstract to make sure that the wrong reader doesn't waste time on the wrong paper, and that the right reader doesn't mistakenly skip over the right paper" (Mack, 2012, para 2). To avoid common pitfalls, the structured abstract writing method is a simple and clear way of making sure nothing essential has been left out.

References

- Alspach, J. A. G. (2017). Writing for publication 101: Why the abstract is so important. *Critical Care Nurse*, 37(4), 12–15. <https://doi.org/10.4037/ccn2017466>
- Edwards, L., & Moore, C. (2015). Creating an abstract: informing and intriguing the reader. *The Language Teacher*, 39(6), 35–37. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT39.6>
- Hartley, J. (2003). Improving the clarity of journal abstracts in psychology. *Science Communication*, 24(3), 366–379. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1075547002250301>
- Hoey, M. (1983). *On the surface of discourse*. George Allen & Unwin.
- Mack, C. (2012). How to write a good scientific paper: Title, abstract, and keywords. *Journal of Micro/Nanolithography, MEMS, and MOEMS*, 11(2), <https://doi.org/10.1117/1.JMM.11.2.020101>
- Muller, T., & Talandis Jr., J. (2019). Tips for getting started in academics: Creating a successful conference proposal. *The Language Teacher*, 43(2), 32–34. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT43.2>

Appendix

Common abstract weaknesses (Alspach, 2017)

Cursory, missing important information	Lacks adequate information for readers to understand what was done and how; fails to include key elements of research methodology
Too long, verbose, excessively detailed	Exceeds required word limit (usually around 250 words); lacks focus and economy of expression; includes extraneous content peripheral to main topic
Includes reference citations	Outside of unique circumstances (i.e. the paper is a direct response to another study), citations within abstracts are not typically required
Disorganized, confusing	Lacks orderly transitions or progression; reuses or transposes the abstract and the paper's introduction; contains information not mentioned in the article
Overstates the data, lacks correlation	Presents conclusions in an inaccurate light; misrepresents the connection between the conclusions and key research findings
Contains grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors	Lack of accuracy reduces credibility of paper



Robert Morel & Satchie Haga

JALT currently has 26 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes an in-depth view of one SIG each issue, providing readers with a more complete picture of the different SIGs within JALT. For information about SIG events, publications, and calls for papers, please visit <http://jalt.org/main/groups>.

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.sig.focus@jalt.org • Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news>

Collaboration is a cornerstone of JALT activities and the same goes for SIGs. While many people often think of collaboration within a SIG, there is an ever-growing amount of collaboration between SIGs as well as among SIGs, chapters, or other groups. This year, the SIG Focus column would like to highlight SIG collaboration in all its forms. Please feel free to contribute or suggest ideas by emailing us at jaltpubs.tlt.sig.focus@jalt.org.

working with all kinds of creative texts (poetry, fiction, film, drama) to discuss teaching and learning with literature. One underexplored area of language learning with literature in Japan is creative writing. CW as an academic discipline is deeply established in the field of humanities, though is comparatively underrepresented as a medium to enhance the language classroom. Recent arguments for its place in the second language (L2) classroom have focused on its capacity to help learners appreciate English as a communicative tool (Hanauer, 2014) and explore their L2 voice and identity, leading to greater motivation (e.g. Maley, 2009; Zhao, 2015). Learner writing is itself a kind of literature, and methods such as workshoping and revising texts is likely to involve uses of short stories, poems, travel writing or excerpts from novels. This event brought together five speakers who teach creative writing as a means of acquiring and producing the target language, in each case, English.

Bringing together speakers from different parts of Japan has typically been one of the more challenging logistical aspects of event planning. The co-hosts were based in Tokyo but session participants, including several new members of the SIG, joined the event from various other prefectures. The online format for this event had some obvious advantages from the perspective of providing a more accessible experience for SIG members. Speakers from any location can join online events more easily, and JALT members from the more rural parts of the country have much to gain from this situation.

For those considering a collaborative event with other SIGs or chapters, hosting events online will help to bring together speakers and audiences from around the country. The five speakers at this event were based in different areas of Japan; Suzanne Kamata in Shikoku, Iain Maloney in Gifu, Cristina Tat and Luke Draper in Kansai, and Atsushi Iida in Gunma. Kamata presented on some of the varied creative writing activities she successfully uses with her education undergraduates. To show the importance of characterization in fiction writing, Maloney provided anecdotes from his own writing. Tat used her experiences from her multilingual reading background to illustrate how extensive reading and

A Chapter and SIG Collaboration: Creative Writing in Language Teaching Contexts

Luke Draper, Mary Hillis, & Tara McIlroy

As SIGs and JALT chapters adapted to the new situation of COVID-19 in 2020, activities moved online and new ways of organising and co-hosting events in the JALT community emerged. In this short SIG Focus article, we report on one collaborative event - Creative Writing in Language Teaching Contexts - held on 29 November 2020. The theme of our event was methods of applying creative writing (CW) to the language classroom, a topic of interest to teachers working with learners at different levels and in different contexts. The planning of the event began with Kyoto JALT, but the pandemic necessitated rescheduling so that it was co-hosted with Tokyo JALT. Both chapters offered continuous support and encouragement to bring about the adapted online event, and the SIG gives credit to both Kyoto and Tokyo for supporting the planning. Here, we discuss how SIGs and chapters may try to collaborate in the new conditions we find ourselves in the wake of the COVID-19 situation.

Collaborative events may seek to explore relatively new areas of interest and research. The Literature in Language Teaching (LiLT) SIG aims to provide opportunities for teachers and researchers

creative writing can be used in combination for L2 learning. Draper's presentation used examples from international CW workshops to discuss the suitability of workshops for L2 learners. Iida focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and explored how he has used poetry writing as a meaningful literacy practice during this difficult time.

As a smaller SIG with an average of 70-75 members, LiLT membership is spread throughout Japan and interests are varied. A recent membership survey revealed that members are most interested in opportunities to present and write about their literature-related language teaching. Gathering in one location for a weekend event may bring certain advantages in terms of direct contact, but online meetings and collaborative events with host chapters may allow for greater connections between

communities of JALT members. The SIG welcomes future collaborations between CW colleagues and all those working with creative texts in L2 contexts. We can be contacted at iltsig@gmail.com and <http://www.iltsig.org>.

References

- Hanauer, D. I. (2014). Appreciating the beauty of second language poetry writing. In Disney, D (ed). *Exploring second language creative writing: Beyond Babel*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Maley, A. (2009). Creative writing for language learners (and teachers). Retrieved from British Council: <http://teachingenglish.org.uk/article/creative-writing-language-learners-teachers>.
- Zhao, Y. (2015). *Second language creative writers: Identities and writing processes*. Multilingual Matters.

[JALT FOCUS] NOTICES



Malcolm Swanson

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

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.focus@jalt.org • Web: <https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/jalt-focus>

Greetings from the Code of Conduct (CoC) and Diversity and Equity Practices (DEP) Committees!

Jackson Lee, Quenby Hoffman Aoki,
Thomas Armundrud (DEP)

Brent Simmonds, Ellie Smith (CoC)

We are two separate committees within JALT committed to improving equity within our organization. We have distinct missions, but our topics overlap: both committees aim to make JALT more safe, inclusive, and welcoming.

Code of Conduct Committee

The CoC exists to ensure JALT is a safe, equitable, respectful, and harmonious environment for everyone, both online and in person. Our purpose

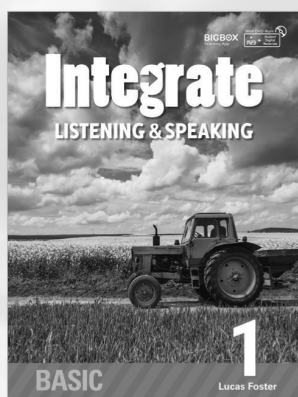
is to promote and maintain this atmosphere and to ensure that all current and future members feel welcome and accepted in all JALT-related capacities. We are currently focused on raising awareness of what constitutes harassment, and of the CoC complaints procedure, through local and national workshops and presentations. We hope to continue building trust between ourselves and the membership, and minimize the fear that surrounds making official complaints. We welcome interested members to join us, to diversify our perspectives, and to ensure we serve the organization as best as we can. Contact us at conduct@jalt.org.

Diversity and Equity Practices Committee

The DEP works to ensure JALT welcomes all forms of diversity (including, but not limited to, gender, native language, national origin, and teaching context) through education, communication, and action. Our goal is to help improve the equity and representation of all JALT organizations, as well as to support JALT members to make positive changes in the field of ELT. We welcome all chapter and SIG officers, and all other members of JALT, to come to us with any questions, comments, or concerns. Contact us at dep@jalt.org.

About the Integrate Listening & Speaking series!

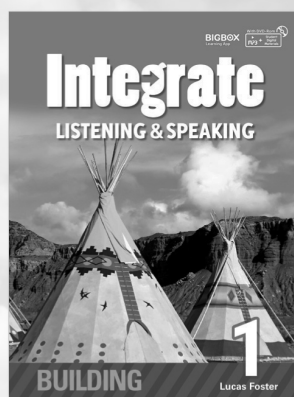
Integrate is a multi-level listening and speaking series for beginner to intermediate learners of English. The series features listening passages in a variety of formats on high-interest topics linked to common academic standards.



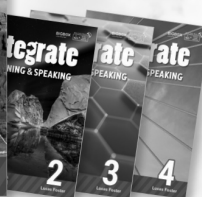
Integrate Listening & Speaking Basic



LEVEL **A1⁺ – A2⁺** Beginner – Upper Beginner



Integrate Listening & Speaking Building



LEVEL **A2⁺ – B1⁺** Beginner – Intermediate

Features

- Two companion series with parallel content
- Pairs Reading with Writing and Listening with Speaking
- Presents a wide variety of passage formats covering fiction and nonfiction
- Clear learning aims linked to common academic standards
- Digital multimedia content; 7 videos + 1 AR per book
- Comprehension and fluency building activities
- Lots of free downloadable supplemental materials for teachers and students

Digital Components



Viewer app
(for VR & videos)



Class Booster
(student learning app)

Components



Student Book
(with CD-ROM of apps and MP3 audio)



Practice Book
(included as an insert in the Student Book)

FOR INQUIRY



- Tryalogue Education Co., Ltd.
- E-mail: contact@tryalogue.co.jp
- URL: www.tryalogue.co.jp



JALT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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

<http://jalt.org>

Annual International Conference

- 1,500 to 2,000 participants
- 毎年1,500名から2,000名が参加します
- Hundreds of workshops and presentations
- 多数のワークショップや発表があります
- Publishers' exhibition - 出版社による教材展があります
- Job Information Centre
- 就職情報センターが設けられます

<http://jalt.org/conference>

JALT Publications

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

<http://jalt-publications.org>

JALT Community

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

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

支部及び分野別研究部会による例会や研究会は日本各地で開催され、以下の分野での発表や研究報告が行われます。バイリンガリズム、CALL、大学外国語教育、共同学習、ジェンダーと語学学習、グローバル問題、日本語教育、自主的学習、語用論・発音・第二言語習得、児童語学教育、生涯語学教育、試験と評価、教材開発等。

<http://jalt.org/main/groups>



JALT Partners

JALT cooperates with domestic and international partners, including (JALTは以下の国内外の学会と提携しています):

- AJET—The Association for Japan Exchange and Teaching
- IATEFL—International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- JACET—The Japan Association of College English Teachers
- PAC—Pan-Asian Consortium of Language Teaching Societies
- TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Membership Categories

All members receive annual subscriptions to *The Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal*, and member discounts for meetings and conferences. *The Language Teacher*や*JALT Journal*等の出版物が1年間送付されます。また例会や大会に割引価格で参加できます。

- Regular 一般会員: ¥13,000
- Student rate (FULL-TIME students of undergraduate/graduate universities and colleges in Japan) 学生会員(国内の全日制の大学または大学院の学生): ¥7,000
- Joint—for two persons sharing a mailing address, one set of publications ジョイント会員 (同じ住所で登録する個人2名を対象とし、JALT出版物は2名に1部): ¥21,000
- Senior rate (people aged 65 and over) シニア会員(65歳以上の方): ¥7,000
- Group (5 or more) ¥8,500/person—one set of publications for each five members グループ会員(5名以上を対象とし、JALT出版物は5名ごとに1部): 1名 ¥8,500

<http://jalt.org/main/membership>

Information

For more information please consult our website <<http://jalt.org>>, ask an officer at any JALT event, or contact JALT's main office.

JALT Central Office

Urban Edge Building, 5th Floor, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016 JAPAN

JALT事務局: 〒110-0016東京都台東区台東1-37-9
アーバンエッジビル5F

t: 03-3837-1630; f: 03-3837-1631; jco@jalt.org

Joining JALT

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

— In Memoriam —

Michelle Steele

Michele...

A name, a song. Sing it with me, won't you? *Michele, ma belle.*

An ethereal being, a wraith, a goddess with a boundless love for family, friends, and students. A devotee of music, poetry, and cats. Someone who truly wanted to change the world for the better.

We had a few things in common: a love for 80s music and the same movies, but not much more. She was so full of light and life, so sweet. Could she be for real? To be honest, my first impression of her was not so kind. I met her as she was walking through a crowd of English teachers, thirsty after a day of conference-going, begging them, each and every one, to please, PLEASE stop talking and listen to the speech being made by the Best of JALT sponsor. I thought to myself, "This girl is stylish, but doesn't she know that you should bring out the beer AFTER the speeches are over? Is she serious?"

But I later learned that that was just one of her many charms. She cared, she truly CARED that the sponsor be heard, and she wanted everyone to be respectful and listen. This woman was the Best of JALT. Michele. As sweet as a song and as soft as a spring breeze, but tough as nails, too.



Steele...

And yes, she was that. We all followed her on her journey, pushing her way through a terrible prognosis, fighting with steely determination to live. And I mean LIVE, not just exist. As her body changed and her strength dwindled, she struggled through, ticking items off her bucket list, making jokes, travelling the world, seeing as many friends as possible, while at the same time honestly showing us the awful progress of pancreatic cancer and the toll it was taking on her spirit and flesh. And yet, the frailer she became, the brighter her spirit shone, like steel, the woman of steel, Michele was being burnished. Her spirit flamed out and warmed us all and changed our lives. As many of you know, when I'm sick, I'll whine until the cows come home, but not Michele. If only we could all move through the world in pain and sickness with such grace, beauty, humour, and determination... well, that would be something wouldn't it.

She approached me at Kevin Cleary's funeral, surprised that I had come "all the way" from Niigata for it, and thanked me for my kindness. I was surprised and happy. I hadn't given it a thought, but this woman who hardly knew me had. When looking over my past messages with her, I found that I was one of the first people she told about her prognosis. In retrospect, it was an undeserved honour, but I'm glad she did, so that I could knit her a hat in yellow baby-soft wool and send her a hot pink t-shirt that said "F@ck cancer!" I didn't know if she would wear it, but she did and even took a picture of herself, snarling at the camera as if it were cancer itself, daring it. "Bring it on," said her look. Sadly, it won, but she fought. I don't know if I could fight that hard. I believe I would have given in at the start.

Kevin Cleary and the late, great Tim Allan of the chapter formerly known as Nagasaki JALT are two other people who, besides Michele, inspired and influenced me to devote more time to JALT. After Tim's death, and Kevin's death, I started taking on more responsibilities and now find myself on the Board of Directors. I am grateful to have had all of them in my lives and know you are, too. And so to them, wherever they are, I say this: "My speech is over. You can drink your beer now."

— Melodie Cook



JALT2021 – *Reflections and New Perspectives*

Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

The year of 2020 was epic. A cascading run of events took humanity to a breaking point in so many ways. We had to adjust our lifestyles and behaviors all with the uncertainty of whether we would be able to return the normal we knew, or be forced to embrace a new normal.

Our community of language educators, learners, and administrators met the challenges brought on by the unfortunate circumstances we were living in; professionally and personally we had to adjust. JALT2021 will provide a platform for the stories and voices within our community. What did people go through? How did they persevere? What lessons did they learn? What does the future hold?

Our community created new networks, supported each other, and embraced technology to create transformative new workflows. Learners had to figure out and embrace new ways to learn. Administrators had to find balance between keeping education systems functioning and protecting school communities.

A significant part of our academic lives was spent online, including JALT2020. The vision for the online conference was born out of the reality on the ground. The vision for JALT2021 is for participants, live on-site and virtually, to reflect on their paths, discuss them, and to show the new perspectives they have gained in dealing with all that has been unleashed by COVID19. JALT2021 sees our international conference back at The Granship in Shizuoka from Friday, November 12 to Monday, November 15, but also with an online presence, thus combining our physical and digital states of being.

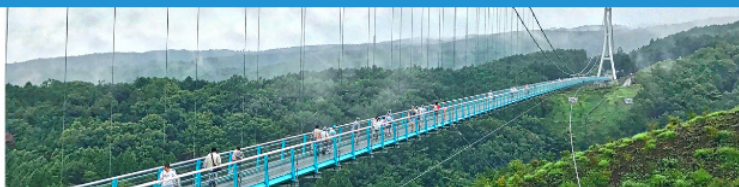
JALT2021 will be our first international conference and educational materials exhibition with both online and face-to-face sessions, with spaces dedicated to interaction between remote and onsite participants. We look forward to having you share this new journey, and engage with your reflections and new perspectives as we work to forward our overall communities of practice.

Call for Presentation Proposals

Deadline: 11:59pm, Japan Standard Time,
Sunday, March 14, 2021

<https://jalt.org/conference/call-proposals>

<https://jalt.org/conference/jalt2021>



PANSIG 2021 – MAY 15-16, 2021 IN MISHIMA, SHIZUOKA

This year's PanSIG conference is a date to celebrate: You are kindly invited to take part in the 20th Japan Association for Language Teaching's annual PanSIG Conference. The conference theme is **Local and Global Perspectives: Plurilingualism and Multilingualism**. We hope to hold a hybrid conference with online sessions and live sessions at Nihon University in Mishima, Shizuoka. The program is attractive with presentations, forums, invited speakers, and a panel discussion. Looking forward to meeting you at PanSIG 2021!

<https://pansig.org> • <https://pansig2021.eventzil.la>

Writing Activity

Useful Vocabulary:

Scene 1

What happened? (How many characters, names, places, what happened...)

Scene 2

What happened? (How many characters, names, places, what happened...)

Scene 3

What happened? (How many characters, names, places, what happened...)

[illegible]

Name: _____ Class: _____ #: _____