The Language Teacher

http://jalt-publications.org/tlt

Feature Articles

TLT Interviews

My Share

JALT Praxis

JALT Publications

Contents

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

*Learning to Teach
Teaching to Learn*

In this month's issue . . .

Welcome to the May/June issue of *The Language Teacher* for 2021. As we enter the second month of the new academic year, many of you are undoubtedly still busy with preparing your classes and orienteering your students. After the turbulent year that was 2020, we hope that your classes in 2021 will be fruitful.

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Rob Kerrigan, and I am the new Assistant Editor. I teach in the Department of Global Studies at Shitennoji University, in Osaka. I have been a JALT member since 2015. I joined the *TLT* crew first as a proofreader in 2017 and then moved up to copy editor in 2019.

Without further ado, let me introduce the current issue of *TLT*. In this issue, we have two Feature Articles. The first, from **Daniel Roy Pearce,** describes a survey of assistant language teachers (ALTs) in elementary schools to dispel the myth that ALTs are a homogenous and monolingual group. The second, from **Takaaki Hiratsuka** and **Koichi Okuma**, investigates the perceptions of team-teaching from the perspective of pre-service teachers.

Please also take the time to look over our regular columns, which should prove to be informative and practical. In *TLT Interviews*, **Aviva Ueno** interviews **Andy Curtis**, and **Joshua Cohen** interviews **Timothy Rasinski**. There are four *My Share* articles, which should be engaging to your students whether you are teaching in the classroom or online. We have two articles in *TLT Wired*. The first, from **Rachel Barington** and **Branden Kirchmeyer**, is about using *H5P* to make interactive content for your classes. The second, from **Steve Paton**, is about how to use the *VLOOKUP* function in spreadsheets. In *Younger Learners*, **Kim Horne** describes a useful technique to keep kindergarten students engaged. In *Book Reviews*, we have a review of *Prism Reading 1* by **Jay Palarino**. In *Recently Reviewed*, we have a collection of materials that you might consider for your classrooms. In *Teaching Assistance*, **Justin Mejia** introduces four suggestions for implementing online lessons. Finally, to finish off the current issue, **Scott Gardner** proposes a novel use for the classic song, *Happy Birthday*.

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

Lastly, I would like to thank all the authors, editors, copy editors, proofreaders, translators, and the many other volunteers, for their kind and welcoming words and for their tireless dedication to ensure that this publication goes out. Most importantly, I would like to give my sincerest thanks to **Peter Ferguson**, the outgoing Assistant Editor. In addition to guiding me on how to take on this new responsibility, he has done a remarkable job over the last few years ensuring that the *TLT* crew were informed and that the production of each issue went smoothly. It will be hard to live up to Peter's and my other predecessors' excellent standards, but I am very excited about taking on this new position and will do my best to ensure that the high quality of work will continue. I wish Peter all the best in his new position as Editor for the *Postconference Publication*. Finally, to the readers, I hope that you enjoy this issue and find it useful.

— *Rob Kerrigan,* TLT *Assistant Editor*

T*he Language Teacher* 2021年5/6月号へようこそ。新年度も2か月目に入りましたが、今も多くの方が授業準備や学生へのオリエンテーションに追われていることでしょう。激動の2020年を経て、2021年の皆さんの授業が実り多いものになることを願っています。

まずは自己紹介をさせてください。新しく副編集長に就任したRob Kerriganと申します。大阪の四天王寺大学国際キャリア学科で教えています。2015年からJALTの会員となり、*TLT*の編集には、まず2017年に校正者として参加し、2019年にコピーエディター（校訂者）に昇格していました。

早速ですが、今号の*TLT*についてご紹介します。今号では、2つのFeature Articlesを掲載しています。1つ目は、Daniel Roy Pearceによるもので、小学校の言語指導助手 (ALT) が均質で一言語話者の集団であるという神話を払拭するために、ALTを対象としたアンケート調査について紹介しています。2つ目の研究は、Takaaki HiratsukaとKoichi Okumaによるもので、教員養成課程在籍者の視点からティームティーチングに対する認識を調査したものです。

また、定期掲載のコラムでも役立つ情報や実践を紹介していますので、目を通してみてください。*TLT* Interviewsでは、Aviva UenoがAndy Curtisに、またJoshua CohenがTimothy Rasinskiにインタビューしています。My Shareには4つの記事があり、教室でもオンライン授業でも、生徒の興味を引くものになっています。*TLT* Wiredには2つの記事があります。最初の記事は、Rachel BaringtonとBranden Kirchmeyerによるもので、H5Pを使って授業用のインタラクティブなコンテンツを作るというもので

す。もう1つは、Steve Patonによる、スプレッドシートでのVLOOKUP関数の使い方についてです。Younger Learnersでは、Kim Horneが幼稚園児を飽きさせないための役立つテクニックを紹介しています。Book Reviewsでは、Jay Palarino著*Prism Reading 1*のレビューを掲載しています。Recently Reviewedでは、教室で使ってみたくなるような教材を集めました。Teaching Assistanceでは、Justin Mejiaがオンライン授業を実施するための4つの提案を紹介しています。最後に、今号の締めくくりとして、Scott Gardnerが古典的な歌「ハッピーバースデー」の斬新な使い方を提案しています。

最後になりましたが、執筆者、編集者、校訂者、校正者、翻訳者、その他多くのボランティアの方々の親切な歓迎の言葉と、本号発行のためのたゆまぬ努力に感謝いたします。最も重要なことは、退任するPeter Ferguson副編集長に心からの感謝を捧げることです。この新しい職責をどのように担うかについて私を指導してくれただけでなく、彼はこの数年間、*TLT*のスタッフに情報を提供し、各号の制作がスムーズに行われるよう、素晴らしい仕事をしてくれました。彼や他の前任者の素晴らしい基準に応えるのは難しいことですが、私はこの新しい役職を引き受けることにわくわくしていますし、質の高い仕事が継続されるように最善を尽くします。Peterの*Postconference Publication*の編集者としての新しい職務が成功することを祈っています。最後になりましたが、読者の皆様におかれましては、本号をお楽しみいただき、お役立ていただければ幸いです。

— *Rob Kerrigan,* TLT *Assistant Editor*

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

Homogenous Representations, Diverse Realities: Assistant Language Teachers at Elementary Schools

Daniel Roy Pearce

Kyoto Notre Dame University

As of 2020, foreign language as a subject has become compulsory for upper grades in Japanese elementary schools, and MEXT recommends the use of assistant language teachers (ALTs) in foreign language classes. While ALTs represent diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, MEXT documents for Japanese teachers portray them as homogenous monolingual native speakers of English. To better understand the linguistic repertoires of ALTs, this study investigates the languages ALTs know. The findings suggest that, contrary to MEXT portrayals, most ALTs have ability in at least one language other than English. With reference to the goals of foreign language education, this paper argues that MEXT should more accurately represent the diversity of ALTs in their literature and actively promote the inclusion of their other languages in classroom practice.

2020年度より、日本の小学校高学年には教科としての外国語が必修化された。文部科学省は外国語の授業における外国語指導助手（Assistant Language Teachers: ALTs）の積極的な導入を勧めている。多くのALTが様々な言語や文化的背景を持っているにもかかわらず、文部科学省の教員向け資料における記述の多くは、未だにALTをモノリンガルの英語母語話者としてのみ想定している。ALTの運用可能な言語について調査した先行研究が不足しているため、本研究は、小学校勤務のALTを対象に、使用言語に関するアンケート調査を実施した。結果として、ALTのほとんどが英語以外に1つ以上の言語を使用できることが判明した。本論文は、外国語科目の目標に照らして、文部科学省のALTに関する資料の更新の必要性を示すとともに、ALTの持つ英語以外の言語の知識をも外国語の授業に取り入れることの重要性を主張する。

As of April 2020, foreign language as a subject has become compulsory for fifth- and sixth-grade elementary school students, and foreign language activities have been brought forward to the third and fourth grades. The introduction of foreign languages was hastily decided, and many schools remain under-equipped to teach them (Terasawa, 2017). To compensate, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) recommends using assistant language teachers, or ALTs (MEXT, 2013; 2017a, 2017b).

ALTs have traditionally been represented in policy documents as (monolingual) native English speakers. However, previous research suggests that ALTs are a lot more diverse than such representations suggest. Around 30% of elementary school ALTs report having a native language other than English, and a similar number come from countries outside the traditional Anglosphere (Sophia University, 2017). As yet, no study has examined the full linguistic repertoires of ALTs. This demographic study therefore seeks to determine the linguistic resources of ALTs and consider how they might be applied to foreign language education in elementary schools.

Goals of Foreign Language Education

Although foreign language education in Japanese elementary schools came about in response to government rhetoric that regarded English as an essential element of globalization, there was resistance within MEXT to adopting early English education as a full subject, which resulted in foreign language activities being introduced in 2011 (Terasawa, 2019). Foreign language activities were to be an unevaluated subject in which students would engage in speaking and listening activities to familiarize themselves with foreign languages. Policy, however, continued to advocate for early English education (see, for instance, the *Plan for English Education Reform in Response to Globalization*, MEXT, 2013). Foreign language is now a full subject, although remnants of resistance to early English education are visible in current MEXT documents. While in the Course of Study, both foreign language as a subject and foreign language activities directives state that the target language to be taught is, "in principle, English" (MEXT, 2017b, p. 164, translation by the author), the commentary to the Course of Study emphasizes the need for awareness of other languages and cultures:

> Many people in the world speak languages other than English. Therefore, in order to understand the people in the world, it is important to take into account the daily lives of people who use languages other than English (MEXT, 2017c, p. 134, translation by the author).

Thus, while much of the literature and government documents refer to early English education, it is clear that MEXT did not intend for foreign language to be English *only*. This can be seen in the

goals of the foreign language subject, which emphasize development of "foundational qualities and competences necessary to attempt communication" (MEXT, 2017b, p.156, translation by the author), rather than knowledge of specific languages themselves.

Representations of ALTs

Despite MEXT's recognition of other languages, Japanese-language documents curiously portray ALTs as homogeneous monolingual native speakers of English. While the only reference to ALTs in the Course of Study is that HRTs should "devise lessons with the help of *native speakers*" (MEXT, 2017b, p.162, translation and emphasis by the author), the 2017 *Guidebook for Foreign Languages Activities and Foreign Language*, a MEXT resource for HRTs, gives more detail:

Table 1

Expected Roles of Homeroom Teachers (HRTs) and Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Team-Taught Elementary Classes (MEXT, 2017a, pp.109–110, translation by the author)

HRTs' expected roles	• Observe students' understanding while progressing the lessons • Alongside the ALT, demonstrate how to conduct activities • Pick up on students' comments and noticing, and have the ALT reply with easy English • Make the ALT repeat, or adjust speed of, remarks in English for the students to listen to • Conduct shared evaluation, and in reflective tasks, praise the students' noticing
ALTs' expected roles	• Alongside the HRT, demonstrate how to conduct activities • Introducing life and culture of their home country relevant to the current unit, and learn about the students' country through interaction • Pick up on students' comments and noticing directly, or with the assistance of the HRT, and reply with easy English and gestures • Repeat and have students listen to the correct native-speaker pronunciation • Engage in conversation with the students using English they have learned • Conduct shared evaluation, and in reflective tasks, praise the students' skills

According to the guidebook, use of a foreign language (English) is primarily a role of ALTs, who are referred to as native speakers. Furthermore, throughout the guidebook the HRT is instructed to clarify ALTs' statements by using Japanese, implying that ALTs are monolingual. No other foreign languages are mentioned. It is possible that such representations are partially responsible for the continued use of ALTs as 'human tape-recorders' simply providing model English pronunciations, resulting in a feeling amongst many ALTs that they are underutilized (Kano & Ozeki, 2018).

Given the global predominance of English in a number of fields, it is reasonable for educational policy to emphasize that particular language. Nevertheless, English is not the only global language, and where it is prominent, is often intertwined with local and other languages (see, for instance, Forlot, 2018). If early foreign language education has been introduced as a response to globalization, and if MEXT policy recognizes the importance of other languages, ALTs' other languages should also be recognized and capitalized upon.

Capitalizing on Linguistic Resources

In advocating for the inclusion of ALTs' other languages, I do not suggest that each should be taken up as a target language for acquisition or given individual recognition in the curriculum. However, from a plurilingual view of linguistic competence, they may be incorporated into classes to help achieve the primary goal of the foreign language subjects as stated by MEXT; developing the foundational qualities and competences necessary for communication[1].

Plurilingual education stands in opposition to traditional language teaching, which has often treated knowledge from other languages as interferences, rather than aids to construction of new linguistic knowledge, or incomplete knowledge of the target language with the (somewhat pejorative) term *semilingualism* (see, for instance, Stroud, 2004). Understanding that bilinguals apply their languages for specific, and differing, purposes, and therefore very rarely have equal or balanced knowledge across their languages (Grosjean, 1989), plurilingual education takes a positive view of partial knowledge of languages as valuable, forming part of what is called "linguistic capital," a set of linguistic assets that are employed according to the situation and the interlocutor (Coste et al., 2009, p. 20).

The plurilingual viewpoint also values knowledge *about* languages as well as knowledge *of specific* languages. Several pluralistic approaches to language

teaching have been developed based on the concept of plurilingual competence, including *Awakening to Languages* (Oyama, 2016), which makes use of multiple language varieties simultaneously. Some of the characteristics of this approach are as follows:

a. Using multiple languages simultaneously: Through exposure to, examination and comparison of multiple languages, and the building of hypotheses about language form and function, learners acquire the skills necessary to pursue a target language (for instance, English).

b. Using languages that the ALTs (or children in the classroom) know: Through active take-up and inclusion of input from ALTs (or children) about languages that they know, their experiences and knowledge can be given fuller recognition in the classroom.

c. Teacher as facilitator: It is not necessary for teachers to have a perfect knowledge of the languages introduced, but rather work together with their students to observe and hypothesize, and to promote the holistic study of language (adapted from Oyama & Pearce, 2019).

If one understands what MEXT calls the foundational qualities and competences necessary for communication as resonating with the concepts of plurilingual and pluricultural competence, then capitalizing upon ALTs' other languages may help to foster such competences in students. Incorporating ALTs' full linguistic repertoires can be an aid to the acquisition of a specific target language (English), while also conveying a more accurate representation of foreign language users (ALTs), one that recognizes them as speakers of languages other than English. Before such theory can influence policy documents on ALTs, however, it is necessary to establish the linguistic resources ALTs have at their disposal.

The Current Study

Purpose

The purposes of this demographic study were to uncover the different languages that ALTs have access to and to establish whether ALTs employ these languages in their lessons, as many may have access to languages other than English.

Participants

The participants in this study were 161 elementary-school ALTs, 114 females, 44 males, and 1 non-binary (2 preferred not to say). 88.2% (n=142)

were currently employed as ALTs at the time of the study[2]. Participants were recruited via personal connections, including local boards of education, and through Facebook groups for ALTs employed by dispatch companies[3]. Perhaps due to the method of data collection, JET Programme participants are overrepresented in the data at 49% (see Table 2, below), whereas JET ALTs only account for roughly a quarter of the population (MEXT, 2016). As the primary goal of this research was to gain a general idea of ALTs' linguistic repertoires this discrepancy was considered acceptable[4].

Table 2
Employment types of ALTs surveyed

Type of Employment	Number (Percentage)
Hired by a private/dispatch company	53 (33%)
Directly hired by board of education or by school	23 (14%)
Recruited under the JET Programme	79 (49%)
Other	6 (4%)
Total	161 (100%)

Questionnaire

The 14-item questionnaire was prepared in English and Japanese (see Appendix for the English version) and conducted between February and March 2020 via a Google form. The respondents were told that participation was voluntary, data collected was anonymous, and that responses could be retracted at any time. An open-ended question was included, in which any other relevant information could be volunteered, to which 47 responded. Results relevant to linguistic repertoires will be explored below.

Results

Native Languages

English was the native language of 95% of respondents (n=153), including 20 native bilinguals (English + another language). This number differs somewhat from earlier data from a survey conducted at Sophia University, in which around 30% of respondents reported native languages other than English (2017). This discrepancy may be due to differences in sampling methods, and because the previous study only reported discrete languages and

did not discriminate between bilingual and monolingual native speakers.

Figure 1

ALTs' native languages

- English, 83%, n=133
- English bilingual, 12%, n=20
- Other, 4%, n=6
- Other bilingual, 1%, n=2
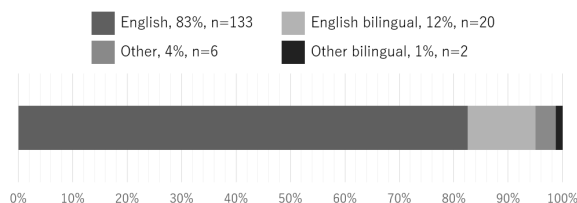
Japanese and Additional Languages

Despite the apparently lower figure of other native languages, results regarding Japanese ability were consistent with those reported in the Sophia University (2017) study. Most respondents (n=159) reported some degree of Japanese ability (Figure 2).

Figure 2

ALTs' Japanese ability

- None, 1%, n=2
- Beginner, 31%, n=50
- Intermediate, 49%, n=79
- Advanced, 15%, n=24
- Native or native-like, 4%, n=6
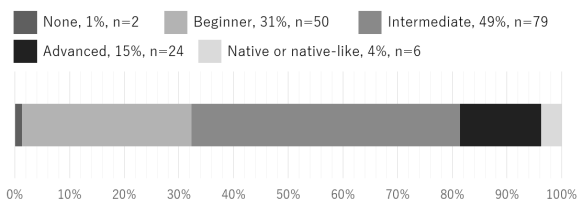
Only 43% (n=70) reported knowing no other language than Japanese and English. Regarding ALTs' knowledge of other languages, 33% (n=53) reported one other language, 16% (n=25) reported two, and 8% (n=13) reported knowledge of three or more other languages (Figure 3). Self-reporting of ability in each language varied from beginner to native-like (for a full list of ALTs' languages, see Pearce, 2021).

Figure 3

ALTs' additional languages

- None, 43%, n=70
- One, 33%, n=53
- Two, 16%, n=25
- Three or more, 8%, n=13
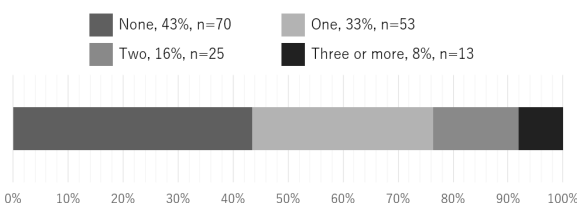
Use of Japanese in Lessons

Regarding use of Japanese in class/lessons, responses varied considerably, from "always" to "never", although nearly half (48%, n=78) of respondents used Japanese either "occasionally" or "frequently" (Figure 4).

Figure 4

"How often do you use Japanese in your lessons?"

- Never, 7%, n=11
- Always, 6%, n=9
- Very Frequently 7%, n=12
- Very Rarely 22%, n=35
- Frequently 20%, n=33
- Rarely 10%, n=16
- Occasionally 28%, n=45
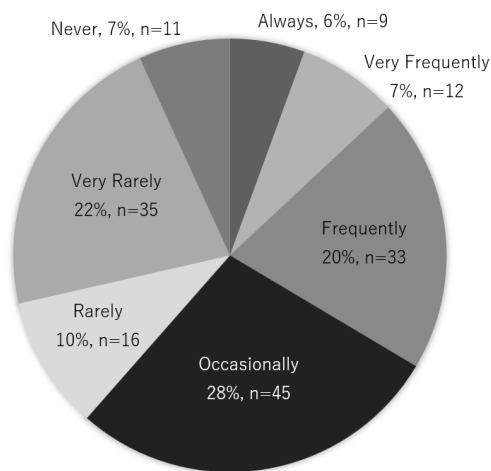
In the voluntary open-ended question, 19 respondents elaborated on their use of Japanese. From these responses, for most ALTs, Japanese use seemed to be a personal choice. Four respondents stated that they adjust the amount of Japanese based on the students' grade, typically using more Japanese for lower grades. Four others specified that they use Japanese for complex instructions or to ease communication. Two respondents emphasized the importance of Japanese use by ALTs for social cohesion: "using a little Japanese in class combats the social block that many Japanese people seem to have developed against foreigners as someone automatically difficult to understand," and "keeping their interest and the doors of communication open is important enough to justify using some Japanese, since refusing to 'meet them halfway' often results in anxiety and giving up attempts to communicate." Two respondents indicated that Japanese use was forbidden by their dispatch companies, one of whom stated:

> We're instructed by our company not to use Japanese at all (or I would probably use more). That said, it's sometimes necessary for me to repeat myself in Japanese quietly for the HRT's benefit, [or] use Japanese to explain hard concepts to students.

As language management research (Lüdi et al., 2016) and our respondent above have shown, overt policy does not necessarily reflect how interactants actually manage their languages. Given research on the effectiveness of L1 use in the EFL classroom (e.g., Shin et al., 2019), and the emergence of sociolinguistically-informed pedagogical approaches such as translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014), the legitimacy of forbidding ALTs from using Japanese is somewhat dubious, and may serve only to reinforce in the minds of both young learners and HRTs the idea that *foreigners = monolingual English speakers*, which can be considered counterproductive considering the multilingual reality of the globalized world (Forlot, 2018). It seems that at least some ALTs are cognizant of this and reject policies that artificially limit their language use.

Use of Other Languages in Lessons

Regarding the use of other languages, no respondent replied with "always" or "very frequently", and only two (1.3%) reported that they include other languages "frequently". While 17% (n=27) stated that they incorporated other languages occasionally, the majority, 82% (n=132) of respondents replied that they used other languages in lessons "rarely" (n=30), "very rarely" (n=55), or "never" (n=47).

Figure 5

"How often do you include languages other than English or Japanese in your lessons?"
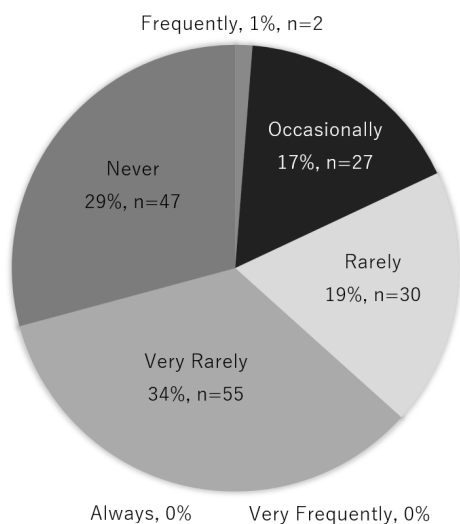
From among the volunteered information, 16 respondents made reference to their other-language use. Introduction of other-language greetings or numbers/counting seemed to be common (six re-

sponses) whereas four respondents stated that they introduced words from other languages only if they appeared in the textbook. Some gave more in-depth reasons for their use of other languages:

> I often use other foreign languages to get kids interested in foreign languages and cultures. I try to help kids realise that outside of Japan, there is a lot more than English speaking countries, and that each country is unique.

> I think it's important to expose children to many different cultures and languages, so sometimes I find it interesting to talk about Spanish numbers or something like that.

Here, the ALTs displayed an understanding of, and a desire to share, the multilingual and multicultural reality of the globalized world. One respondent expressed a disappointment in the lack of HRT enthusiasm for the inclusion of other languages:

> I teach greetings in multiple languages in our lessons about other countries. I also teach the song Feliz Navidad in December. I feel this is too surface level, and I'd like to do more. I wish HRTs would encourage this more too.

This lack of enthusiasm on the part of HRTs may be a result of the portrayal of foreign language at elementary schools as early English education, and of representations of ALTs as monolingual native-English speakers in Japanese-language documents. As plurilingual approaches have shown the potential to increase recognition of minority languages and create more inclusive classes within the Japanese context (Oyama & Pearce, 2019), they may also provide an avenue for including ALTs' other languages. This could potentially alleviate the persistent use of ALTs as 'human tape recorders' by giving ALTs a more active and varied role in the classroom. In turn, it might also help to reduce feelings of underutilization and isolation that ALTs sometimes feel (Kano & Ozeki, 2018).

Discussion
Homogenous Representations, Diverse Realities

As the results have demonstrated, the ALT population is considerably more diverse than their representation in MEXT documents as monolingual native-English speakers. Nearly all respondents (n=159) affirmed some level of Japanese ability, and the majority (n=91) reported abilities in languages other than English and Japanese. Homogenous representations of ALTs are therefore not only

ARTICLES

JALT PRAXIS

JALT FOCUS

inaccurate but may also be problematic, resulting in the 'hiding away' of ALTs' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. HRTs typically do not have free periods during the school day, and thus often have no opportunities to talk with ALTs to learn about their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Much of their understanding of ALTs is therefore likely to come from either prior experiences or the afore-mentioned MEXT documents. It has been pointed out in the previous literature that "many ALTs... do not get information regarding their school mission, lesson planning, and curriculum" (Ohtani, 2010, p. 43), but the same can be said of HRTs; they do not get sufficient information about ALTs. While MEXT documents can continue to emphasize English as the target language, they should be updated to include more accurate representations of ALTs.

Making the Most of ALTs' Linguistic and Cultural Repertoires

It has been suggested exposure to multiple languages has a positive effect on the learning of specific languages in monolinguals (Bice & Kroll, 2019). As such, there is a strong argument for the inclusion of ALTs' other languages in the class-room. This might be achieved through plurilingual approaches to teaching. For instance, *Awakening to Languages*, described above, which has already been implemented at some elementary schools in Japan (Oyama & Pearce, 2019) may be one way to include ALTs' other languages in a manner that is not "too surface level," but encourages genuine learning.

We must also remember that ALTs are not just linguistic resources, but also cultural informants, as can be seen in the roles expected of ALTs (Table 1, above). An ALT might capitalize on their other languages from a cultural informant point of view. ALTs could include information on languages in their home countries – including the role of English, if they are from a place where English is a minority language. Alternatively, they might share indigenous or minority languages, foreign languag-es they know, or information about the roles of different language varieties in their countries.

Given that prior research has cast doubt on the long-term effectiveness of English-only education at elementary schools when compared with chil-dren who began English study at the secondary level (Terasawa, 2017; Uematsu, 2015), there is likely little reason to focus on ALTs' English ability alone. Rather, capitalizing on their full linguistic and cul-tural repertoires may be more in line with the stated goals of foreign language education at elementary

schools, "to develop... the foundational qualities and competences necessary to attempt communica-tion" (MEXT, 2017b, p. 156).

Concluding Remarks

This demographic study has shed some light on the diversity of ALTs' linguistic repertoires. In contrast to homogenous portrayals of ALTs as monolingual native-English speakers, it was found that almost all ALTs reported a degree of Japanese ability, and the majority reported knowledge of at least one other language. It was argued that these linguistic resources should be capitalized upon through plurilingual approaches in the classroom to better achieve the goals of foreign language educa-tion. Such approaches are likely to require a greater awareness of ALT diversity, and of plurilingual approaches, which therefore need to be reflected in policy and teacher training. Having established that ALTs have a remarkably diverse range of languages, follow-up research into how ALTs include other languages and cultures in their classrooms may also help to better inform policy and to enrich foreign language education in Japanese elementary schools.

Notes

1. The "fundamental qualities and competences necessary for communication," are not defined in the Course of Study, and there is thus am-biguity in policy, which has put teachers in the position of having to define these for themselves (see, for example, Ohtani, 2014).

2. ALTs have a variety of employment types. Initial-ly recruited only via the government-sponsored JET Programme beginning in 1987, in the 1990s employment types expanded to include ALTs di-rectly hired by local Boards of Education, private sector companies which contract ALTs and dis-patch them to local schools, and volunteers. Of the current ALT population, recent figures show that volunteers (including Japanese nationals) comprised around 41% of ALTs, dispatch com-panies around 26%, JET Programme participants around 18%, and direct-hire ALTs, around 15% (MEXT, 2016).

3. The author reached out to four major ALT dispatch companies for assistance in distribut-ing the survey. One company responded with a refusal, and the other three did not reply. While the author understands the right of the compa-nies to refuse cooperation, given that ALTs are involved in public education, this inaccessibility to information is problematic.

4. Given that non-JET ALTs show a greater diversity in mother tongue and country of origin (Sophia University, 2017), it is likely that diversity in ALTs' linguistic repertoires is even greater than in the results reported here.

Acknowledgements

References

Bice, K. & Kroll, J. F. (2019). English only? Monolinguals in linguistically diverse contexts have an edge in language learning. *Brain and Language. 196,* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl. 2019.104644

Coste, D., Moore, D., & Zarate, G. (2009). *Plurilingual and pluricultural competence*. Council of Europe.

Forlot, G. (2018). English in the Educational Expanding Circle: Power, Pride, and Prejudice. In F. Le Lièvre, M. Anquetil, M. Derivry-Plard, C. Fäcke, & L. Verstraete-Hansen (Eds.), *Langues et cultures dans l'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur au XXI e siècle*, (pp. 91–111). Peter Lang.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765_4

Grosjean, F. (1989). Neurolinguists, beware! The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person. *Brain and Language, 36*(1), 3–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/0093-934X(89)90048-5

Kano, A., & Ozeki, H. (2018). Insights from elementary school ALTs in Japan. *JES Journal, 18*, 116–131. https://doi.org/10.20597/jesjournal.18.01_116

Lüdi, G., Höchle Meier, K., & Yanaprasart, P. (Eds.) (2016). *Managing plurilingual and intercultural practices in the workplace.* John Benjamins Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1075/mdm.4

MEXT. (2013). グローバル化に対応した英語教育改革実施計画. https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/houdou/25/12/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2013/12/17/1342458_01_1.pdf

MEXT. (2016). 平成２７年度公立小学校における英語教育実施状況調査の結果について. https://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/04/05/1369254_4_1.pdf

MEXT. (2017a). 小学校外国語活動・外国語研修ガイドブック. http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kokusai/gaikokugo/1387503.htm

MEXT. (2017b). 小学校学習指導要領（平成29年告示）. http://www.mext.go.jp/ component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2018/09/05/1384661_4_3_2.pdf

MEXT. (2017c). 小学校学習指導要領（平成 29 年告示）解説 外国語活動・外国語編. http://www.https://www.mext.go.jp/component/a_menu/education/micro_detail/__icsFiles/afieldfile/2019/03/18/1387017_011.pdf

Ohtani, C. (2010). Problems in the assistant language teacher system and English activity at Japanese public elementary schools. *Educational Perspectives, 43*, 38-45.

Ohtani, Y. (2014).「言語・文化」の授業づくり.『2013年度なら教育大学附属小学校研究紀要』，136–154.

Oyama, M. (2016). 言語への目覚め活動：複言語主義に基づく教授法. Hitsuji shobo.

Oyama, M., & Pearce, D. R. (2019). Promoting bilingualism in Japanese elementary schools: Exploring the possibilities of the awakening to languages approach. *Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism, 25*(1), 65–86.

Pearce, D. R. (2021, forthcoming). 小学校の外国語指導助手（ALT）はモノリンガルか―単一言語教育に従う複言語話者の位相―.『言語政策』，17.

Shin, J. Y., Dixon, L. Q., & Choi, Y. (2019). An updated review on use of L1 in foreign language classrooms. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2019.1684928

Stroud, C. (2004). Rinkeby Swedish and semilingualism in language ideological debates: A Bourdieuean perspective. *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 8*(2), 196–214. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2004.00258.x

Sophia University. (2017). 小学校・中学校・高等学校におけるALTの実態に関する大規模アンケート調査―最終報告書. https://www.bun-eido.co.jp/aste/alt_final_report.pdf

Terasawa, T. (2017). 小学校英語政策の問題点. In Y. Fujiwara, K. Naka, & T. Terasawa (Eds.), これからの英語教育の話をしよう. Hitsuji shobo.

Terasawa, T. (2019). 小学校英語の政策過程：外国語活動必修化をめぐる中教審関係部会の議論の分析.『関西学院大学社会学部紀要』, *132*, 13–30.

Uematsu, S. (2015). *Long-term effects of learning English: Experiences from Japanese primary schools*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-493-1

Daniel Roy Pearce is a lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at Kyoto Notre Dame University, and a PhD candidate at Kyoto University. He has five years of teaching experience as an ALT in Yamagata Prefecture. He holds a Japanese teacher's license (English: Junior and Senior High School) and is an advisory member of the MEXT textbook review committee. His research interests include team teaching, teaching training, plurilingualism, language policy, and sociolinguistics.

Appendix

Questionnaire items

1. How old are you?
2. What is your gender?
3. How many combined years have you lived in Japan?
4. Are you currently employed as an ALT? (f no, please complete the remainder of the survey with regards to your last experience as an ALT).
5. How many combined years have you worked as an ALT at elementary schools?
6. In what prefecture/municipality do you teach?
7. What is your current employment status?
8. What is your country of origin? (Where you were born: If you are a JET, and this is different to the country you applied to the JET Programme through, please specify)
9. What is (are) your native language(s)?
10. What is your approximate level of Japanese?
11. What languages other than your native language or Japanese do you use or know, and what is your rough proficiency in them (Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced, Native or Native-like)? If none, please write 'none'.
12. How often do you use Japanese in your lessons.
13. How often do you include languages other than English or Japanese in your lessons?
14. Any extra information related to the questions above (or anything else?)

"I Can Teach Alone!": Perceptions of Pre-service Teachers on Team-Teaching Practices

Takaaki Hiratsuka
Ryukoku University

Koichi Okuma
Chinen Senior High School

Team teaching by local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) and foreign assistant language teachers (ALTs) has met with widespread approval and attracted great empirical attention. It is notable, however, that no study to date has explored the perceptions of pre-service teachers on team-teaching practices. The absence of such research is surprising and regrettable, considering that pre-service teachers are required under the new national foreign language curriculum to gain a deep understanding about team teaching in their teacher training courses and that they will inevitably team teach English with ALTs in their future careers. In this study, we collected data from three pre-service teachers on this subject through semi-structured interviews. From the data, three dialectics with regard to team-teaching practices were inferred: (a) encouraging/intimidating, (b) helpful/burdensome, and (c) worthwhile/unnecessary. Based on these findings, suggestions are provided for addressing these ambivalent perceptions towards team teaching in pre-service teacher training courses.

日本人英語教師(JTE)と外国語指導助手(ALT)によるティームティーチングは各方面から高く評価されている。同時に、それを題材にした様々な学術研究が行われてきた。しかし、教員養成課程学生が抱くティームティーチングへの認識に関する研究は、現在まで行われていない。その学生達が大学講義や教育実習中、更には将来正規教員としてティームティーチングに携わることを考えると、これは極めて遺憾なことである。本研究では半構造的インタビュー手法を用いて、教員養成課程学生からデータを収集した。その結果、それらの学生は(a)励み・恐れ、(b)有益・負担、(c)有意義・不要、といった複雑な思いをティームティーチングに対して抱いていることが明らかになった。本論では最後に、教員養成課程においてティームティーチングを扱う際の留意点を提示する。

Since its establishment in 1987, one of the world's largest international exchange programs, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, has welcomed more than 70,000 participants from 75 countries (CLAIR, 2020). Over 90% of the participants have been employed as assistant language teachers (ALTs), whose role is to support English lessons with local Japanese teachers of English (JTEs). The team-teaching arrangement is believed to improve teacher efficiency and student learning by reducing the student-teacher ratio (see Villa et al., 2008). This arrangement in turn creates a communication-oriented learning environment and promotes internationalization at the local level (CLAIR, 2020). Team teaching English lessons in Japan has therefore enjoyed widespread approval and served as the subject of numerous empirical studies (e.g., Hiratsuka, 2016; Tajino et al., 2016).

However, to our knowledge no previous study has investigated *pre-service* JTEs' perceptions of team teaching. This is surprising for three reasons. First, under the provisions of the current national foreign language curriculum, pre-service teachers are required to gain a deep understanding of team teaching with ALTs in their teacher training courses (MEXT, 2017). Second, they are often expected to team teach with ALTs during their teaching practicums, not to mention in their future careers. Third, attitudes formed during JTEs' pre-service training programs have a significant influence on their opinions about what makes a good teacher (see Wiggins et al., 2007). After graduation, this influence is said to continue to impact what teachers think and what they do in the classroom (Freeman, 2016).

In the present study, we investigated pre-service teachers' perceptions of team teaching, revealing their ambivalence towards it. This ambivalence was categorized into three diametrical pairings: (a) encouraging/intimidating, (b) helpful/burdensome, and (c) worthwhile/unnecessary. Our research is of particular value because, firstly, it describes pre-service teachers' idiosyncratic perceptions of their team-teaching experiences, which have not been addressed in the field of ELT in Japan. Secondly, it provides practical suggestions for pre-service teacher training to make the team-teaching experiences of the stakeholders involved more fruitful.

Team Teaching

Although the term *team teaching* seems straightforward, consensus has not been reached on its definition. Sandholtz (2000) maintains that team teaching sometimes means a simple allocation of responsi-

bilities between two teachers outside the classroom and at other times means full collaboration inside it. Villa et al. (2008) assign team teaching to one of four categories of *co-teaching*, namely, supportive teaching, parallel teaching, complementary teaching, and team teaching. According to them, co-teaching means "two or more people sharing responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom" and involves "the distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instruction, and evaluation" (p. 5). In supportive teaching, one teacher has primary responsibility for designing and instructing a lesson, while the other provides individual support to the students in the class. Through parallel teaching, teachers instruct different groups of students simultaneously in a classroom. In complementary teaching, one teacher works to enhance the instruction of the other, such as by paraphrasing the instruction or demonstrating how to take notes. Villa et al. (2008) assert that, among these four modalities, team teaching is the most sophisticated, occurring when two teachers divide their lessons equally while alternating fluidly between leading and supporting roles. In the context of Japan, it is important to distinguish between the commonly used term *team teaching*, referring to JTEs and ALTs collaborating on teaching together in the classroom generally, and the definitions of team teaching outlined in the literature. The latter can differ in practice from lesser to greater sharing of responsibility (Sandholtz, 2000) and can include any of Villa et al.'s (2008) four different types of co-teaching. Therefore, this study acknowledges that the degree and type of collaboration between team teachers in Japan can vary by teacher, class, school, or course.

Recent studies of team teaching in Japan have investigated a wide array of topics with a variety of methods, such as by documenting the effects of a collaborative professional inquiry in the form of exploratory practice (Hiratsuka, 2016) or by demonstrating the significance of dialogic and cooperative practice conceptualized as team learning (Tajino et al., 2016). However, most of the research focuses on teachers' and students' perceptions of how they viewed themselves/their teachers, team-teaching practices, and student learning in team-taught classes. This literature reveals JTEs to be perceived as successful English language learner role-models for their students as well as mediators who are tasked with facilitating effective interaction between their students and ALTs, whereas ALTs are regarded as the authorities and providers of the target language and cultures (Hiratsuka, 2017a; Miyazato, 2012). Furthermore, the studies found that teacher roles and the pedagogies employed are not rigidly pre-determined (Hiratsuka, 2015; Ogawa, 2011). The literature also presents multifaceted perceptions of student learning in team-taught classes, perhaps due to the variety of interpretations of the rationale, goals, and pedagogical focus of team teaching (Hiratsuka, 2013; Johannes, 2012).

It is notable that all the studies of team teaching in Japan reviewed above concern in-service teachers and have not included pre-service teachers. Thus, we addressed this gap by examining Japanese pre-service teachers' perceptions of team teaching. The guiding research question of this study was "What perceptions do pre-service teachers of English have concerning team-teaching practices?" We found that the perceptions of the pre-service teachers concerning team teaching were formed from their prior experiences as students in team-taught classes and as pre-service teachers in their teacher training courses and teaching practicums.

Methodology

As participants in the study, the authors recruited three students at a university in southern Japan taking a teacher training course with a team-teaching component. The participants were selected using both purposeful and convenience sampling strategies based on their experiences in team teaching as well as on their accessibility and availability. Only after they had fully understood the nature of the research and the consequences of their participation did they join the study by signing written consent forms. All participants were senior-year undergraduate students studying for Bachelor of Arts degrees. Each was assigned a pseudonym in the individual descriptions below. Atsushi was a 23-year-old male with intermediate English ability. He took part in team teaching on three occasions with three different classmates during the course. Kazuki was a 22-year-old male with intermediate English ability. On two occasions, he team taught English lessons with two different classmates during the course and, on ten occasions, he team taught English lessons with an ALT during a teaching practicum a few months prior to data collection. Tetsuko was a 21-year-old female with advanced English proficiency. She took part in team teaching twice with two different classmates in the course and six times (three times with a JTE and three times with an ALT) during a practicum one year prior to the data collection.

Data were collected from the three participants through semi-structured interviews immediately after the course ended. Each interview took approximately 90 minutes. We believe this interview technique was an appropriate data collection method

for this study because our purpose was to obtain rich information regarding the participants' perceptions of team teaching within their idiosyncratic histories and contexts (see Seidman, 2013). The interviews were conducted by the second author, in Japanese, the first language of the participants and himself, in a lecture room at the university. He started the interview with "Tell me about your thoughts on team teaching" and then asked the participants follow-up questions, such as "What accounts for successful/ unsuccessful team teaching?" and "Why do you think so?" All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. After transcription, the interview data were translated into English with attention to maintaining the nuances of the original utterances in Japanese. The data were then analyzed through content analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), in which we concentrated on the meaning of the participants' perspectives, identified similar and recurring ideas (e.g., encouraging, helpful, and worthwhile), and grouped these together into salient themes (e.g., relating to emotions, impressions, and rationales). This analysis was applied within and across the participants' responses in a reiterative manner before arriving at the final three themes presented below.

Findings

The reiterative analysis resulted in three diametrically opposed pairs of perceptions of team-teaching practices: (a) encouraging/intimidating, (b) helpful/ burdensome, and (c) worthwhile/unnecessary.

Team Teaching as an Encouraging but Intimidating Practice

The first diametrically opposed pairing relates to the participants' *feelings* towards team teaching. The participants felt team teaching was both encouraging and intimidating. Regarding the former, Atsushi shared his perception as follows: "It is comforting that there is another teacher besides me in the classroom. We can deal with problems together if they arise." Kazuki perceived team teaching, particularly with a native speaker of English, in a positive light: "ALTs can promote students' intercultural understanding. They can also expose the students to some foreign games. I feel confident when my teaching partner and I have respective strengths to offer." Similarly, Tetsuko expressed her appreciation for having a teaching partner: "It was easier for me to conduct team-taught classes than solo classes because the students got excited and the class atmosphere became lighter when they saw the ALT." Despite these positive comments, the participants expressed uncertainty as well. For example, Atsushi indicated:

"I did not know what to expect from team teaching because I had never really seen how it works." Kazuki commented: "We do not know what we will do in class until we actually do it even if we meet and plan the lesson with our partner beforehand. It is scary not to have total control over the lesson." Along similar lines, Tetsuko remarked: "When I conducted team-taught classes, there were often awkward silences because we did not know who should speak next. That made me feel nervous."

As pre-service, non-native English-speaking teachers, the participants felt their teaching partners' pedagogical and cultural contributions as well as their presence comforting (see Tajino et al., 2016). At the same time, however, they feared the uncertainties that are unique to team-taught classes, where two teachers, often with different experiences, skills, and expectations, attempt to teach in the same classroom together (see Ogawa, 2011).

Team Teaching as Helpful but Burdensome Practice

The second diametrically opposed pairing of helpful/burdensome is associated with the *practical implications* of team teaching. The participants thought that team teaching helped the lesson to progress smoothly: "One teacher can lead the class, and the other walks around the classroom to give individual assistance" (Atsushi); "ALTs can talk to the students in authentic English, and JTEs can explain what they said in Japanese when the students don't understand" (Kazuki). The participants also believed that team teaching promoted student learning by providing both controlled, targeted English sentences and fluent native-speaker English: "Both teachers can provide proper English sentences that include target grammar rules of the lesson" (Atsushi); "With ALTs, students can be exposed to lots of English spoken by native speakers of English" (Tetsuko). However, these benefits were tempered by an acknowledgement of the concomitant burdens of the practice. For instance, Atsushi noted: "I have to compromise my ideas and opinions because I need to take into consideration my teaching partners' thoughts and ideas." Additionally, Kazuki relayed that "because we have to make time to prepare lessons together, team teaching takes a lot more time than solo teaching." Tetsuko recounted a perceived negative episode from one of her team-taught classes: "When I asked my ALT to explain our crossword puzzle activity to the students, she used unfamiliar words such as 'upwards' and 'downwards.' It made it necessary for me to explain everything in Japanese all over again."

The participants accepted team teaching as a helpful practice for students, as a result of the increase

in individual support and their exposure to both targeted and native-speaker English (see Johannes, 2012). Nonetheless, when they taught with a teaching partner, they felt burdened, as they had to make adjustments to their teaching, invest more time in planning, and interpret when the ALT used vocabulary unfamiliar to the students (see Hiratsuka, 2015).

Team Teaching as Worthwhile but Unnecessary Practice

The final diametrically opposed pairing of worthwhile/unnecessary concerns the participants' perceptions of the *rationales* for team teaching. Atsushi addressed how it is worthwhile for the students: "Team teaching with ALTs can offer rare opportunities for students to observe conversational English in action." Likewise, Kazuki said, "In team-taught classes, I can show students various interactions of two proficient speakers of English." Tetsuko echoed, "Showing real conversations in English with ALTs is important. I cannot do that with even the most fluent student in class." Notwithstanding, the participants also perceived that team teaching is sometimes unnecessary to attain the goals of the lessons. Atsushi recounted: "While my partner was leading the lesson, I was just writing students' ideas on the blackboard. Now that I think about it, either of us could probably teach the class alone without any problem." Kazuki's comments were thought-provoking: "ALTs are just a human tape recorder, anyway. I can teach alone!" Tetsuko also had doubts about team teaching: "Even after experiencing team teaching, I still don't see the point of it in English classes in Japan . . . . All ALTs do is read the textbook with clear pronunciation. Just the pronunciation part is different, I guess." Team teaching was perceived to be worthwhile because it enabled spontaneous and authentic communication between the two English-speaking teachers (see Miyazato, 2012). At the same time, it was also viewed to be sometimes unnecessary because the participants could not justify the need for two teachers, believing instead that they could adequately teach the lesson alone (see Hiratsuka, 2013).

Discussion

The findings of this study corroborated those of previous studies. The participants recognized the advantages of team teaching, such as collaboration between two teachers (Hiratsuka, 2016; Sandholtz, 2000; Tajino et al., 2016), increased individual support for students (Hiratsuka, 2015; Johannes, 2012), exploitation of both teachers' strengths and expertise (Hiratsuka, 2017a; Miyazato, 2012; Ogawa, 2011; Villa et al., 2008), and the provision of model

conversations in English (Hiratsuka, 2013). The participants' ambivalence was also in line with previous findings: They oftentimes felt uncertain about the roles of each teacher and, consequently, about how to manage their lessons, thereby feeling fearful at times (Johannes, 2012; Ogawa, 2011). The participants in this study also viewed the practical aspects of team teaching to be burdensome (Hiratsuka, 2015) and considered team-teaching practices to be sometimes unnecessary (Hiratsuka, 2013).

Based on these findings, we offer three suggestions. First, in order to cope with the perspective of team teaching as an intimidating practice within the diametrically opposed pairing of encouraging but intimidating, we should provide student teachers with access to a collection of exemplars of team teaching in the form of video clips, audio recordings, and documents from diverse teaching contexts. These would ideally introduce a range of lesson objectives, pedagogies, teacher roles, and classroom activities and materials. Pre-service and in-service teachers could then familiarize themselves with several possibilities for their team teaching, though they should not treat such resources as prescriptive. They should instead be encouraged to adapt them to their unique circumstances. Second, to address the helpful but burdensome dialectic, we should increase opportunities for communication between team-teaching partners while attempting to reduce, or at least better manage, the extra burdens that team teaching entails. Pre-service JTEs can increase their shared understanding by exchanging their thoughts and ideas more frequently and deeply through pair discussions, email exchanges, and joint journal writing. To make this practically feasible, however, they need support from their course instructors/teacher educators as well as classmates and colleagues. For example, decreasing their required course assignments/teaching loads is one way to make time for engaging in increased collaboration and reflection (see Hiratsuka, 2017b). Lastly, in order to deal with the worthwhile/unnecessary dialectic, team teachers should be given the opportunity to read books and articles and participate in lectures and workshops on team teaching in order to broaden their knowledge and evaluate their beliefs about the rationales behind team teaching. This knowledge might lead to the team teachers' discovering and/or reconfirming the worthwhile aspects of and opportunities for team teaching while giving them the language and concepts to critique disparaging discourses about it, such as the resistant conclusion "I can teach alone!"

Conclusion

The findings of this study support those of previous studies (e.g., Hiratsuka, 2013, 2015), that the

pre-service teachers' perceptions of team-teaching practices are like those of in-service teachers and their students. We have categorized the pre-service teachers' perceptions into three dialectics: encouraging/intimidating, helpful/burdensome, and worthwhile/unnecessary. Our hope is that our suggestions to address each of these pairings be put into practice to help reduce ambivalence towards team teaching. This study is a small-scale investigation and the first of its kind to our knowledge to examine this group regarding team teaching. Therefore, we acknowledge the need to examine larger samples in different contexts with more robust and triangulated data collection methods, such as classroom observations, journal writing, and reflection papers. In doing so, we hope to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of team teaching and generate more and better ways of making team teaching more successful.

Acknowledgements

References

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

CLAIR. (2020). *The Japan exchange and teaching programme*. http://jetprogramme.org/en/

Freeman, D. (2016). *Educating second language teachers*. Oxford University Press.

Hiratsuka, T. (2013). Beyond the rhetoric: Teachers' and students' perceptions of student learning in team-teaching classes. *The Language Teacher*, *37*(6), 9–15. https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT37.6-2

Hiratsuka, T. (2015). A case study into team teachers' perceptions of JTEs, ALTs, and L1 use. *SELT-Okinawa Review*, *13*, 30–54.

Hiratsuka, T. (2016). Actualizing Exploratory Practice (EP) principles with team teachers in Japan. *System*, *57*, 109–119. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.01.004

Hiratsuka, T. (2017a). Capitalizing on the strengths and complementing the weaknesses of native and non-native English-speaking teachers. *Out of the Box*, *8*(1), 45–53.

Hiratsuka, T. (2017b). Pair discussions for reflecting on action: Stimulated recall. In R. Barnard & J. Ryan (Eds.), *Reflective practice: Options for English language teaching and researchers* (pp. 89–97). Routledge.

Johannes, A. A. (2012). Team teaching in Japan from the perspectives of the ALTs, the JTEs, and the students. *TEFLIN Journal*, *23*, 165–182.

MEXT (2017). *The draft of core curriculum for foreign language education*. https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo3/002/siryo/attach/1388110.htm

Miyazato, K. (2012). Students' views on JTEs and AETs. In A. Stewart & N. Sonda (Eds.), *JALT2011 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 636–645). JALT.

Ogawa, C. (2011). Perceptions about team teaching: From assistant language teachers and Japanese teachers of English. In A. Stewart (Ed.), *JALT2010 Conference Proceedings* (pp. 473–486). JALT.

Sandholtz, J. H. (2000). Interdisciplinary team teaching as a form of professional development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *27*(3), 39–54.

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). Teachers College Press.

Tajino, A., Stewart, T., & Dalsky, D. (Eds.). (2016). *Team teaching and team learning in the language classroom*. Routledge.

Villa, R., Thousand, J., & Nevin, A. (2008). *A guide to co-teaching: Practical tips for facilitating student learning* (2nd ed.). Corwin Press.

Wiggins, R. A., Follo, E. J., & Eberly, M. B. (2007). The impact of a field immersion program on pre-service teachers' attitudes toward teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *23*(5), 653–663. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2007.02.007

Takaaki Hiratsuka is an associate professor at Ryukoku University in Kyoto. He received his PhD in language teaching and learning from the University of Auckland, New Zealand. His research and teaching interests lie in the areas of teacher education, teacher research, and qualitative research methods (in particular, narrative inquiry and classroom-based research). He has recently contributed a chapter to Barkhuizen's (2019) *Qualitative research topics in language teacher education*. He has also written a chapter with John F. Fanselow in Walsh and Mann's (2019) *Routledge handbook of English language teacher education*.

Koichi Okuma is an English teacher at Chinen Senior High School in Okinawa. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English education from University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa. His experience at the university allowed him to deepen his love of teaching and learning. As an in-service teacher, he strives to explore effective ways of teaching English, practically and empirically, for his students, who continue to inspire him each day.

ARTICLES

JALT PRAXIS

JALT FOCUS

Torrin Shimono & James Nobis

Welcome to the May/June edition of TLT *Interviews! For this issue we are happy to present you with two separate conversations. The first brings you Andy Curtis, the former president of TESOL International Association and developer in New Peace Linguistics. The second interview features Timothy Rasinski where he discusses his extensive work in the field of Reading Fluency.*

Our first interview is with Andy Curtis. He has authored and edited more than 150 publications, and he has presented to 25,000 teachers in 50 countries. He is a pioneer in the field of New Peace Linguistics, and is based in Ontario, Canada, from where he works as a consultant for language education organizations worldwide. He was interviewed by Aviva Ueno, an assistant professor in the Faculty of International Studies at Meiji Gakuin University in Yokohama, Japan. Her main areas of interest are using technology to facilitate language acquisition, maintaining learner motivation, and promoting reflective practice. She holds a Master's in TESOL from Anaheim University. Without further ado, our first interview!

An Interview with Andy Curtis

Aviva Ueno

Meiji Gakuin University

Aviva Ueno*: Thank you, Dr. Curtis, for doing this interview, and welcome back to* TLT*!*

Andy Curtis: You're very welcome, Aviva, and it's great to be back. As you know, I wrote for *TLT* more than 20 years ago, and I was happy to see that my 1999 article can still be read online.

One of the things you're well-known for is leaving medicine to become an English language teacher. What made you decide to make such a move?

Well-known is the polite way of putting it—*infamous* has been another common descriptor! Like most parents, mine wanted what was best for their children. But for the poorest immigrant parents like mine, this meant one thing and one thing only: medicine. Lots of prestige—with bragging rights among the other

immigrant parents—and lots of money. I know that medicine is supposed to be all about healing, but most of the immigrant parents I knew at that time put so much pressure on their kids—not just to succeed, but to show that we were just as good as the natives and deserved to be treated with respect. Somewhere in the family archives are photos of the racist graffiti that was painted on the walls of our home. So, when I was awarded a much sought-after medical scholarship at one of the top teaching hospitals in the UK, my parents were the proudest they'd ever been. I'll never forget the looks on their faces when I told them I had decided to leave medicine. They were heartbroken. Not only that, but leaving medicine for teaching, with no prestige and no money. The phrase "career suicide" came up a lot! The most controversial answer I've given to the question, "Why the hell would anyone do such a thing, make such a move?!" is, "To save lives." Sounds crazy, I know, but I realized that an equally powerful way of saving lives—and maybe even more powerful in some ways—was through education. I have seen with my own eyes, the moment when something happens in a classroom that shifts the path of young learners' lives in ways that they could never have imagined. No amount of money or prestige can compare with that kind of moment.

Occasionally, you talk about "coming from three generations of slaves." I've seen the shock on the faces of audience members when you say that. Would you be comfortable saying a little more about that aspect of your history?

That certainly has been a controversial statement, and not one I make lightly. But when I do say that, audience responses range from stunned silences to denials. Believe it or not, some participants have even shouted out, "That's not true." I know that for those kinds of people, slavery is something from a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, and it was bad, but aren't we good for ending it. But according to the Global Slavery Index there are still millions of people in some form of slavery in the world today. My great, great grandparents were kidnapped by the slave traders of the British Empire, and shipped overseas to work on the sugarcane plantations of Guyana (then British Guiana). They were eventu-

ally called *indentured labour* but that's just another name for the same thing. The reason I share that personal and painful part of my family history is so that people who doubt the power of education to save lives can see just how powerful education can be. If you're a teacher having a bad day in class, and wondering what's the point, I can tell you, if you're teaching wholeheartedly, you are most certainly making a difference in the lives of your learners.

What are some of your most vivid memories of your year as the 50th President of TESOL International Association?

It was an even more grueling presidential year than usual, as the 50th anniversary of the Association was marked with many groundbreaking firsts, such as the Association's first-ever event in India. And as the first-ever president of Indian origin, it was a big deal! Going back to the land of my forefathers and foremothers is always an emotional experience, and going back as a president made it almost surreal. For the first 40 years of the Association's history, the presidential leadership was almost exclusively Caucasian, American men and women, who had been born and grew up in the USA, and who had spent most of their lives working there. The 15 or so years since then have seen more linguistic and cultural diversity in the TESOL presidency than in all of the previous 40 years, which shows how committed the Association has been to diversifying its leadership, and I took that aspect of my year very seriously. And I'm pretty sure I was seriously sleep-deprived for the whole of that year, with hundreds of thousands of miles of flying all over the world in the cheapest economy seats available. In reality, for me, being TESOL president meant thousands of hours of work for free, not earning anything, not being allowed to earn, and sometimes even having to pay out of my own pocket as well. But I don't regret one single moment of that year as the chance to pay it forward, and to see, firsthand, the tremendous difference that TESOL teachers were making in the lives of their learners. I still get emotional when I see the sacrifices that some of those teachers were willing to make for the sake of their learners. In too many places, I saw teachers, who, even though they were being paid so little, buying school supplies, like pencils and paper, for their learners.

You've been described as a "pioneer" in the field of New Peace Linguistics. How did that happen?

Like so many of these things in my life, at least, it was entirely and completely unplanned. I was invited to give the plenary talk at the Hawaii TESOL Conference in 2016. That went well and in 2017, I

was invited to develop and teach a new course on Peace Linguistics at Brigham Young University-Hawaii (BYU-H) on the beautiful island of Oahu. I had not taught at a faith-based institution before, and I did not know anything about the Mormon religion, so I read everything I could find, including their Book of Mormon. To our surprise, in spite of extensive research, we could not find anywhere that was teaching a university-level credit-bearing course on Peace Linguistics. And it turned out that, although the term *Peace Linguistics* had been in use for decades, there had been very little actual linguistics, in terms of systematic, in-depth analysis of language. Most of the Peace Linguistics that had gone before was about using language to communicate in ways that would avoid conflict, for example, not saying *bad words* that would make the other person feel disrespected or dishonored. But the New Peace Linguistics is focused on how people in power, such as world leaders, use language in ways that can bring about peace or that can create conflict. For example, if a president calls the coronavirus the China Virus, they are deliberately inciting racial attacks on all *Asian-looking* people. Such is the power of language when used by powerful people. I reviewed hundreds of articles in the most well-known journals of peace education and peace studies and was struck by how few articles there were on the importance of language studies or linguistics in creating and resolving conflict. After teaching the first courses on PL at BYU-H, I edited the first special issue of a journal on PL, and wrote the first book on PL, which will be published by University of Michigan Press soon, I hope!

You've also been active in the area of Virtual Reality and language learning. Where are we with that now, and where do you think we're headed with VR and ELT?

My relationship with educational technology has been ambivalent, as it's great when it works but so frustrating when it doesn't! And although I've been teaching online for Anaheim University for many years now, I will always prefer old-school, bricks-and-mortar classrooms. To be able to walk into a room full of eager students on the first day of a course, to see their faces, to feel that energy, anticipation and excitement is not something that I have experienced online. But, as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic, hundreds of millions of students and teachers all over the world have been thrust into the world of online teaching and learning, often with little or no warning or training. Lucky for me, I was given the opportunity to work with Dave Dolan (one of the first to graduate from the Anaheim MA TESOL program) and his

team at Veative. They helped me see the tremendous potential of VR. Once I put that headset on, I was a convert! Since then I've been researching and writing and publishing and presenting on VR in ELT, accepting its limitations but also appreciating its ability to create an authentically immersive experience for the language learner. Of course, VR is not as good as going to England to learn English or France to learn French. But when you look at the costs of doing that versus the costs of the new VR technologies, which are going down all the time, then learners could *be* all over the world—without leaving their homes. Amazing stuff. And now, in the post-pandemic world, there are valid concerns about just how safe it is to fly around the world, queuing up in crowded airports, packed tightly into small metal tubes at 30,000 feet for 15-hour flights. We did not expect the *safety aspect* or VR to be a major attraction, but it could be now.

What advice would you give ELT professionals in Japan?

My biggest concern for teachers in Japan these days is the after-effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which will no doubt change every aspect of all our lives for many years to come. One of the biggest changes may well be in the move from face-to-face to online teaching and learning. That's OK, but it looks to me like universities, colleges and schools in Japan and elsewhere do not have what they need to make that move successfully. For example, teaching online is not just about the teacher and the learners simply staring at the webcam or the screen! Just making our handouts, slides and other materials available online is *not* teaching or learning. It's not even education really. That's just presenting information. As those of us in the classroom everyday know, there is so much more to teaching and learning than that, but I worry that some university administrators in Japan and elsewhere do not seem to get that. They seem to think or say "OK. COVID-19. Just put everything online." Of course, that's impossible. Quite apart from the technology, which may not be up to the task, so much training is needed for teachers and learners in how to teach and learn online in ways that work. And in terms of covering the material, it is not feasible to expect teachers and learners to make the same progress online as they can when they are in regular face-to-face real-time classrooms, as it takes much more time to establish communities of learning online. So, covering less material but perhaps in more depth may be a more achievable goal, and even brief but regular online chats between teachers and learners can also help everyone feel more connected and more motivated. Moving from face-to-face to online takes time and

requires significant up-front investments in technology and training, and it should never be seen as a quick, easy or cheap alternative to in-class teaching.

Thanks again, Dr. Curtis, for sharing, and we hope to see you back in TLT *far sooner than another 20 years from now!*

You're welcome, Aviva, and thank you for the great questions!

For our second interview, we share a discussion with Timothy Rasinski, a professor of literacy education at Kent State University and the former director of the University's reading clinic, Camp Read-A-Lot. He has written over 200 articles and authored 50 books on reading education. His research on reading has been cited globally and published in many prestigious journals. Although Timothy Rasinski's focus has been on students experiencing difficulty reading in their first language, many of the techniques he advocates lend themselves aptly to second language learning and teaching contexts. He was interviewed by Joshua Cohen. Joshua Cohen teaches English at Kindai University in Osaka, Japan. His interests include reading fluency development and task-based language teaching. Now, for your reading pleasure . . .

An Interview with Timothy Rasinski

Joshua Cohen
Kindai University

Joshua Cohen*: How did you first get interested in reading fluency?*

Timothy Rasinski: It goes back to my days as a teacher. Back in the mid-70s, I got a teaching degree and I taught outside of Omaha, Nebraska, first as an elementary school teacher, and then I became a reading specialist and developed an interest in kids who were struggling. I still recall working with some students I was not making any progress with. I was doing everything that the book at the time told me to do, you know, work on phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and they still weren't making any progress. Fortunately for me, I was working on my master's degree at the time, and the professors had us reading these articles that were just beginning to appear on reading fluency. One was called, *The Method of Repeated Readings,* by Jay Samuels (1979); and another was Carol Chomsky's (1976) *After decoding, then what?* You teach kids to decode words successfully, but they still don't make any

progress, then what do you do? And of course her answer was fluency. I read those things and I said, "Well, gosh, maybe there's something to this." So I tried out repeated readings and assisted readings with the students I was working with and lo and behold, they started to make progress. In some cases, the progress they were making was quite spectacular when compared to where they were previously. So that was the start of it. When I went on for my advanced degree, that was an area I wanted to continue studying. Forty years later, I'm still at it!

What about reading fluency do you find so appealing?

Many people ask, "Why was it ignored for so long?" Actually, it wasn't. Back in the day, the day of John Dewey at the turn of the century, he talked about reading fluency. But somewhere along the line, he got derailed. I think it was because we often associated reading fluency with oral reading, and of course, we're at the point now where silent reading is the gold standard. So maybe he got derailed there, you know, having kids memorize texts and read out loud. I was just interested in how can we get it back on track? And what I saw happening working with these kids was really something.

Shelia Valencia is a professor at the University of Washington in Seattle, and looked at kids who perform poorly in these State Reading tests that we give kids all across the country now, and basically asked the question, "What's going on with these kids?" What she found was that for most of the kids, it's either word decoding or fluency—upwards of 90% of these kids. So that just begs the question, if this is what is happening to these kids who perform poorly, then what would happen if we could provide some additional instruction for them?

What resources do you find most influential in your work as a literacy educator?

Not so much individual books, although I've written a couple of them. But as far as people go, Melanie Kuhn has done a lot of work and her advisor Steve Stahl—he's passed away now—he really got into it; Paula Schwanenflugel at the University of Georgia, there's a whole cadre there of folks who are studying reading fluency. More recently, David Paige at Northern Illinois University has been doing some interesting work, especially with adolescents and fluency, and a guy by the name of Chase Young at Sam Houston State University. He was a second-grade teacher and heard me speak maybe a dozen years ago, and he decided to apply some of these things into a whole classroom setting, not just with struggling readers. He really became convinced that it was something that would make a difference, especially for those

kids who are beginning to transition from just word decoding to actual contextualized reading.

Can you give TLT *readers a definition of reading fluency?*

Sure. The definition is what makes it a bit more complex than it needs to be. It's actually made up of two sub-competencies: the first is automaticity and word recognition. This is something that Dr. Samuels talked about. A reader recognizes words so effortlessly that minimal mental effort is put into decoding the words. I often say to my classes when I teach a course on phonics, the goal of phonics instruction is to get students not to use it. If you have to use phonics when you're reading, sounding out every third or fourth word, you can do it, but there's a price to be paid. The price is you're using too much of that mental energy for a lower-level task than what's meant to be for comprehension. So that's one. And you develop that automaticity through lots and lots of practice. The other side of it is this thing called prosody, or expression. Now I think about someone who is a fluent speaker, it's not somebody who reads fast, it's somebody who uses their voice to make meaning. They get loud and soft and fast and slow. They add dramatic pauses, and all those things add to the meaning of the text they're reading. And how do we develop prosody? Again, through practice; it's the best way. Hear expressive reading and then try to emulate it on your own, through your own practice. That's where this notion of repeated readings comes in. You don't mind if I go off on a tangent here do you?

It's perfectly fine!

We recognize in our schools today that repeated reading is very valuable. But because the way we measure it, when we measure automaticity, which is the speed of reading, many repeated reading exercises are aimed at getting kids to read fast, which I think is not terribly authentic. When you keep in mind this notion of prosody, then repeated readings can be much more authentic, rather than practicing something for the purpose of reading it fast, you're practicing it for the purpose of being able to read it in an expressive, meaningful voice. And of course, that begs the question: Are there certain texts that are meant to be read out loud in an expressive and meaningful voice? That is what led me to poetry, song lyrics, reader's theater scripts, and things such as that. Things that we used to do a lot of in school, and we don't seem to do nearly as much now. It's those two things: prosody and automaticity, and they seem so dissimilar to one another, one is about reading effortlessly and the other is reading with expression, but they can be brought together into

some sort of whole, I guess. People have called fluency sort of the bridge or link between word recognition and phonics at one end and comprehension at the other.

Is there a way to measure prosody?

Yeah. You can put kids on a spectrograph and do some analysis there, but what we have found, and Paula Schwanenflugel, who has done some work on this (see Schwanenflugel et al., 2004), recommends that actually teachers just listen to students read and rate their reading along some dimensions on a rubric. Actually, I have one. I developed it with my colleague, Jerry Zutell (see Zutell & Rasinski, 1991). It's on my website. It's a multidimensional fluency scale, which looks at four different dimensions of fluency, and then you listen to kids read and rate them on each of those four points. It's actually been found to be quite reliable and valid. Some studies have been done. Sometimes people say, "Oh you're just making a subjective judgment," and indeed you are, but it can be something you can rely on as being a pretty valid estimate of how fluent kids are in their reading.

Do you think reading fluency differs depending on whether you are reading in your first or a second language?

First of all, I do know that we've done some research—I've worked with some folks who've found fluency manifests itself in other languages, but when you're going into a second language that is not your native language, I would suspect that fluency is an issue. In fact, if I'm not mistaken, the National Reading Panel here in the States did a report on English language learners, and they did indicate that fluency was an issue that needed to be addressed. Of course, it just makes sense. If you're learning to read, or for that matter, speak in another language, your first attempts are probably pretty halting and that with practice, you become much more fluent, automatic, and expressive in your oral language as well as your oral reading of that text.

Why are you such a big proponent of activities like reader's theater, and music and songs as a way to engage students in the reading classroom?

First of all, they're all-natural oral reading activities. The National Reading Panel, when they talk about fluency, they kind of pigeonhole it as an oral reading activity. So, poems, songs, and scripts are meant to be read orally, but they're also meant to be read with expression. In particular, poetry and song, if you think about it, have to be read with rhythm and a certain degree of melody to them—songs in particular, but poetry as well. They're the kind of texts that really lend themselves to students focusing on the melodic aspect of texts. Robert Pinsky, who was once the poet laureate of the United States calls those rhythmical texts, poetry as rhythmical texts. There is a rhythm they need to be read to and that seems to really capture that notion of something that is really helpful for developing fluency. I might add if you're talking about younger kids or kids who are struggling, something like a song lyric or a poem is not terribly long. Sometimes these kids can get overwhelmed by a text that's a 20-page story or something. But a poem you can master in a short while and have that feeling of success that lots of students need, especially if they're struggling.

So, the fact that poems and songs are authentic appeals to learners?

That's exactly right. In our reading clinic, our students learn a poem and at the end of the week that they've been practicing it, will have a poetry slam. They'll get in front of their classmates and others and perform. That really does give them motivation for wanting to practice. You know, a lot of times, if you ask a student to read something three or four times, they'll ask you, "For what reason?" If you can say, "Well, you'll be performing it on Friday or Saturday," you have a natural reason to do that. That's something I've been talking about lately, which is the art of teaching. We've been talking so much about the science of reading, but I think that to be a really good teacher, you have to follow the science, but you have to apply the science in artful ways and trying to find those authentic situations where kids can put what they're learning to authentic uses. It's really an artistic goal we should be aiming for.

There're several programs that've come out on reading fluency and they're based upon these notions that we talked about; modeling fluent reading, assisted reading, and so on, but they're not very authentic, and I just wonder to what extent students are just going to see it as the equivalent of nothing more than a boring worksheet that sometimes they get at school. It's a really important goal for teachers to become that artist.

Are there any quick and dirty or easy ways for teachers to assess students' reading fluency?

Yeah, actually. You said quick and dirty. I wrote a book with my colleague called, *3-Minute Reading Assessments*. It's actually more like five minutes, but three minutes sounds a little more sexy. If you had a student read a short passage, like in an informal reading inventory—maybe 100-200 words in length—and as they're reading, you're marking any errors that they're

making. You also mark where they're at the end of a minute reading, you record their reading, and when they're through reading, you ask them to give you a retelling of what it is they've just read. What you can do from that one reading is, of course if you know the grade level passage of the reading you're asking the kids to read, you can measure first of all their word recognition in terms of percentage of words read correctly, you can measure their automaticity by the number of words they read correctly in a minute's time, you can measure prosody by listening to that recording of their reading and rating them on that prosody scale I mentioned (or something similar), and you can measure comprehension by simply listening to their retelling and measuring it against a rubric we developed. It's not a completely precise measurement, but it'll give you some indication of whether, say if this is a 5th grade passage, that can give you a sense of whether the student can handle 5th grade material or not from that one reading or so. If they can't, you know what you need to work on with that student.

What are some suggestions for teachers with limited time who can only meet their students once a week?

That's always a challenge. It would be best if you were able to work with kids on a regular basis. There's a lesson we use in our reading clinic—it's called the fluency development lesson. Basically, it's about a 20-minute lesson where the goal is for students to learn to read something really well in about twenty minutes' time. It's usually a poem, but it could also be a segment of a story and these 20 minutes go like this: It starts with the students listening to the teacher read the text once or twice maybe even three times, and then reading it with the teacher, and then the student would practice on his or her own or with a partner while the teacher walks around the room and does some coaching of the students. After about five or six or seven or eight readings, then the student is given the opportunity to perform for classmates or even the teacher. In our reading clinic, we send students out into the hallway and the kids perform for a parent. Then we engage the kids in some word study from that text. It might be looking at the meaning of certain interesting words, or it might be looking at some phonetic elements. After another five minutes or so of that, we've had really a lot of success. The reason why I mention that is I could almost see something like this if you're meeting your students once or twice a week where that first part of the lesson where the teacher models it and reads it with the student could be done in the lesson. But that rehearsal, that practice could be done independently throughout the week, knowing that when they return the following day or the following week, they would be asked to perform that text that they had practiced.

A lot of your work is focused on younger learners who struggle with fluency, but can you comment on working with students a little older, say junior or high school level or even young adults?

Sure. First of all, I would say that we have found that fluency is an issue that goes beyond the elementary grades. We published a study a few years back—several studies—but we found that significant numbers of students struggle with fluency in middle and high school. They're also students who have difficulty with comprehension, so that's an issue. Another little interesting study we did a couple years ago, here at the university, is we looked at freshmen. We did one of those oral reading fluency exercises I mentioned, and we had them read a 12th grade passage for a minute and what we had was their ACT scores. We were able to correlate their fluency with their ACT scores. And it was really interesting. We had significant correlation between fluency and college entrance examination score,s which suggests that those students who are more fluent are more likely to score higher and be more successful in college than those students who struggle with fluency. And that might be an impediment to their growth; their development in college as well. Now saying that, there's things that we can do. I've been a big advocate for poetry, and if you think about it, there are a lot of texts that lend themselves to high school kids. I was working with some kids not long ago, and we did a whole unit of study on the poetry of Langston Hughes, a poet of the Harlem Renaissance. Really, it's quite sophisticated stuff, so you could actually find material. Basically, it's the same idea, but finding more sophisticated material for students to practice and perform. Oftentimes, there's related material that they can get into to build knowledge.

Without getting too technical, I wonder if you can describe some of the cognitive process at work as a person reads words. For example, is there a difference orthographically, semantically, or phonologically?

Great question. Now you're getting above my pay grade, as they say. There's a couple people who've been talking about this, Linnea Ehri (at CUNY) and David Kilpatrick (at SUNY), they talk about this thing called orthographic mapping and what their goal for word recognition instruction is to get kids to the point where they're not analyzing or looking at the letters and analyzing the sounds and so on. Actually, what they do is, they create a mental template of the word. And this mental template is not just seeing the series of symbols and the sounds that go with it, but also integrate it with the meaning of the word itself. That's what we really want to

get to. To get students to that point, that instant, effortless recognition. And how do you develop that orthographic map? Actually, it's through analyzing a word. If you analyze it enough times, it becomes second nature, it becomes that map you have in your head.

Have you done any work on literacy instruction with second or foreign language learners?

Unfortunately, not. I've worked with scholars who've worked with fluency in other languages but not as a second language. But my guess is that many of the same processes that we use for first language learners would apply for second language learners as well.

Are you familiar with extensive reading or wide reading?

Well, I use the term wide reading. It may not be in the same way that you have in mind. For me, wide reading is just trying to maximize the amount or reading students do, and it's the kind of reading that we do as adult proficient readers. When you read something, you may reflect on it, discuss what it is that you read with somebody, and then you move on to something new. One thing after another. I often say that that's really important for developing fluency, but needs to be balanced sometimes, especially for those kids we worry about with that notion of repeated readings. So wide reading—and another word for repeated reading might be deep reading—can go hand-in-hand.

What are your thoughts on research-based teaching and experience-based teaching? Which one should guide teachers?

I think they're equally important. The challenge is how can you blend them together. I don't think it's very valuable to have a time in the day devoted to evidence-based reading instruction and another part of the day devoted to experience-based instruction. If you can find a way of combining them, it's more efficient, and I think you get that sense of synergy. You get more power than the sum of the parts. That's the challenge though; there're no real instructional programs that I know that actually do that in the kind of way that I would like to see it done. That's where I think it requires a knowledge-able teacher to be able to do that.

How do you envision it being done?

I go back to Dewey. He talked about the notion of project-based learning, where you develop a theme for instruction over the course of a week or two and within that theme, whatever it might be. Right now, we might be studying veterans in American history. We would find ways to be reading informational texts, stories, finding songs, poetry, maybe finding ways of actually getting other areas of the curriculum into that study, whether it's social studies, bringing in veterans to tell their stories to students, having the students write memoirs for some of these soldiers—those kinds of things. We're also trying to find ways to bring mathematics and even science into that study.

What are you working on these days?

I'm trying to master teaching from my living room.

We all are!

I'm teaching a couple classes. I was lucky because the university asked me to start developing some of these online courses in advance, so I have a bunch of it already recorded and uploaded, but I'm still working at it and trying to find ways of making it engaging. I've been doing weekly lessons that I put on Twitter. But as far as research goes, actually, I'm at the stage of my career where, I think I only have a year or two left before I retire. I've been trying to nurture some graduate students and colleagues who are younger than me to keep the ball going on this. Chase Young and David Paige have been doing some remarkable work with reading fluency and struggling readers. Another one of my graduate students, Meghan Valerio, is doing some really strong stuff. You know, I guess I'm at the point now where I'm trying to continue the interest.

Well thank you so much for your time, Dr. Rasinski. It's been a pleasure.

You're quite welcome. Next time call me Tim.

References

Chomsky, C. (1976). After decoding: Then what? *Language Arts, 53*(3), 288–296.

Samuels, S. J. (1979). The Method of Repeated Reading. *The Reading Teacher*, *32*, 403–408.

Schwanenflugel, P., Hamilton, A. M., Wisenbaker, J. M., & Kuhn, M. (2004). Becoming a fluent reader: Reading skill and prosodic features in the oral reading of young readers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 96*(1), 119–121. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.96.1.119

Zutell, J., & Rasinski, T. V. (1991). Training teachers to attend to their students' oral reading fluency. *Theory Into Practice, 30*(3), 211–217. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849109543502

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

Hi everyone, and welcome to the May/June edition of My Share. As the spring semester gains momentum, most of us will be settling into a new routine, whether this be teaching online, in-person, or some blended variety of the two. I, for one, am quite happy to be back meeting students in-person despite the ongoing necessity of double-masking and social distancing. I have just invested in a few comfortable picnic blankets, and on warm, dry days, class will be outside on the grass. Looking at the ideas in this edition, I think at least two of them could be tweaked to be fun in the open air. Many of the tried and tested suggestions in My Share are easily adaptable to multiple teaching contexts, and the back catalogue (available at https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/myshare) is a wonderful resource to tailor to your situation. Whenever you need new teaching ideas, please take a look!

In this edition, first Fleur Ogura introduces a word association game, which is so clear, easy to prepare, and useful, that I can't believe this is the first time I have heard of it. I am sure it is going to become a staple in most of my, and many of your, classes. In the second article, Justin C. Mejia invites us to imagine the home of our dreams and explains how this can be used to practice students' speaking skills and grammar. As the activity requires students to not only creatively design their dream homes, but also sell them, it is certain to be a lot of fun. In the third article, Deepti Mishiro suggests an interactive guessing game based on the ever-popular character, Doraemon. By introducing his ingenious gadgets, students can be creative in practicing modal verbs and descriptive adjectives. Finally, for those of you who are continuing to teach remotely this semester, Claire Ryan introduces an idea that takes advantage of the Zoom background function to ask the question, "Where am I?" With multiple variations and possibilities, this incredibly adaptable idea is sure to be useful wherever you may be.

— *Steven Asquith*

JALT2021 – Reflections and New Perspectives
Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

Word Association Explanation Chains

Fleur Ogura

Meijo University

fleurogura@gmail.com

Quick Guide

» **Keywords:** *Warm-up, speaking fluency*
» **Learner English level:** *Low-intermediate and above*
» **Learner maturity:** *Junior high-school and above*
» **Preparation time:** *2 minutes*
» **Activity time:** *10 minutes*
» **Materials:** *Blackboard/whiteboard, writing utensils, stopwatch/clock*

This is a warm-up activity that can be used in speaking classes to flip the mental switch in students' brains from their L1 to their L2. While word association games that use only single words can be fun and accessible for lower levels, this activity incorporates statements to increase difficulty and student satisfaction for higher level or older students. It requires little time, no materials beyond those that are already present in most classrooms, and is best used as a quick warm-up before the main tasks of the lesson.

Preparation

Step 1: Think of a *starting word* for the association chain. It could be related to the upcoming lesson or a topical word.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide the class into groups of three to five students.

Step 2: Tell students that they are going to play a word association game, and that they will take turns to say an associated word and give a short sentence to explain it.

Step 3: Model an example. Write the starting word *banana* on the board. Explain to the students that the first person could say, "Monkey, because monkeys eat bananas, monkey." Emphasise that they should say the word, a statement, and then the word again. Then tell the students that the second person could say, "Zoo, because monkeys live in zoos, zoo." Emphasise that they should make associations to the previous word only (not to the starting word every time).

Step 4: Elicit another associated word and explanation from the class, and continue (helping with more examples, if necessary) until the students understand the procedure.

Step 5: Tell the students that each group will now create their own unique chain.

Step 6: Write the starting word you thought of in the preparation stage on the board. Set the stopwatch for 10 minutes or check the time on the clock.

Step 7: Tell the students to begin their own word and explanation association chains in their groups.

Step 8: Allow the students to continue taking turns saying associated words and explanations in their groups until the time is up. Monitor and remind students to give explanations, as necessary.

Step 9: When the time is up, ask each group to tell you what their final word was, and write them on the board. As each group was individually making associations each group's final word is usually very different. It is amusing for students to see what different words result from the same starting word.

Extension

Teachers could ask students to guess the chain that led to other groups' final words.

Conclusion

It can be difficult for students to suddenly switch from their L1 in speaking classes. This warm-up activity allows students to get used to speaking in their L2 before the main tasks of the lesson. It is fast, requires no preparation, and is a good tool for teachers to keep in their tool-box to be used anytime.

The Real Estate Market
Justin C. Mejia
Trident College of Foreign Languages
tc.483.justin.mejia@gmail.com

Quick Guide

» Keywords: *Homes, houses, first conditional, second conditional*
» Learner English level: *Low intermediate to high intermediate*
» Learner maturity: *High school to university*
» Preparation time: *5 minutes*
» Activity time: *75 minutes*
» Materials: *Paper, pencils, scissors, magazines, glue*

This is a fun and engaging practice activity for the first and second conditionals that allows students to use these types of sentences in a tangible way. This lesson can easily be broken up into two parts depending on the length of your class periods.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare an example of your dream home on a large sheet of paper, poster, or PowerPoint slide. Include both a visual representation and the following information in note form: (1) the location of the home. For example, which country or city is it in and is it downtown or at the beach? etc., (2) how many floors and rooms it has, and (3) prominent features like swimming pools or home theaters (e.g., *Location: city center, Barcelona. Floors: 2*, etc.).

Procedure

Step 1: Group students into pairs or groups of three.

Step 2: Explain that the students will be working together to build their dream home. Reference your own example and ask the students to work together with their partner(s) to decide on the same three pieces of information for their own dream homes and make a note of them.

Step 3: Allow the students enough time to work.

Step 4: When all groups have finished, model changing the notes about your dream home into second conditional sentences (e.g., *If I built my dream home, it would be in the city center of Barcelona.*).

Step 5: Allow students time to do the same. Monitor and assist as needed.

Step 6: When all groups have finished, explain that the students will now make a visual representation of the houses they have dreamed up. They may draw or use cutouts from magazines or, in cases where students have access to digital resources, they could also make slides or collages with images from the Internet.

Step 7: Pass out the materials to each group and allow the students time to work.

Step 8: When all groups have finished, have each group briefly present their home to the class using the sentences they wrote earlier.

Step 9: Next, have the students imagine that they have lived in their dream homes for many years, but now they want to sell them. Ask them to decide as a group on an asking price that they will tell buyers and a "secret price" that is the lowest they will accept.

Step 10: Show the students how to use the first conditional in sentences like, "*If you lower your price to xxx, I'll buy it!*" and "*If you raise your offer to xxx, I'll sell it!*" Model such a negotiation with one of the groups.

Step 11: Have one student from each group stay by their home to be the seller. Allow the other students to walk freely throughout the classroom, browsing the other groups' homes, making offers on the ones they like, and negotiating until they buy one. After buying a home, they should return to their partner and change roles. Monitor and assist as necessary.

Conclusion

This activity not only gives students a chance to be creative and work cooperatively, it also provides ample opportunities for interaction using both prepared and spontaneous speech. Although this activity works better with students that have a larger vocabulary, it can be successful with low-intermediate students as the target grammar is relatively simple.

Doraemon's Pocket
Deepti Mishiro
dmishiro2720@gmail.com

Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *Writing, imaginative, creative thinking*
- » Learner English level: *Intermediate*
- » Learner maturity: *University*

- » Preparation time: *5-10 minutes*
- » Activity time: *90 minutes*
- » Materials: *Printout of Doraemon's objects, whiteboard and markers*

Anime is an interesting teaching tool for ESL teachers. Many students can identify with anime and are motivated to learn more when it is used as a medium of instruction. This activity enables students to use their knowledge about Doraemon's gadgets and convey it in English. It aims to enhance students' ability to describe and write creatively. Furthermore, it helps them to review descriptive paragraph writing and can be used to review specific grammar.

Preparation

Print out Doraemon's gadgets from the Doraemon.com or the TV Asahi website. You may wish to ask a colleague to help in understanding each gadget, as TV Asahi is in Japanese. Most students will know at least a few of these gadgets since Doraemon is so popular. Cut out the gadget pictures and put them in a small paper bag or box.

Procedure

Step 1: Ask students to work in groups of three. Each group takes one picture from the box. Next, check if the students know their gadget. If not, have them change it or tell them what it is.

Step 2: Tell the students to discuss with their group members about their gadget picture and how it is used in the Doraemon series. Give ten minutes to brainstorm.

Step 3: Get students to make a list of descriptive adjectives and things they would like to describe about the gadget. Remind them to use their five senses. In addition, let them know you will do a quiz where each group's written paragraph will be read, and other groups will guess the gadget. Each group whose gadget is recognized by the other groups will get 5 points.

Step 4: Tell the students they will write their paragraph on the whiteboard without writing the name of the gadget.

Step 5: Once all groups have finished writing their paragraph, ask each team to display their whiteboards and form a circle in order to be able to do a gallery walk.

Step 6: Ask each group to read the paragraphs of the other groups and, after discussing with their groups, write down what gadget they think it might

be. Students can also mark the grammatical errors on the whiteboard and write down the number of errors.

Step 7: Once all the groups have read each other's paragraphs, do the quiz as explained in Step 3.

Extension

Make playing card-sized gadget cards. Students could play a group game in which they choose an object card, and the other members have to guess the object first to get the card. The student that gets the most cards wins.

Variation

This activity can also be used for high school students to practise modals of ability. Students can work in pairs, write a few sentences describing their gadget, and then present it to the class.

Conclusion

This activity challenges students to describe clearly and enhance their writing skills in a fun and creative way. It encourages students to use new vocabulary and adjectives. It is also an engaging activity that enables students to share and learn the process of writing in order to appeal to their readers.

References

Fujio, F., Ms. (n.d.). *Doraemon's secret gadget catalogue*. TV Asahi. https://www.tv-asahi.co.jp/doraemon/tool/a.html

Viz Media. (April 11, 2013). *Gadgets.* Doraemon Gadget Cat from the Future Official U.S. Website. http://www.doraemon.com/gadgets.html

Where Am I?
Claire Ryan
claire.ryan34@gmail.com

Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *Warm-up activity, online lesson, landmark, location*
- » Learner English level: *Beginner and above*
- » Learner maturity: *Elementary school and above*
- » Preparation time: *0-5 minutes*
- » Activity time: *5-10 minutes*
- » Materials: *Photographs of locations, list of facts about locations*

Now that we've all been exposed to our "new normal" of online lessons for a few months, maybe we are starting to feel a little more comfortable with the setting. We've had time to find our feet—as have our students—and, we've learned what works and what doesn't. So, we're ready to try our hand at introducing some new and exciting techniques to make our lessons even more fun. A great chance to do that is with this warm-up activity at the start of the lesson. Here's one for the more tech-savvy instructors, which takes advantage of the background feature of online teaching applications. The difficulty can be adjusted easily for children or adults through the pictures you choose to work with.

Preparation

Step 1: Find some pictures of famous landmarks around the world.

Step 2: Set one of these as your background picture on Zoom or other apps that support this feature.

Procedure

Step 1: Inform students that you have "traveled" to a famous location.

Step 2: Point out some features of the location in the picture, without naming the landmark or place name in question.

Step 3: Ask students to guess where you are.

Step 4: If students struggle to guess the location, add some extra details, such as the weather conditions, the type of food you ate there, how long it took you to fly there from Japan, etc.

Step 5: If time allows, change the picture to a new location and repeat the game as before.

Variations

Option 1: Play the game as above at first, then ask students to have pictures prepared for the next class so that they can take turns at presenting too. If you like the idea of trying out this activity, but you or your students lack the technical know-how to pull it off smoothly, it is also possible to present using a slide instead. This ensures that all class members can be included equally.

Option 2: When having students present in larger classes, divide the class into smaller groups as a way to save time. This can be done using breakout rooms in an online lesson. This ensures you don't have to spend too much class time on the activity while also allowing everyone a chance to participate in the game.

Option 3: This activity has the potential to be developed into more than just a warm-up. Students could use this game as a jumping-off point for a larger project where they learn about and present on a location or landmark of their choice.

Conclusion

This warm-up activity allows learners to engage with their classmates in the online environment in a new and exciting way. It is flexible enough to work with large or small groups and can be adapted easily for various ability levels. Young learners can take part with a well-known landmark—the Eiffel Tower or Statue of Liberty—while adult learners could develop the activity further, perhaps sharing an interesting location they visited on vacation that may not be as well known. Learning about the world around them through English will help students further develop their interest in the language, and this activity really helps to encourage that learning.

[RESOURCES] *TLT* WIRED

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.

H5P Tasks for Communicative Language Practice

Rachel Barington

Branden Kirchmeyer

Sojo International Learning Center, Sojo University

Language educators worldwide are increasingly exploring solutions for creating and delivering engaging online content. H5P is an online content-authoring tool with which anyone, regardless of tech-savviness, can develop and share content that is engaging, eye-catching, and grounded in research. In this article, we describe examples of tasks that were designed explicitly to support and facilitate classroom English language communication between first-year university students enrolled in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) programs. We distinguish *supportive* tasks as those that help prepare students for pair work by modeling target language and *facilitative* tasks as those that aid communication during pair work.

What Is H5P?

H5P is versatile software that allows users to create, share, and publish interactive online content—material that is programmed to respond to user input such as clicking, swiping, typing, and recording audio. Used as a *plugin* (software that can add a specific feature to an existing computer program) on platforms such as Moodle, WordPress, and Drupal, H5P allows teachers to create a wide range of content, update and deliver content easily and quickly, assess student interaction with content (integrate with the Moodle Gradebook), share content across courses and sites, and edit various settings (access, completion, tagging, etc.) for class management. Currently, H5P can be used for free on self-hosted platforms or as a paid service (from 57 USD per month at H5P.com) for which authors can create and store content on the H5P website and link or embed their content in their online teaching spaces.

Content and Tasks

H5P content types can be divided into a few different categories such as games, multimedia, questions, and social media. They differ in levels of interactivity, dimension, and complexity. Although some content types are simply singular questions a student must answer, others can house a variety of content types within its structure.

Supportive Content

Dictation

Dictation is a good example of a content type that students can complete independently to warm up with or introduce language students will be expected to produce. As the title implies, this content type allows you to create a dictation exercise. Teachers can include as many dictation items as they like, as well as up to two audio files per item. This allows you to provide students with audio at varying speeds to suit their listening comprehension levels. As depicted in Figure 1, students are provided with immediate feedback.

Speak the Words Set

There are two versions of this content type: Speak the Words and Speak the Words Set. The former allows you to create a single item which will elicit a verbal response from a student. The latter will let you create a series of such items. We used this content type for vocabulary and pronunciation practice activities. Students see Japanese text on the screen that they must produce in English. Other options include prompting an answer with a question or more targeted pronunciation practice of individual words. Currently, the speech engine used in this content type is only available in the Chrome browser.

Speak the Words Set allows students to practice pronunciation using automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology. Teachers create a series of text prompts, acceptable answers, and feedback for correct and incorrect answers in a straightforward interface as shown in Figure 2. The student interface is straightforward and simple to use.

Quiz Question Set

The quiz question set will allow you to create a series of questions including types such as multiple choice, drag the words, mark the words, fill in the blanks, and drag and drop. Question settings can be adjusted to allow for multiple attempts, to see the solutions, and to give pre-determined specific feedback for both correct and incorrect answers. It is designed to generate quizzes, but you are only limited by your creativity. We used this content type to make grammar practice-oriented games. We utilized the feedback option to give students grammar points and tips as they go through the activity.

Interactive Video

In Interactive Video, items such as multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions, text, and other interactions can be added to videos. You can also add questions with adaptive behavior settings, which will allow you to direct students to other parts of the video based on the student's response. There is an option for a summary task at the end of the video as well. The videos can be added via a video link, such as a YouTube video or from a file. As previously stated, Interactive Video is a task option within Column. It is also a task option within Course Presentation and Branching Scenario. We have used Interactive Video within Column as part of homework assignments.

Facilitative Content

Course Presentation

Course Presentation has diverse content types that can be used in a variety of ways. It can be used for simply displaying information or can support interactive elements that users must engage with. Like the Quiz Question Set, items include multiple-choice questions, fill in the blanks, drag and drop, and other questions types. You can also include multimedia. They can be designed for users to access independently or in pairs or groups. We used Course Presentation to make Heads Up games. What would ordinarily require paper-based resources and time spent printing and cutting could now be made digitally.

Branching Scenario

This content type is arguably the most open to a developer's creativity. In Branching Scenario, you can allow for learners' choice. That is, interactive content can be branched into a variety of structures that allows students to choose from a set of options that will then lead them to various tasks, allowing for adaptive learning. Branching Scenario can also be set for collected scoring through the learner's path or set per ending. Choices may lead to any other node within the structure. Within Branching Scenario, you can use content types, such as course presentation, text, image, image hotspots, interactive video, and video. We have found that this content type is an excellent opportunity to create online pair and group work opportunities for students. Students choose a branch and fulfill that role within the pair or group activity.

Accordion

Accordion is designed to condense the amount of text presented to readers. Content is minimized into headlines which students can take a closer look at by expanding the title. The content type on its

own does not allow for much interactive content. However, we have used it to develop an interactive speaking task. In the task, students click on headlines displaying questions categorized into their CEFR language proficiency levels. Students choose a level and question they feel is appropriate for them. The headline then expands to include sample responses also divided into proficiency levels. Essentially, students can use the Accordion content to scaffold their conversation practice.

Other Uses

Chart

Chart allows users to quickly create pie charts and bar charts. It is excellent for quickly generating a visual interpretation of any statistical data you want to display. In our curriculum, we have used Chart to display ongoing rankings of student wins for in class games, specifically to show how many games of Quizlet Live they have won so far in the semester.

Image Hotspots

In Image Hotspots, you can create *hotspots* within an imported image that may reveal texts, images, and videos when clicked. Within an image, you may add as many hotspots as you like, as well as determine the placement and color of those hotspots. We used this content type to display required materials for our courses. Students could click on the material to get further instruction in both English and Japanese as to what they must bring, specifically how often and for what purpose.

Column

In Column, much like Course Presentation and Branching Scenario, you can house a long list of other content types. In a column structure, you can add questions, interactive presentations, images, videos, quiz question sets, text, audio, and so forth. We have found that students can navigate a column with ease. It is also worth mentioning that this content type displays very well on tablets and smartphones, which has proven useful for our purposes in creating homework activities students can access even if they do not have a PC available.

Other Considerations

H5P is a diverse tool that can also be used to facilitate class management and independent study, and we have used many other content types not described in this article. A complete listing of content types and examples can be found at https://h5p.org/content-types-and-applications. Current limitations of the free H5P plugin include the inability to view or record specific user interaction, restrict access using passwords, restrict attempts, and isolate graded attempts. The H5P community maintains an evolving list of upcoming updates (Roadmap, 2020) to look forward to.

References

Examples and Downloads. *H5P*. (2020). Retrieved from https://h5p.org/content-types-and-applications

Integrations. *H5P* (2020). Retrieved from https://h5p.org/node/287135

Roadmap. *H5P*. (1 April 2018). Retrieved from https://h5p.org/roadmap

Figure 1

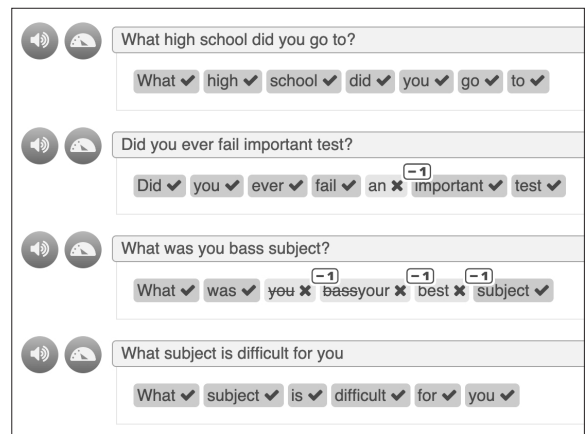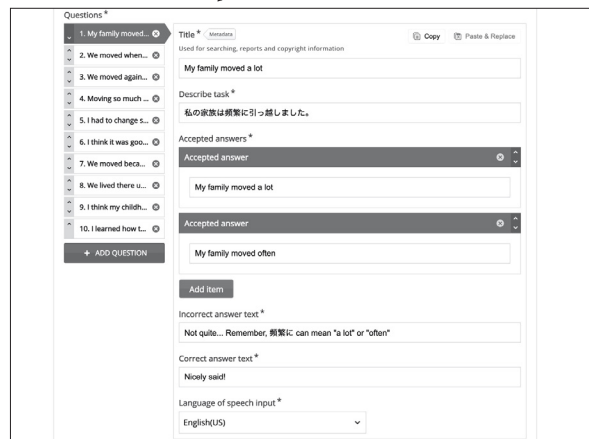*Spelling-Dependent Automatic Feedback on Dictations*

Figure 2

Authoring Multiple Accepted Answers and Customizable Feedback on "Speak the Words"

Get Your Spreadsheet Data in Order with VLOOKUP

Steve Paton
Fukuoka University

Many teachers like to keep an Excel or Numbers spreadsheet to record and calculate grades across the semester. Nowadays, as more and more of our score data is being imported from an ever-widening variety of online sources, such as Google Forms and any number of quiz or Learner Management System (LMS) sites, it is becoming increasingly difficult to organize the data that we import into our spreadsheets. Nobody wants to be dragging around individual cells trying to match them up to the right students, but when you are copying in data that's out of order, uncalculated, or incomplete, what better way is there? The answer is the Vertical Lookup Table function, or VLOOKUP, which is built into all modern spreadsheet applications.

What Is VLOOKUP?

Imagine that you give a quiz using Google Forms. You ask for each student's name and student number and ask 10 quiz questions. If you have told Forms the answer to each question, it will automatically create a sheet showing you each student's name, student number, and score. Great—no marking! However, these results cannot just be simply copied into your spreadsheet. Firstly, they will be sorted in the order in which they were submitted, whereas your sheet is probably ordered alphabetically or by student number. Even sorting the results data by student number will not do because there will be no empty cells or "zero" scores for the students who did not submit an answer form. If you were to just copy and paste that column's data, you would end up with scores lining up next to the wrong students and a number of empty cells at the bottom of the column.

VLOOKUP takes care of all of this. Just tell it to look through a particular range of cells (such as those results generated by Google Forms), tell it what to look for (i.e., a specific student number), and what to come back and tell you (i.e., the corresponding score in a neighboring cell). "Hey VLOOKUP, please go searching through this disorganized data that I just imported, find student number XYZ123, and tell me their score." Type this formula into a cell, and it will display whatever that student's score is. Copy that formula into each cell

of an entire column, and it will go and look for each student number and return each one's score. You do not have to do any searching, dragging, or re-organizing. The app goes digging through the rows of data like a sniffer-dog, finds each specific student number that you told it to find, and then brings back their score. It is a magical timesaver.

Example

Let's say you have a class of 10 students, and you keep a spreadsheet of their scores sorted by student number (Figure 1). You have given them a test on Google Forms, and you want to record their scores into a column called "Test 1." To facilitate the use of the VLOOKUP formula, somewhere off to the right side of your spreadsheet, make a column called "VLOOKUP results." (You'll be able to use this column again and again, so having such a dedicated column over to the right of your sheet is a good idea).

Figure 1
Sample Main Sheet Set-up

Have a separate sheet within the same spreadsheet file (or a separate *Table* if you are using Apple's Numbers spreadsheet), where you can paste in the results from Google Forms that you want to sort through. In the example, I called this sheet "Data import sheet," and I pasted in four columns of data from Google Forms: time stamp, student number, name, and score (Figure 2). Notice that in this example, only 7 of the 10 students completed the test, so even if we were to simply sort this data by student number, we wouldn't just be able to paste those scores into the main sheet without creating errors.

Figure 2

"Data Import Sheet" With Data of Seven Students

	A	B	C	D	E
1	1/7/2021 10:12:25	ABC004	Tomoki S	8/10	
2	1/7/2021 15:20:43	XYZ993	Jun XYZ993	7/10	
3	1/7/2021 16:11:31	XYZ992	K Kobayashi	9/10	
4	1/7/2021 16:44:17	LMN555	Yumi	3/10	
5	1/8/2021 14:13:34	ABC001	Takeshi Tanaka	9/10	
6	1/8/2021 15:28:56	XYZ991	Risa F	4/10	
7	1/8/2021 16:03:15	ABC003	Kenji D.	5/10	
8					

Let's put this formula to work. On my main sheet, in Column G, I want each student's score to magically appear. I am going start with G2 and tell this cell to go and look through the range of data that I imported into my "Data import sheet," find this student's student number (from Column B), and return his score information. Here's the VLOOKUP formula:

=VLOOKUP(lookup_value, table_array, col_index_num, [range_lookup])

There are four parts included between the parentheses, separated by a comma and space. Let's go through each of them:

- "lookup_value" is what the formula is going to go and look for. In this case, it is the contents of Cell B2: this student's student number.
- "table_array" is the range of cells that you want it to look through to find each student number and the corresponding score information that you are seeking. In this case, it is the table of cells on the "Data import sheet" stretching between Cell B1 and Cell D7 (Figure 2). Note that we do not start from Column A: the "lookup value" (the student number), *must* be in the first column of the range.
- "col_index_num" tells the formula which column to go to get our desired information. In this case, we want it to find the score information, which is Column D. However, the formula wants to know the number of that column within the range we selected. Column D is the third column in our range, so we will enter "3."
- The final part, "[range_lookup]" is a strange one. It basically asks, "Is it OK if I return an approximate value as opposed to exactly what's there?" In this case, no. We do not want an approximate value, so we are simply going to answer "FALSE."

Thus, keeping in mind that commas and spaces must be included correctly, our formula is this:

=VLOOKUP(B2, 'Data import sheet'!B1:D7, 3, FALSE)

Like magic, when we enter that formula and hit Enter, that cell will suddenly display the value "0.9." It looked at the student number in Column B2, looked through the range of cells we pointed it towards and found the right student number, looked across to the third column in that range, found "9/10," and returned it.

Entering the formula is easier than it looks. Those first two values, the "lookup_value" and the "table_array", can be entered by simply using your mouse. As soon as you type "=VLOOKUP(" , the app knows what kind of information it needs next and will understand if you just click on Cell B2. Enter a comma and a space, then make your way to your "Data import sheet," and select the range of cells B1:D7—there is no need to type out the name of the sheet. Again, enter a comma and space followed by typing "3," enter a final comma and space, and type "FALSE." Hit Enter, and you are done.

Now, however, we want it to do that for each student. It is simply a matter of copying and pasting, but there is a slight catch. If we were to copy that formula down into the next cell, G3, the application will be smart enough to know that we want it to look for the student number in B3, but it might be confused as to where we want it to go looking. It might think that since we are going one row lower for the "lookup_value" (i.e., the student number), we might also want it to shift our "table_array" one row lower, too. Of course, we do not want that. We want it to look through the exact same selection of data. So, we need to tell it to keep those values no matter how far down the column we copy this formula.

The data we imported from Google Forms is in that second sheet, in Cells B1:D7. In the formula, the way to tell it to keep these exact cells is to put a "$" sign in front of each referent, like this: "$B$1:$D$7" (without the quotation marks). This locks in those values. Let's manually edit the formula in G2 and add those "$" signs to make it this:

=VLOOKUP(B2, 'Data import sheet'!$B$1:$D$7, 3, FALSE)

Now, when we copy that formula into every cell down the column, it will look for all the students in each row but keep looking through the exact same range of cells. Figure 3 shows what we will get.

Figure 3

VLOOKUP Results Appear With Error Notifications

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Name	Student no.		Test 1	Test 2		VLOOKUP results	
2	Takeshi T	ABC001					0.9	
3	Yui A	ABC002					#N/A	
4	Kenji D	ABC003					0.5	
5	Tomoki S	ABC004					0.8	
6	Yumiko E	LMN555					0.3	
7	Satoko K	LMN556					#N/A	
8	Taiki D	LMN557					#N/A	
9	Risa F	XYZ991					0.4	
10	Kouta K	XYZ992					0.9	
11	Jun S	XYZ993					0.7	

Error Notifications

The formula has brought back each of those score values, but we have got some errors because there are three students who did not complete the test. Also, the formula cannot find their student numbers in the results data. There are two ways to overcome this.

Firstly, in some spreadsheet applications and versions, it might not be necessary, but our final step is going to be to copy the results in that "VLOOKUP results" column into the "Test 1" column. Select those cells with the VLOOKUP results, Cells G2:G11, and copy. Then select Column D2, the placewhere you want to paste these scores. If we simply paste what we have copied, it will paste the VLOOKUP formulas, which is not what we want. We want it to paste only the results of those formulas, so try a "Paste special," or a "Paste formula results," or "Paste values," depending on what software you are using. In many cases, it will paste the score values and completely leave out those errors, making the process complete. In other cases, those ugly error notifications will be pasted in too, in which case, we need to quickly go back and include just one more step.

Let's tell the spreadsheet what to do if it cannot find any particular student number. We do not want it to tell us there is an error; we just want it to return a score of '0.' For this, we need to add the "IFERROR" formula to our VLOOKUP. The IFERROR wraps around the VLOOKUP and produces one of two results: either the VLOOKUP result, or whatever we tell it to if it cannot complete the VLOOKUP.

Let's tell it to return a zero if it cannot complete the VLOOKUP:

=IFERROR([our existing VLOOKUP] , "0")

This means: "Perform that VLOOKUP, but if you find an error, just give me a zero."

Our final masterpiece formula, therefore, is:

=IFERROR(VLOOKUP(B2, 'Data import sheet'!$B$1:$D$7, 3, FALSE), "0")

Figure 4

VLOOKUP Results Appear

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Name	Student no.		Test 1	Test 2		VLOOKUP results	
2	Takeshi T	ABC001					0.9	
3	Yui A	ABC002					0	
4	Kenji D	ABC003					0.5	
5	Tomoki S	ABC004					0.8	
6	Yumiko E	LMN555					0.3	
7	Satoko K	LMN556					0	
8	Taiki D	LMN557					0	
9	Risa F	XYZ991					0.4	
10	Kouta K	XYZ992					0.9	
11	Jun S	XYZ993					0.7	
12								

Copy that down the column, and you will have what we see in Figure 4. Wonderful!

Final Step

Now that we have got all of our score results in the correct rows in the "VLOOKUP results" column, we want to copy these results into the column for "Test 1" scores (Column D). Select and copy those VLOOKUP results, and then, again depending on your application, either "Paste formula results," or "Paste values" into Column D. (This will ensure that only a numerical value goes into those cells, not a formula.) There is likely a keyboard shortcut for doing that special kind of paste, too.

As with everything new you learn about spreadsheet formulas, the possibilities start to grow. Rather than copy in those decimal values, why not create a simple formula in Column H to turn them into a score out of 10 or 20? In Cell H2, enter "=G2*20," and copy it down the column. See Figure 5. Select those results, and "Paste special" into Column D. You could even do that kind of calculation in an additional column on the "Data import sheet" and have your VLOOKUP formula return *that* column instead of the raw score.

Figure 5

Formulating Weighted Scores From VLOOKUP Results

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Name	Student no.		Test 1	Test 2		VLOOKUP results	weighted /20
1	Name	Student no.		Test 1	Test 2		VLOOKUP results	weighted /20
2	Takeshi T	ABC001					0.9	18
3	Yui A	ABC002					0	0
4	Kenji D	ABC003					0.5	10
5	Tomoki S	ABC004					0.8	16
6	Yumiko E	LMN555					0.3	6
7	Satoko K	LMN556					0	0
8	Taiki D	LMN557					0	0
9	Risa F	XYZ991					0.4	8
10	Kouta K	XYZ992					0.9	18
11	Jun S	XYZ993					0.7	14
12								

Sheet 1   Data import sheet   +

Reusable

Now, you have got the "VLOOKUP results" column ready to use for next time, as well as the "Data import sheet" ready to paste your next lot of results. When you paste in the results of your next test or quiz, you will likely need to edit the range of cells that your formula looks through, but once you have edited that range in the formula in G2, your top row, you can just copy it down the column and it will immediately show all of those results, ready to paste (special) right away into the column for, say, "Test 2."

I hope this has been a helpful introduction to this wonderful formula. Now that you know it, start to play around with it, and you are sure to find more and more ways to utilize it.

Further Reading

Excel VLOOKUP Function. (n.d.). *Exceljet*. https://exceljet.net/excel-functions/excel-vlookup-function

Vlookup. (n.d.). *Excel Easy*. https://www.excel-easy.com/examples/vlookup.html

[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

Today's Plan: Pockets of Learning and Growth in the Classroom

Kim Horne

Izumi Chuo Kindergarten

kim_horne@hotmail.com

Long, long ago, I made a discovery that changed my teaching. At this point, I don't remember exactly how it came to be, but suddenly, one day it appeared. In fact, for me, it is an all in one Teacher's Aid that, for the benefit of my students, I call Today's Plan. Today's Plan has addressed a number of weaknesses in my classes: Students had trouble focusing on the lesson, transitions between activities were slow, and I often had to stop and redirect the class.

Looking at Figure 1, you can see there are 12 different components, in the form of activity cards, that represent different parts of the lesson which some-times change and have evolved over time. I also have found some effective and fun classroom management strategies and established important routines. Today's Plan is quite easy for teachers to use.

Figure 1

Today's Plan

Another crucial thing I did was to share my lesson plan with my class. I put Today's Plan up on the board and introduced each activity to them. This made a big difference. Now the students could see what was coming, make smooth transitions, and focus on the activities.

Using Today's Plan

We use Today's Plan for our 4-6 year-old students (Ss) in our 40-minute after-school English classes. We greet the students at the door and remind them of the first four activities they should attend to before we start class. On the whiteboard is Today's Plan, which is a vinyl CD pocket holder that showcases the class activity cards for all to see. Once everyone is seated, we ask if they have completed the items shown in card #1: Go to the bathroom. Wash your hands. Drink something. Crisscross applesauce (sit on the floor).

In the first term, we created a call-and-response chant to check on what Ss had done:

Teacher (T): "Did you go to the bathroom? Did you go to the bathroom?"

Ss that went to the bathroom speak first and say, "Yes, I did. Yes, I did" (shaking both thumbs up).

Then, Ss that didn't go say, "No, I didn't. No, I didn't" (making an X with their arms in front of their bodies). The T asks the following questions and the Ss respond as above.

T: "Did you wash your hands?"

T: "Did you drink something?"

T: "Did you crisscross applesauce?"

Further into the term, Ss will form two groups and call and respond to each other.

Group 1: "Did you go to the bathroom?" Group 2 members respond with, "Yes, I did." or "No, I didn't."

Group 2: "Did you wash your hands?" Group 1 answers and asks the next question and so on.

Next, the T says, "Let's check!" Ss say, "Today's plan!"

In the beginning, T says all activities while Ss listen and repeat if they like. Later, Ss will start repeating on their own and will build enough confidence to initiate answers. In the beginning, we use the words "first" and "next" as we go from card to card and later on add "then" as a new prompt.

We have activity cards for the Hello Song, Rocket (number counting), Weather Song, Alligator Chant (phonemic awareness chant), Crisscross Applesauce (XXAS-sit down), Mystery Box, How Are You, Dottie Chan (virtue messages), Story, Game, Craft Time, Lapbook, Let's Sing (specific song cards are behind the generic song card), and the Goodbye Song. At certain times in the lesson, we will point to Today's Plan and ask the Ss, "Did you do the Hello Song?" and if they have, they'll answer, "Yes, I did." Then we'll go through all of the activities in the plan until we get to the one we haven't done yet, listen to them say, "No, I didn't," then we will do that activity and the rest that follow.

The beginning portion of Today's Plan is called the "Greeting Block." These activities include the Hello Song, Rocket, Weather Song, Alligator Chant, XXAS, How Are You, and Dottie Chan, and are always on the schedule. The numbers used in Rocket will vary between the day's date or a specific number found in a story or activity that comes later. The vocabulary and other items will change in Weather Song, How Are You, and Dottie Chan, depending on the activities that follow the Greeting Block. We do not use Mystery Box, Story, Game, Craft Time, Lapbook, or Let's Sing in every class, so these cards will change as needed.

Over time, the students become accustomed to the features of Today's Plan. They respond well to our class management strategies, such as getting their attention, transitioning quickly between activities, coping well with the grouping of more active and quieter activities, and celebrating the power of collaboration we bring to our class. Around this time, as their confidence grows, an interesting thing happens. Students feel at ease enough with the plan and the specific language and activities that we use, that one child or more feels confident enough to line up beside the teacher and face their classmates in the role of teacher. That first time is electric as the little boy or girl steps in front of their peers to lead them. In subsequent classes, more children will move to the front until the adult teacher becomes the only student in front of a class full of very young teachers. The students may take on the role of teacher to lead the activities alone or in pairs (it takes four little hands to handle the rocket!). They choose the activity that they would like to do and attach their name tag to the appropriate activity pocket. The teacher initially helps the students to make decisions, but after a few classes, the students work together to decide who does what. The goal is to have everyone, on their own accord, try to lead every activity in the Greeting Block sometime in the classes remaining.

Benefits of Today's Plan

1. Preparation: Activity cards allow Ss to see what's coming so they can prepare quickly for the next activity. This helps in making smooth

transitions from step to step. It is also easy for the T to work a good balance between high and low energy activities.

2. Repetition: There is ample opportunity to repeat to remember and remember to repeat. Using the same language consistently, along with scaffolding, builds comprehension and confidence.

3. Curiosity: When Ss see the cards, they immediately discuss with each other what is on Today's Plan.

4. Cohesion: Ts are able to construct a cohesive lesson plan that flows from point to point by linking the Greeting Block elements with new activities. For example, in Rocket, Ts match the final rocket number with a number that appears later in a story or another activity. For How Are You, Ts can use the emotion flashcards that will appear later in a story or activity. For the Mystery Box, Ts put in an item or clue that will be used later in the lesson. Ts can also use a class mascot to highlight a virtue that comes later in a story or activity.

5. Learner Autonomy: It gives Ss choice and leadership opportunities for them to become teachers. Ss can choose the content, their own leadership role, and learn how to negotiate and cooperate in running their own lessons.

6. Trust: The structure of Today's Plan provides an environment for comfort and safety through a routine process of learning, repetition, and practice. This develops automaticity, where responses can become quick and fluid, and self-confidence can flourish.

Conclusion

In the past, I kept my materials face down in a corner of a table where they could not be seen until I pulled them out to show. I liked being the "magician," but my students did not have a North Star to guide them, so there were bumps in the lesson that did not need to be there. Today's Plan smooths it all out, giving both the children and the teacher anchors and wings and providing pockets full of fun and mystery for us all to enjoy.

P.S. Stay tuned for Part Two in the next issue. I will show you how to incorporate several books and activities into the plan's structure and introduce Dottie, our beloved mascot, who shows us many ways we can be kind and brave in the classroom.

Kim Horne teaches at Izumi Chuo Kindergarten in Gifu City. While in the Peace Corps, she did agriculture extension and English teaching projects in the Dominican Republic (DR), then served as an academic director for SIT's College Semester Abroad in the DR. She enjoys giving presentations, photography, and writing haiku.

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 Jay Palarino's review of Prism Reading 1.

Prism Reading 1

[Michele Lewis and Richard O'Neill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. p. 168. ¥4,844. ISBN: 9781108556194.]

Reviewed by Jay Palarino, Fukuoka Medical and Sports Vocational School.

Prism Reading 1 is the second in a series of five texts. The key focus of this series is on developing academic reading abilities, as well as analytical and critical thinking skills for students looking to enter into academic college programs. Units are divided thematically, covering a range of academic disciplines a student may wish to pursue. Topics such as sociology and urban planning, anthropology and cultural studies, and computer science and engineering are all covered. The textbook is illustrated throughout with glossy, full-color photos of each topic. The entire series has an academic focus spanning CEFR levels A1-C1 with the level of Prism Reading 1 (Level 1) being appropriate for students at the A2 level.

As well as the central aims of the series, the textbook's objectives include key reading skills, such as scanning, previewing, synthesizing, annotating, and making inferences. These are all essential skills for a successful language learner (Ishikawa, Sasaki, & Yamamoto, 2011). The textbook also covers grammar skills and a range of academic vocabulary. These words, taken from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000), are labeled for special attention in the text and in the glossary section at the end of the textbook.
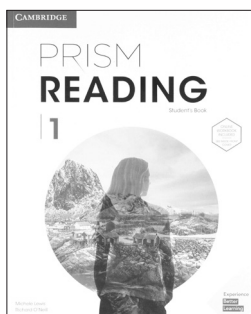
Each unit begins by presenting its learning objectives and a few introductory questions to help activate student interest. There are two main reading passages per unit, as well as various other shorter passages. Each unit has a unique theme and content. Each reading passage is preceded by supporting exercises. These present new vocabulary and pre-reading tasks to help provide essential scaffolded instruction. This helps with the later critical thinking and group tasks.

The readings are sufficiently varied in content and format, and passages are presented so as to look like real-world articles, websites, fact-sheets, and surveys. The wide-variety of content matches well with each unit's educational objectives. Each unit contains post-reading activities that provide supplementary material for the main text. In addition, each unit provides tasks for students to collaboratively work and learn together, as well as to develop their critical and creative thinking skills based on Bloom's taxonomy for learning objectives (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). For example, the second unit, *Festivals and Celebrations*, is full of readings on a diverse collection of worldwide celebrations. The accompanying activities allow students to synthesize the language content into their lives and culture with the aim of increasing students' interest and motivation. This work also helps enhance their social relationships and overall speaking ability (Haga, 2018) through teamwork.

The end of each chapter builds on and reviews each unit with *language development* and *watch and listen* sections. The former section focuses on related grammar points, such as frequency adverbs or prepositions of movement. The latter section includes exercises centred around video content sourced from real-world video footage that contains its own critical thinking and collaboration tasks.

Finally, this series also provides other resources, such as an online learning component that includes an online workbook and additional reading passages which are ideal for homework assignments. Students can also download the audio content to listen to whenever they like. The presentation plus section also provides teachers with interactive presentation materials for the class. These materials can be

accessed by using an activation code found in each copy of the text and which is valid for 12 months.

This particular year has been a great challenge for teachers worldwide and many of my own classes were conducted online rather than in a classroom. However, whether implemented online or face-to-face, each unit, with all its additional tasks and activities, has enough material for two 90-minute classes. Many of the collaborative activities, which focus on smaller groups and pairwork, can easily work in an online classroom.

Overall, each unit provides its own content for generating new discussions and interest on a wide range of disciplines and can provide an essential reading component to a second-language curriculum while enabling the teacher or students to choose which units they want to focus on. The textbook is suitable for teachers who teach academically-motivated students at the high school or university level. It could also fit very well for teachers looking to add a simple but effective reading component to their curriculum.

References

Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. R. (Eds.) (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Longman.

Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(2), 213-238. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587951

Haga, S. (2018). Critical thinking and discussions in a Japanese university EFL setting. In P. Clements, A. Krause, & P. Bennett (Eds.), *Language teaching in a global age: Shaping the classroom, shaping the world*. JALT.

Ishikawa, Y., Sasaki, D., & Yamamoto, S. J. (2011). Integrating critical thinking skills into the EFL classroom. In R. Stroupe, & K. Kimura (Eds.), *English language teaching practice in Asia* (pp. 127-141). IELTS. https://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/ELTPA

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 June 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

* Evolve Level 2 (2nd ed.) — Clandfield, L., Goldstein, B., Jones, C., & Kerr, P. Cambridge, 2018. [Evolve Level 2 is a part of a six-level English course that gets students speaking with confidence. This student-centered course draws on insights from language teaching experts and real students and focuses on the most effective and efficient ways to make progress in English.]

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.]

! Longman preparation series for the TOEIC® test: Listening and reading (Intermediate course). (6th ed.) — Lougheed, 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.]

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.

* Movie time! (3rd printing) — Bray, E. Nan'un-do Publishing, 2020. [Students and teachers will have the unique opportunity to watch a great film together. The coursebook contains 16 units that include language development activities, a journal for recording reactions and ideas, as well as opportunities for in-class performance.]

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

* Unlock Level 2: Listening, speaking & critical thinking. (2nd ed.) — O'Neill, R., Lewis, M., & Sowton, C. Cambridge (2019). [Unlock Level 2 is a part of a six-level academic-light English course created to build the skills that language students (CEFR Pre-A1 to C1) need for their studies. It develops students' abilities to think critically in an academic context right from the start of their language learning. The coursebook can be supplemented with a mobile app and online workbook with downloadable audio and video.]

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

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

* *Bridging the humor barrier: Humor competency training in English language teaching* — Rucynski, J., Jr. & Prichard, C. Lexington Books, 2020.

English L2 reading: Getting to the bottom (4th ed.) — Birch, B. M., & Fulop, S. Routledge, 2020. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429397783

[JALT PRAXIS] TEACHING ASSISTANCE

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

Implementing online classes during the pandemic was so new and different that many teachers struggled alone in their first classes. To make matters worse, most universities in Japan suspended the hiring of teaching assistants. This academic year provides a second chance for instructors with newly-appointed TAs to teach a first class online, the way they should have. This issue's Teaching Assistance suggests four basic teaching tips for those who will continue to teach online or hybrid classes. A recent graduate from Arizona State University, the author informs readers how in-person language class techniques can be successfully re-harnessed to create interactive Zoom sessions.

Zoom With These Four In-person Class Techniques

Justin Mejia
Trident College of Foreign Languages

We have all been there. The clock strikes, you take one last sip of coffee and click the microphone and camera icons. You say "good morning" to a grid of black squares and get crickets in return.

Though it is a truly lonely feeling, you are not alone at all. Student non-participation in the age of COVID-19 is widespread in the English language teaching (ELT) community. This was a huge problem for my colleagues and me, who teach English as a foreign language (EFL), because what we are transmitting to students is a skill and not just a body of knowledge (Serrano, 2011). Also, skills require more practice than study.

For years, there have been maxims in the ELT community about boosting student language production; sayings like "be a guide on the side, not a sage on a stage" are commonplace. Research by Turan and Akdag-Cimen (2019) backs this up too, with active learning approaches to EFL generally being considered more effective than traditional lecture-style classes. I think most teachers aim for the kind of student-centered, production-focused classes that these sayings are meant to create. But for many of us, that goal became markedly harder to meet when teaching online became the new normal in 2020.

Because this pandemic basically took everyone by surprise, most of us were fumbling in the dark when teaching online was first thrust upon us. This meant that while many teachers were struggling to figure out how to get along in this brave new world, they failed to uphold that core principle of EFL dogma: get the students talking.

The biggest factor in promoting student production, in my opinion, is crafting a class atmosphere that is conducive to participation—which is extremely hard to do in a virtual classroom. Nevertheless, through trial and error, I have found some very good ways of doing just that. Some methods depend heavily on factors like class size and student level; however there are a few general things that I have applied broadly and seen success with. I have used the following four basic techniques in traditional classes, and some of them may even seem trite, but I think they are worth reiterating for online classes.

Let Your Expectations Be Known

When online lessons first started, *all* of my students had their cameras off, and participation

was low. Frustrated by talking to black squares, at the beginning of the next class I simply asked the students to turn on their cameras. Immediately about three-quarters of the students did so and—at risk of confounding correlation and causation—participation went way up from there. So, from the first class I recommend letting the students know exactly what you expect of them in terms of visual and verbal participation. You might be surprised by the result. This could also be paired with an actual incentive for production by adding a participation category to the grading rubric of your syllabus if you don't already do such a thing. Simply giving a reason to actively participate actually does motivate a fair number of students.

Create an Avenue of Regular Communication

When my school began offering online classes, I had no access to students outside of class time, and the reverse was true as well. This not only caused some problems in the class (students neither asked for help nor clarification), but it also resulted in a diminished sense of the "class" as well. For both the students and me, it felt like we were just showing up for these 90-minute sessions that did not seem to cohere in any real way. One fix was to collect student email addresses via a Google Form and to give them my email as well. I try to have regular communication about assignments, and students know that they can ask me about classwork anytime. Similarly, if you are not already doing so, consider using a platform to anchor your class—something like a shared class Google Drive, Google Classroom, or Moodle. It goes a long way to making students feel like they are part of a class outside of your 90 minutes with them. The results for me have been great in terms of both communication and class atmosphere.

Use Breakout Rooms Wisely

Breakout rooms are a regular feature of online classrooms. As the meeting host, the teacher can choose to split participants into separate sessions. However, it is important to use them wisely. For me, this means two things. Firstly, once you know your students, you should build your breakout rooms around their individual personalities and abilities. For each class, I have a list of the strongest students that I never put together and the weakest students that I never put together. When I make breakout rooms, I quickly put one strong student and one weak student into each room as the core participants and then fill the rooms out with other students. Secondly, I do not use breakout rooms for every small exercise. Getting the students in and out of breakout rooms takes up time and interrupts the flow of the lesson. While I think they are an invaluable tool, I only use them when I expect actual production or cooperation.

Assign Roles

Assigning students to perform classroom roles works really well for me. During group work in breakout rooms, assign one student to be the leader of their room. They are responsible for making sure their group does their work and does it well. This can be extrapolated onto a classroom level too. If you have a somewhat large assignment or activity, each group can be made responsible for a certain section of it. This motivates students, as the entire class is depending on their contribution. Finally, if you are doing something together as a class, consider having the students choose who will answer. You can call on the first student to answer number one, but then they choose who will answer number two, and so forth. This seems to take a bit of the dread out of being called on and also promotes a sense of playful familiarity.

Conclusion

I have used an iteration of each of the above techniques in my in-person classes for several years, but when suddenly faced with teaching via Zoom, I quickly forgot about them. I was preoccupied with imagining just what teaching online would even look like. My hope is that readers who still have not quite found their groove can put these techniques to use. There are a lot of useful strategies I have stumbled onto over the past few months, but the ones I have listed are easy to implement and have—in my experience—a huge effect on how my classes play out. Above all, though, if you want your students to feel comfortable, just remember to be kind and open-minded. And do not be afraid to look foolish and keep things light.

References

Serrano, R. (2011). The Time Factor in EFL Classroom Practice. *Language Learning*, *61*(1), 117–145. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00591.x

Turan, Z., & Akdag-Cimen, B. (2019). Flipped classroom in English language teaching: A systematic review. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *33*(5-6), 590–606. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1584117

ARTICLES

JALT PRAXIS • TEACHING ASSISTANCE

JALT FOCUS

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 https://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.

Collaboration and the Teacher Development SIG

Matthew W. Turner

Toyo University

Michael Ellis

International Christian University High School

We are Matthew Turner and Michael Ellis, the Teacher Development (TD) SIG Coordinator and Program Chair. Here we will describe how the ethos of collaboration is a central theme of our group. We will also share some experiences and mention some future plans, in the hope of inspiring involvement in, and collaboration with, our SIG.

Formed in 1993, the TD SIG now has approximately 150 members. Our group is committed to helping peers and ourselves become more effective language teaching educators in order to better serve learners. As such, our varied interests include continuing professional development (CPD), teach-er-research, and reflective practice (RP). We understand that all SIGs in JALT are similarly concerned with helping members develop as professionals too, so we therefore believe that one of our offerings is to provide a space for networking and collaboration with other groups and specialisms. Our membership is diverse, and our events attract a range of teachers, from junior high school to university educators. Opportunities are given for different practitioners to unite for careful and critical reflections and explorations of their vocation, with a view ultimately to develop as professionals.

Our two main annual events are our *Teacher Journeys Conference* and a joint forum with the College and University Educators (CUE) SIG at the JALT international conference. The purpose of the *Teacher Journeys Conference* is to encourage presenters to reflect on their personal journeys as educators through narrative inquiry. Typically, it is co-sponsored by a JALT chapter, which has allowed us to "journey" with the conference to various regions of Japan, including the Kanto, Chubu, Kansai, Chugoku and Kyushu regions. Due to COVID-19, the conference moved online in 2020 through a curated selection of video presentations on our *YouTube* channel from educators around the world. At our forum with CUE, we ask teachers to share stories in PechaKucha presentations to rotating groups in order to encourage a casual atmosphere and open discussion. In thinking about collaboration, feel free to reach out if you would like to co-sponsor a conference or work together in future.

PanSIG is JALT's second largest conference, where SIGs work together to coordinate the delivery of an event showcasing various ideas and activities from Japan's language teaching community. In recent years, we have used our forums to bring SIGs into closer and more meaningful contact with one another, towards the goal of fostering a more informed understanding of each other's interests. The format of these forums breaks with conventional arrangements, as a series of one-to-one semi-structured interviews are used as an approach to encourage dialogic discovery. For example, at the 2018 and 2019 conferences, TD officers interviewed representatives from the Mind, Brain, and Education (BRAIN),

Gender Awareness in Language Education (GALE), Mixed, Augmented, and Virtual Realities (MAVR), and Testing & Evaluation (TEVAL) SIGs, in order to explore teacher development activities across sub-disciplines and envisage future collaborative initiatives with one another (Turner, Ellis, & Yoshida, 2019). For this year's PanSIG conference, we will be working with the Intercultural Communication in Language Education (ICLE) SIG to establish how educators can bring intercultural mindsets and communication skills into their practice.

In order to help foster collaboration and meaningful development among peers, we also sponsor RP meetings for teachers to gather locally for critical and cooperative exchanges about teaching practice. These meetings are typically planned and hosted by teachers with refreshments provided by the TD SIG. Recent meetings have been conducted online, allowing practitioners to more readily support each other regardless of distance. Meeting hosts and attendees are also encouraged to write a summary in our publications to spread the word and document the content of meetings. If we can support you with something like this, be sure to let us know.

We are always striving to forge stronger connections with our members and have recently devised a database which members can easily add the details of their professional expertise and experience to, helping our group tailor its activities to individual needs. In addition, we work with teachers who do not receive CPD funding by offering grants for conference participation and so on. In conclusion, we are keen to welcome you as a member, or learn about how we can collaborate with your SIG, chapter, or association. You can reach us by email at jalt.td.sig@gmail.com, on *Twitter* at @JALT_TD_SIG, or on *Facebook* at https://www.facebook.com/TeacherDevelopmentSIG. Our *YouTube* channel can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyh0CMnZrzBl-iePXQeRxfA.

References

Turner, M. W., Ellis, M., & Yoshida, A. (2019). Exploring the roles that SIGs play in teacher development: Three interviews. *PanSIG Journal 2018,* 264-271.

JALT2021 – Reflections and New Perspectives
Granship Shizuoka • Friday, Nov. 12 to Monday, Nov. 15 2021

Teacher Journeys 2021

The Teacher Development SIG's Teacher Journeys 2021 conference will be taking place in June. Like last year, we will be curating a collection of video presentations, highlighting educators' personal experiences of change, growth, and learning. Find us on Twitter (@JALT_TD_SIG) and Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/TeacherDevelopmentSIG) for up-to-date information on the call for submissions, and visit our YouTube channel to watch last year's series of videos.

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.

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

JALT 2021 OGM

2021年総会開催通知

Notice of the 2021 JALT Ordinary General Meeting (OGM)

- 日時: 2021年6月27日(日)
  Date: June 27, 2021 (Sunday)

- 時間: 14:30–15:30
  Time: 14:30–15:30

- 場所:つくば国際会議場(中会議室406)/オンライン(ハイブリッドミーティング)
  Location: Room #406, Tsukuba International Congress Center (Epochal Tsukuba) / online (hybrid meeting)

議案 / Agenda:

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

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

- 第3号議案 2020年度事業報告 / Item 3. Business Report (2020/04/01-2021/03/31)

- 第4号議案 2020年度決算報告 / Item 4. Financial Report (2020/04/01-2021/03/31)

- 第5号議案 2020年度監査報告 / Item 5. Audit Report (2020/04/01-2021/03/31)

- 第6号議案 2021年度事業計画 / Item 6. Business Plan (2021/04/01-2022/03/31)

- 第7号議案 2021年度予算 / Item 7. Budget (2021/04/01-2022/03/31)

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

* 5月下旬に、会員の皆様に議案詳細、各報告書のリンク先、及び個別の不在者投票へのリンク先をEメールでご案内いたします。

* An email containing details of the agenda, including links to the various reports that will be presented, and a link to an individualized ballot will be sent to you at the end of May.

　Eメールがお手元に届きましたら、不在投票の方法に従って投票をしてください。

本総会は、特定非営利活動法人(NPO)としての地位を保つ為に必要なもので、過半数以上の会員の皆様による出席(定足数)をもって、正式に開催することができます。

　幸い当学会では、会員の皆様に向けて電子投票システムを提供させていただいており、不在投票をしていただくことで、本総会の出席者としてみなすことができます。

　お手数をおかけいたしますが、ご支援とご協力のほどよろしくお願いします。

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

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

JALT Research Grant

Proposal Deadline: September 30

Each year, JALT awards up to three grants for a maximum of 100,000 yen each for research on language teaching in Japan. Only JALT members who have no outside funding sources to conduct research are eligible to apply. The goal of the grants is to support language teachers in their professional development and to encourage teachers to engage in classroom-based research. Grant applications are collected each summer and vetted by the JALT Research Grants Committee. Winners of the grants receive funding before the start of the following school year, during which they conduct their studies, provide quarterly reports, and receive guidance from the committee. Following the completion of the research, winners are invited to give presentations on their projects at the JALT international conference and to publish a paper in *The Language Teacher*. The deadline for proposals for projects starting in the 2022 school year is September 30, 2021.

Application details can be found on the JALT Research Grants website.

https://jalt.org/main/research

A Letter from JALT President, Dawn Lucovich

Dear *TLT* Readers,

At our last Executive Board Meeting (EBM) in February, we welcomed two new SIGs: *Accessibility in Language Learning* (ALL) and *Listening*. We are looking forward to seeing contributions from them and their members on these pages soon.

I proposed several committees, including the Graduate Student Subcommittee (gss@jalt.org) to address student concerns and issues and the Mentoring and Orientation Committee (mentoring@jalt.org) to guide formal mentoring and coaching for JALT members. We also welcomed the Writers' Peer Support Group (psg@jalt.org) as a committee in order to raise awareness about the resources and assistance they offer to both novice and experienced writers. If you are a JALT member, you can contact them for peer reading and advice during any stage of writing from idea generation to a first or final draft to submitting for publication.

Finally, I have launched a new initiative on the last Sunday of each month at 20:00-21:00 JST, the *JALT Zoom for Professional Development* (ZPD). Please join for networking, informal chat, and in building a community of practice with JALT members and prospective members during these stay-at-home times (see the back cover of this *TLT*).

I look forward to seeing you virtually very soon and face-to-face as soon as safely possible.

Dawn Lucovich
president@jalt.org

JALT Apple Store

Don't forget, JALT membership brings added bonuses, such as discounted Apple products through the JALT Apple Store.

<https://jalt.org/apple>

Michinoku English Education Summit in Hachinohe (MEES) 2021

"Pandemic Pedagogy コロナ教育"

Hachinohe Gakuin University

Sunday, July 4 2021 - Online Conference

Event Page - https://www.facebook.com/events/523479255286866/

JALT ICLE SIG 1st Conference will be held on July 10 (Saturday) Online.

This is the 1st conference of JALT's Intercultural Communication in Language Education (ICLE) SIG. The purpose of this conference is to promote the core values of our SIG in terms of bridging the gap between the theory and the practice of incorporating culture in various language education settings.

We are looking forward to learning about your ideas, best practices, and research on Culture & Language Education! Please submit your abstract by May 10 (Monday) at 17:00 (Japan time).

https://tinyurl.com/ynp83efm

See more information at the ICLE SIG Homepage https://sites.google.com/view/jalt-icle-sig/home

---

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

https://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

https://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

https://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。

https://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

https://jalt.org/main/membership

Information

For more information please consult our website <https://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.

Scott Gardner *jaltpubs.tlt.old.gram@jalt.org*

An Anthem All Your Own

The "Happy Birthday" song and "The Star-Spangled Banner": two extremely popular tunes with similar problems. They are similar in that both appear celebratory on the surface while harboring dark undertones. One is a seemingly joyful ode to humans' inevitable spiral towards death; the other commemorates surviving a military attack, then compiles a list of who should be killed in retribution.

Until recently, a major U.S. music publisher claimed ownership of "Happy Birthday" and for decades charged royalties as high as $700 for public performances. That came to about $44 for each "happy" in the lyrics. Low-income Americans had to make tough decisions each year on whether to get Grandma a birthday cake or sing her a song, because they couldn't afford both. Some surreptitious celebrants skirted the law by singing quietly with the lights out (hence the candles), or singing at funerals and public executions instead of birthdays. They'd claim the performance was parody and subject to free speech protection. Since the copyright applied to the U.S. only, my aunt used to call her Canadian relatives and have them sing it over the phone. The copyright claim was rejected in 2015 and the song is now public domain, but people still feel skittish about singing "Happy Birthday" out loud. On birthdays at my house we've opted to sing "No Fun" by The Stooges.

"The Star-Spangled Banner" is the U.S. national anthem, but it's also part of a battle over the American definition of the word "patriot". (For a neutral definition of "patriot" look in the dictionary under "nationalist".) Some Americans contend that showing respect for their country—"patriotism"—includes not only singing the song at public events like football games, but also standing and performing specific ritualistic actions while singing it. These symbolic actions aren't difficult to do, but they require patriotic sports fans to find flat, stable surfaces to put aside their beer and hot dogs until the song is finished. What's worse, people who, for whatever reason, don't perform the ritual satisfactorily may be labelled as unpatriotic. Sadly, the issue of performing the song correctly has become such a political football (an apt metaphor) that some public event organizers have tried abandoning its performance altogether. Of course this makes the patriots' "red glares" even redder.

I have a solution to the problems with both songs: Make them the same song! When you sing it at home to Grandma, you needn't worry about copyright because no red-blooded American would stop you from singing. Meanwhile, at your next football game you can sing while keeping in mind the birth of whatever special person or entity you like: your toddler, your country, your maturing retirement fund, or the goofy guy a few rows down from you with the "Turning 50, Feeling Nifty" t-shirt.

The key is to change the lyrics. The insipid original words to "Happy Birthday" need to be given some substance, and the violent military emblem worship in "The Star-Spangled Banner" needs to be given up and turned over to the heavy metal bands.

"The New Happy Birthday Song"
(to the tune of "The Star-Spangled Banner")

Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
Everyone gets their turn
So it's time you got yours too

One more year has amassed
And you still haven't passed
So we sing one more time
And we hope it's not the last

By tonight we'll be gone
To someone else's lawn
But for now it's to you
That we're singing this song

We don't ask for much
Just a smile when we're through
For the people who sang
"Happy Birthday to You"

PanSIG 2021 May 14 – 16, 2021 Online

Local and Global Perspectives: Plurilingualism and Multilingualism

This year's PanSIG conference is a date to celebrate! You are kindly invited to the 20th Japan Association for Language Teaching's annual PanSIG Conference, a showcase of JALT's Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

▸ **Plenary Speaker**
  ▹ Jane Willis (Aston University) Task-Based Teaching

▸ **Featured Speaker**
  ▹ Dr Helen Spencer-Oatey (University of Warwick) Intercultural Communication

▸ **Panel Discussion** on "Plurilingualism and Multilingualism in the Japanese Context"

▸ **More than 160 sessions** with 250 presenters: SIG forums, presentations, posters, or pre-recorded videos

How to attend PanSIG 2021?

1. Join the PanSIG 2021 event space on Eventzil.la (https://pansig2021.eventzil.la)
2. Get a ticket: JALT Members: ¥3,500, non-JALT Members: ¥5,000, students: free (either JALT student members, or full-time students with proof of student status, such as a valid student ID)

Schedule Overview

» Opening Friday, May 14, 2021 at 7 pm (includes the featured speaker address)
» Saturday, May 15, 2021 from 9 am to 8 pm (includes the plenary address)
» Sunday, May 16, 2021 from 9 am to 5 pm (includes the panel discussion)

PanSIG is about bringing together people with different backgrounds and areas of expertise, and offers the openness of an ongoing dialogue. A lot to learn, a lot to share, a lot to enjoy!

https://pansig.org/
https://pansig2021.eventzil.la/

ZPD

Please join us on the last Sunday of each month from 20:00 to 21:00 for the **JALT Zoom for Professional Development** (ZPD)!

Each JALT ZPD will feature opening remarks by directors and committees, orientation for new and prospective members, and breakout rooms for networking, finding collaborators, and such areas as discussion of research, tips, and best practices in teaching.

Please join us for networking, informal chat, and in building a community of practice with both JALT members and prospective members. This event is free and open to all.

RSVP using this QR code or at bit.ly/ZPDRSVP

Dawn Lucovich
NPO JALT President