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In this month's issue . . .

Welcome to the January/February issue of *The Language Teacher*. We hope you had a wonderful holiday and that you are ready to take on the year with renewed energy!

This issue begins with two Feature Articles. The first is from **Peter Clements**, who presents a narrative perspective on Japanese preservice English teachers' career choices, demonstrating the relationship between career decisions and preservice teachers' evolving sense of identity. The second is from **Sara Kawabata**, who sheds light on students' and teachers' perspectives on the use of English vs. Japanese in high school English classes.

In addition to these two articles, the issue also includes an interview with **Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson** by **Nathaniel Reed**. Please be sure to check out our many regular JALT Praxis columns as well.

In closing, as always, I would like to thank the content authors, reviewers, copyeditors, proofreaders, translators, and all the many other *TLT* volunteer contributors, whose efforts make this publication possible. Finally, to all our readers, I hope you enjoy this issue!

—Irina Kuznetcova, TLT *Co-editor*

The Language Teacherの1/2月号へようこそ。素晴らしい休暇をお過ごしになり、新たな気持ちで新年を迎えられたことと思います!

今号は2つのFeature Articlesから始まります。1つ目はPeter Clementsによるもので、日本の教育実習生のキャリア選択に関してナラティブによる視点を提示し、キャリア決定と教育実習生のアイデンティティの成長との関係について議論しています。2本目はSara Kawabataによるもので、高校の英語の授業における英語と日本語の使い分けについて、生徒と教師の視点に光をあてています。

これら2本の記事に加え、Nathaniel ReedによるNaoki Fujimoto-Adamsonへのインタビューも掲載されています。毎号掲載しているたくさんのJALT Praxisのコラムもぜひご覧ください。

最後に、いつものように、執筆者、校閲者、編集者、校正者、翻訳者、そしてその他多くの*TLT*ボランティアの方々のご尽力により、この出版が可能になったことに感謝いたします。最後に、読者の皆様、本号をお楽しみいただければ幸いです!

−*TLT*共同編集者*Irina Kuznetcova*

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Inspired Teachers: A Narrative Perspective on Preservice English Teachers' Career Choices

Peter Clements

Shizuoka University

Research on why people choose to pursue teaching careers has focused on a variety of factors related to recruitment and retention. For language teacher trainers, however, a potentially more insightful approach involves examining the discourse that preservice teachers (PSTs) use to discuss career decisions. This paper presents an analysis of narratives that Japanese PSTs used to explain why they wanted to become public school teachers. Data are drawn from a larger study of narrative inquiry as a tool for reflection in a language teaching methodology course and include texts written during the course and interviews conducted afterward. Using a framework that connects specific narrative elements (people, places, times) to wider contexts, the study reveals how PSTs relate career decisions to a dynamic and evolving sense of identity. This has implications for teacher trainers and programs, suggesting in particular the value of engaging PSTs in critical reflection on career plans.

　教職キャリアの選択についての先行研究は、採用や定着に関連する様々な要因に焦点を当ててきた。しかし、語学の教員養成者にとって、教育実習生(PST)がキャリアの決定について話し合う際に使用する談話を調べることがより洞察的なアプローチであろう。本研究の目的は、教員養成課程の学生が公立の学校の教師を目指す理由を説明するためのナラティブを分析することである。データは、英語教育法を受講した学生の振り返りのツールとして、大規模なナラティブ研究から抽出されたもので、授業のために書いた課題やその後のインタビューが含まれている。本研究では、ナラティブの要素（人物、場所、時間）を社会的背景に結びつける分析法を用いて、教育実習生が教職の選択を動的で進化する個々のアイデンティティの感覚にどのように関連付けているのかを探求する。結果は、特に教員を目指す学生が自身のキャリア選択について批判的に考えることの価値を示唆しており、教員養成者と課程にとって意義を与えるものである。

❝Why do you want to be a teacher?" Many of the preservice teachers (PSTs) that I work with answer this question by referring to experiences and people from their past. They describe, for example, that particular teacher that they found inspirational or that memorable class that opened a door for them and eventually led to a love of teaching and learning and a desire to make a career out of it. This type of response reflects the fact that the teaching profession in Japan can be characterized as having what Lortie (1975), writing about teachers in the US, called a "wide decision range":

People can decide to become teachers at any number of points. Since the occupation is ubiquitous and highly visible in the lives of children, it can easily figure in their fantasies about adult occupational activity; even young children can make persisting decisions to enter teaching. At the other end of the continuum, it is possible to decide on teaching late and still implement the decision. (p. 38)

Similarly, while the path to becoming a teacher in Japan is circumscribed by gate-keeping mechanisms such as licensing, hiring exams, and periods of apprenticeship (Howe, 2005; Numano, 2011), these are loosely spread over a time extending from the trainee's university coursework through the first years of in-service teaching, making it relatively easy to change course along the way. Thus, it seems natural that people explain their decisions to pursue a teaching career by drawing heavily on personal outlooks and dispositions. Becoming a teacher, in other words, is a story that they tell about themselves.

The purpose of this article is to explore these observations by looking at the ways in which undergraduate PSTs in Japan frame their career choices through personal stories. Specifically, it focuses on narratives written for a methods course for university students acquiring an English teacher's license.

Background

Research into the factors influencing the choice of a teaching career has traditionally taken a top-down approach, with large-scale studies at the national and cross-national level (Alexander et al., 1994; An et al., 2021; Kim & Kim, 2022; Uztosun & Topkaya, 2017; Watt et al., 2012) using survey instruments such as the one developed by Watt and Richardson (2007). These studies have suggested that there are similarities across contexts in people's motivations to pursue a teaching career, although sociocultural factors are associated with specific differences in attitudes and outcomes. The bird's-eye view taken by this research has implications for

educational policy, as it provides insight into issues that affect the overall health of the teaching profession, including recruitment and retention.

A more recent line of inquiry has focused on individual factors underlying teacher career decisions, often employing qualitative methods and adopting a dynamic view of teacher motivation (Harfitt, 2015; Low et al., 2017; Olan & Belló, 2016a, 2016b). These studies have complemented large-scale surveys by yielding insight into the ways in which individual teachers understand their careers as an unfolding process of self-realization. This work also reflects calls to make teacher training programs more supportive of novice teachers' identity development (Clarke, 2008; Fairley, 2020; Trent, 2010). The analysis reported here fits within this second line as it examines PSTs' reflections on learning and teaching experiences, particularly the ways in which they construe those experiences as part of their motivation to become a teacher.

Context

The data for this investigation are drawn from a larger study of the use of narrative inquiry in a course on English language teaching methods. The course is the last of a series for undergraduates obtaining a teaching license with a qualification in English, and enrollment typically consists of around 40 students in the 3rd and 4th year, approximately half of whom are in the education faculty's English education department, with the rest from other departments in the faculty. Entry surveys indicate that students take the course for varying reasons, including the fulfillment of graduation requirements, the prospect of adding English to their teaching qualifications, and preparation for a career as an English teacher.

Whether students are planning to become teachers or not, the course is designed to provide opportunities for them to think about teaching as a career and their own possible futures as teachers. This design includes a series of three written assignments modeled on Barkhuizen's (2008) contextualized narrative approach. For the first two assignments, students are told to first write a story about a significant learning experience and then one about a significant teaching experience. Prior to each activity, students are given few specific directions other than that their stories should be as vivid and detailed as they can make them. The third assignment is to analyze one or both of these stories using narrative techniques that they practice in class (see Clements, 2021, for details). Prior to a recent iteration of the course, university approval was obtained to collect

data for an analysis of these assignments, including the assignments themselves and interviews with students. After the course ended and grades had been submitted, students were informed about the project and participation was solicited. Fourteen (out of 43) agreed to let their writing be used, and six of those (three male, three female) consented to a semi-structured interview, conducted in either Japanese or English, depending on participant preference. The low participation rate likely reflects the fact that students were not contacted until after the term had ended and spring break had begun. One participant was interviewed online just after the course ended because he was about to graduate, and the remaining five were interviewed in an on-campus office during the following term. Interviews were conducted individually and lasted between 23 and 34 minutes.

Analysis

The study as a whole involved a content analysis of 42 written assignments and six interview transcripts using Barkhuizen's (2016) short story analysis. This approach takes Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three dimensions of narrative space—*who* (the people and their relative roles in the story), *where* (the settings and shifts from place to place), and *when* (the unfolding of action in the past, present or future)—and applies them to three scales of context, or levels. The first level (*story*) focuses on the immediate here and now of the narrative, particularly the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the participants. The second level (*Story*) looks at the communities and institutions that are implicated as well as longer time scales extending before and after the narrative proper. The third level (*STORY*) considers the macro scale of sociopolitical context, including government policy and national culture as well as time scales encompassing life histories and career trajectories. Short story analysis is thus a method of closely reading texts and connecting their specific narrative elements (people, places, times) to broader contexts.

It is important to note that this kind of analysis is interpretive and constructive. The interpretations are based on close engagement with the data, but they remain the interpretations of one researcher. The aim is not to suggest that these are more correct than someone else's interpretations, but to acknowledge that they add a layer of meaning to participants' stories, to which readers add their own understandings as part of an open-ended process of "narrative knowledging" (Barkhuizen, 2011). A range of issues emerged from the study as a whole such as PSTs' perspectives on the value of the teacher

training program that they were enrolled in and the future working conditions that they were anticipating. However, this study focuses specifically on those points where participants talked about their decision to pursue a teaching career and how they relate to the three levels of context (*story*, *Story*, and *STORY*).

The discussion that follows focuses first on interview responses followed by written narratives. Although the written narratives were completed first, they tended to yield richer narrative data than interviews, which were largely confirmatory. As a result, interview data provide an introduction to themes explored in greater detail in written narratives. All names are pseudonyms, which do not necessarily reflect ethnicity or nationality, as participants were asked to choose their own pseudonyms. Also, all extracts are presented without editing for grammar. Commas indicate pauses and false starts while brackets indicate material removed for space considerations. The question guiding this discussion is "How did participants narrate their decision to become a teacher?"

Interview Responses

Five of the six interview participants were in their 3rd year of university during the course and were interviewed at the beginning of their 4th year. The sixth (Kotaro) was in his 4th year during the course and was interviewed online just prior to graduation. Four of these students were still planning to become teachers when they were interviewed, and all four located their initial motivation in experiences in elementary and middle school. For example, Kotaro recalled an elementary school calligraphy exercise in which he had been asked to write what he wanted to be when he grew up and had chosen the Chinese characters for "teacher" (教師). Participants also referred to people they had encountered during their schooling, particularly teachers, as in this brief story from the interview with Nica:

> When I was elementary school student, grade one to three, I don't like studying but when I was fourth grade the teacher, my teacher is very wonderful person [...] and I want to study, I wanted to study so [...] I respect her so I want to be teacher.

Nica implies that the teacher influenced her attitude toward learning and that this made her want to be like the teacher by becoming a teacher herself. Statements like Kotaro's and Nica's present the decision to become a teacher as something that begins in school communities (*Story*) and which is triggered by specific incidents and encounters

with people in those communities (*story*). They also suggest that the decision has been maintained over the years from childhood to the present. In other words, deciding to be a teacher is talked about as part of one's life history (*STORY*).

Written Narratives

As noted earlier, the narrative assignments that students completed during the course were somewhat open ended, the primary direction being to write as vividly as possible about significant learning and teaching experiences. In contrast to interviews, participants were not directly asked about career plans, although six of them brought up this topic, once again pointing to specific experiences in school settings, as in the following:

> I started aspiring to be a teacher when I was in junior high school. It was time to meet the teachers I admire [...] For me, who was an elementary school student until a while ago, the rules of junior high school, where teachers change for each subject, may have been fresh [...] Three teachers left an impression on me.

This extract, taken from the beginning of the narrative, introduces the main section—the portraits of three teachers who "left an impression"—as part of the student's career aspirations (*STORY*). The writer also suggests that the newness of middle school influenced her feelings about her teachers (*story*), thus placing the already distant context within the transition from elementary to middle school (*Story*).

Participants did not draw solely on positive experiences in explaining their career plans. They also recalled aspects of schooling that they disliked or felt needed changing, as in the following:

> When I was in high school, most English classes were "translation and reading" that called "yakudoku." Those classes were very boring, and I wondered if there was not useful to improve my English skills. Then, in my third year of high school, I went to a cram school and met a teacher who taught me "how to read English" and the core-meaning of vocabulary. These instructions made me easy to read English and helped me to pass my examinations. However, at the same time, I believed that these instructions should be received. I decided to become a teacher who could provide such instructions at school.

The writer describes an inspiring encounter with a teacher (*story*), but this is presented in relation to features of English education (*Story*, *STORY*): "boring" classes using outmoded teaching techniques and the presence of private educational institutions

(cram schools). The last two sentences imply that the writer sees a difference between public and cram school environments (*Story*), the latter being more innovative and responsive to student needs, and suggest that he wants to use that understanding to inform his future work as a public school teacher "who could provide such instructions at school" (*STORY*).

Aside from experiences as students, participants also related career decisions to more recent teaching experiences, drawing especially on practicum sessions and part-time cram school work. The following example is from the conclusion to a narrative about the writer's teaching practicum at a middle school affiliated with the university:

> I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the teachers of [university name] and [...] [middle school name]. Thanks to them, I was able to fill [*sic*] real pleasure of teacher, and my desire to become a teacher became even stronger.

As Clements (2019) noted, university students' practicum narratives tend to portray the practicum as a positive learning experience, in which initial nervousness and anxiety are gradually overcome through challenging yet pleasurable interactions with children, leading to feelings of accomplishment and appreciation. In the example above, the sense of gratitude is connected to long-term career plans (*STORY*) through the idea that the practicum has strengthened the writer's decision.

Many of these teaching narratives discuss specific encounters with children and how those encounters led to realizations about teaching as a profession. An example of this can be seen in a narrative about working at a cram school in which the writer, Sammy, describes tutoring a student who needed a considerable amount of remedial instruction (in Sammy's terms, "basic knowledge"). Sammy characterizes this situation as a process of helping the student gain confidence and shoring up her motivation: "As she became able to solve a lot of questions, she became confident. This is the turning point of her English studying. After that, she studied harder than ever, and her score was getting better and better." The student's test scores eventually improved to the point where she left the cram school, but she later returned to give Sammy a letter of appreciation, which he reflects on as follows:

> I was not sure, until getting this letter, whether I had given her appropriate support mentally and on studies and of course I know she was able to pass the test because I had spent tremendous amount of time in studies, but I felt like rewarded and I realized what a nice job a teacher

is. The job of teachers is not only teaching, but also support students for the sake of students' future. What is more, they can feel the growth of students. By reflecting this experience, I feel it was I that was encouraged and given energy. I am proud of having taught her English, and this experience will be remained in my mind forever.

At the immediate level (*story*), this extract, particularly the mixture of subordinate and coordinate clauses in the first sentence using "whether...and...but," seems to mirror Sammy's uncertainty over the results of his teaching efforts. He then connects the experience to more general observations about teaching (*STORY*): that it involves both immediate and long-term results ("teaching" versus "growth") and that the relationship between students and teachers is reciprocal ("I feel that it was I that was encouraged and given energy").

Whether connected to career plans or not, this focus on encounters with individuals, particularly student-teacher interactions that are usually positive, is common in the narratives that have been analyzed in this project and in previous work (Clements, 2019), and it reflects the ways in which everyday incidents are used to express identity. Sammy reflected further on his outlook as a teacher in the third assignment of the course by connecting his cram school teaching experience with unpleasant memories of when he was a student at a private English conversation school. The third sentence of the following extract ("... as the teacher at the English conversation school did to me") refers to an incident from his childhood that he had written about in the first narrative assignment of the course, where he failed a standardized interview test and stopped taking conversation classes as a result.

> I feel happy when I can teach something, and the hearer understand what he or she did not understand. These experiences and events have made who I am, made me to decide to take a job to teach English. I am thinking of how to cheer students up who do not have confidence like who I was as the teacher at the English conversation school did to me. What is more, I want to figuring out, as an identity of me, other ways to encourage students to study English more, such as how to give a fascinating lessons to students, how to lead to students learning English on their own, and motivate students to learn not only to pass examinations, but also for the future.

Once again Sammy contrasts short-term results (passing exams) with long-term ones (learning "for the future") and places that contrast in the arc of his evolving identity as a teacher (*STORY*). His use

of past- and present-tense *be* verbs ("who I am" versus "who I was") suggests that developing specific teaching skills and approaches, such as the ability to give "fascinating lessons" and encourage students to learn English "on their own," is part of a process of self-realization.

Implications

Researchers have recognized that an important component of teacher cognition is teachers' beliefs and how those beliefs influence their openness to new theories and instructional techniques (see, e.g., Takagi, 2022). Preservice and in-service training, therefore, need to encourage reflection on beliefs so that teachers can learn to make informed decisions about practice. The narratives that have been analyzed for this paper suggest that this examination of beliefs could well be extended to include an explicit focus on teacher identity, as others (e.g., Clarke, 2008; Fairley, 2020; Trent, 2010) have called for. That is, trainers can ask teachers to talk about their sense of themselves as teachers and then explore the broader implications of that talk. Although there are many ways to promote reflection (see, e.g., Maijala, 2023), narrative inquiry provides a toolkit of techniques and activities that are both practical and meaningful. Moreover, these kinds of activities are potentially valuable not only for the trainees themselves, who engage in critical reflection that can ultimately be empowering, but also for teacher trainers, who gain insight into students' outlook and developing sense of self.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that PSTs' narratives are dynamic and evolving, a fact that is consonant with the wide decision range of the teaching profession in Japan. For example, when Sammy was interviewed the following term, after the course had ended, he reaffirmed many of the points noted above about his orientation to teaching, particularly the importance of being responsive to and supportive of students with varying needs. However, he also revealed that he had decided not to work as a teacher after graduation but instead go to graduate school with the aim of becoming an academic. The question that this article begins with—"Why do you want to be a teacher?"—is not something that students can answer definitively, and answers will shift depending on a variety of factors. Rather, questions like this afford opportunities for PSTs to examine their career decisions and discover how they make those decisions meaningful through discourse.

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Peter Clements has lived in Japan on and off for over 30 years and is currently associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Shizuoka University, where he teaches EFL skills and methods courses. His research interests center around second language writing, discourse analysis, study abroad, and teacher training.

Japanese Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Using Japanese and English in High School English Classes

Sara Kawabata

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The use of students' L1 in the EFL classroom is an area of on-going debate. This study investigated teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of Japanese and English in Japanese high school English language classes. Twelve Japanese teachers of English (JTE) and 179 Japanese high school students participated in the study. The participants reported that most of their classes were conducted predominantly in Japanese. Both the JTEs and students expressed their belief in the necessity for Japanese use in class, especially for grammar or vocabulary explanations. However, most participants stated that English should be used for 50-70% of class time. This study also revealed that most of the JTEs did not consciously think about language choices when preparing for class.

EFLクラスルームでの学習者のL1使用は賛否両論ある議題といえる。本研究では、日本の高等学校における英語授業での日本語と英語の使用に関する生徒および教師の認知を調査した。12人の日本人英語教師(JTE)および179人の高校生が調査に参加した。調査参加者は授業の大半は主に日本語で行われていると答えた。JTEと生徒は日本語使用の必要性を表明しており、特に文法や語彙の説明などにおける日本語使用を求めていた。しかしながら、授業時間の50〜70%ほどは英語が使用されるべきだと考える声が大半であった。また、日本人英語教師の多くは、授業準備の際に、言語選択に関しては意識的に考慮していないことが明らかになった。

A review of Jeremy Harmer's *The Practice of English Language Teaching* over the last 30 years shows a change in attitude towards L1 use in the English language classroom. In the first edition, Harmer (1983) only briefly mentioned L1 use; in the third edition (2001), he expanded on the problematized L1 use by students and suggested how to discourage students from using L1. In the latest edition, Harmer (2015) discussed the role of other language—the pros and cons of L1 use—and included recent studies on the benefits of L1 use in class. The attitudes towards L1 use can be seen to have moved away from discouraging its use and now focus on how to employ it efficiently and appropriately.

In the context of the Japanese education system, Japanese high school teachers have been expected to conduct English classes in the English language

since 2013 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology [MEXT], 2009). Omote and Kawakami's (2021) study shows that the amount of English classroom speech used has increased over the last decade. However, almost 50% of Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) are still reported to use English less than half the time during class (MEXT, 2022). This reveals a gap between the intentions expressed in the Courses of Study Guidelines (CoS) and the actual practice of JTEs in high schools.

MEXT, however, does not prohibit Japanese use in class. The new CoS states that if teachers keep in mind that classes should provide a real purpose for communication and expose students to English, the supplemental use of Japanese can be considered (MEXT, 2018).

Research focusing on English use in the classroom has identified some of the issues from the perspectives of JTEs. Machida (2019) conducted interviews, class observations, and a questionnaire with junior high school non-native English teachers. The results indicated that the majority were positive towards the policy of conducting English classes predominantly in English, but felt anxious due to a lack of confidence in using English for class instruction. Additionally, the teachers had concerns over possible problems with students being able to learn effectively in those circumstances. Reed's (2020) study used a questionnaire and interviews to reveal that non-native English teachers felt unprepared to conduct classes primarily in English for a variety of reasons including workload, a perceived lack of training, and English competency.

As for the students' perspective, research on Japanese use in English classes has shown a preference for Japanese in particular circumstances. Aoyama's (2020) study of third-year high school students conducted through classroom observations and interviews showed that students used Japanese for several specific purposes such as asking for help, backchanneling, and identifying equivalents. This study indicated that students had complex and varying attitudes towards Japanese use in the classroom

as well as a desire to use more English. Hosaka's (2020) study of junior high school students through a questionnaire indicated a preference for Japanese during explanations of difficult grammar. This mirrors Sakai's (2018) research on older students with higher English proficiency who showed a preference for Japanese when dealing with complex topics.

Saito (2018) conducted a series of interviews and observations with three senior high school teachers from different schools and administered a questionnaire to their students. The teachers' choice between Japanese or English in class was based on the current MEXT CoS guidelines, the students' English proficiency, and the pressure of preparing for university entrance exams. The study also revealed that the students had distinct expectations and opinions of when and for what purposes their teachers should use Japanese and English in class.

A logical step in this area would be a broader examination, including interviews with both JTEs and students and focusing on just one school, of the perceptions of JTEs and their students towards both Japanese and English use in their English language classes. Such a study could include interviews with both JTEs and students from just one school in order to identify differences in their perceptions. This study aimed to explore both JTEs' and students' perceptions towards how much English they use in class, in what situations Japanese or English should be used and why they think each party uses Japanese or English in class. The perceptions of the participants towards mixed Japanese/English classes compared with English-only classes were also examined.

Research Questions

The research questions in the study were formulated as follows.

RQ1. What percentage of the language used in class is English, according to the JTEs' and students' perceptions?

RQ2. In what situations do the JTEs/students think Japanese/English should be used?

RQ3. What reasons do JTEs/students think cause their use of Japanese/English?

RQ4. What are the JTEs'/students' attitudes towards mixed Japanese/English use compared with exclusive use of English?

Methods and Data

The research used in this study was carried out as part of a master's course attended in the United Kingdom. Data originally collected in 2018 was analyzed for this study. The mixed methods approach consisted of a quantitative questionnaire followed by several qualitative interviews.

The data was collected at a private high school in an urban area of Kyushu, western Japan. The school is above average size. All the full-time JTEs working at the school were asked to complete the questionnaire, and 12 (out of 13) took part. Six out of the 12 JTEs were willing to be interviewed. The research plan and all the materials were approved by the Institutional Ethical Board of Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK, and all necessary consent procedures were followed. The students (first- and second-year high school students aged 16 to 17) taught by those six JTEs were asked to complete the online questionnaire (see Appendix A), and 179 responses were received. Among the student participants, 72 (from two classrooms) were first-year students and 107 (from six classrooms) were second-year students. The majority of students had EIKEN grade 2, pre-2, or 3 (41, 46, and 46 respectively). Two students had grade pre-1, 11 students had grade 4 or 5, and 33 students did not have an EIKEN grade.

Following Dörnyei (2010), established questionnaires investigating similar themes were consulted and adapted. The questionnaires from Schweers (1999), Levine (2003), Thompson (2006), Hashemi and Sabet (2013), and Shabir (2017) were used based on similar research questions and contexts. Questions consisted of numerical rating scales, multiple choice items, and Likert scales. The four questions with numerical rating scales in the first part focused on the perceived amount of English use in class by the JTE and students, and the response options available were 0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, and 81-100% of class time. The second part investigated the JTEs' and students' beliefs about Japanese and English use with Likert six-point scales. Questions 5 to 7 focused on the ideal amount of Japanese/English use in class, and Question 8 to 16 on beliefs regarding language choices made in class. The third part of the questionnaire used multiple-choice items to examine situations in which students believe Japanese/English should be used and the reasons why. Data from the questionnaire was organized using the online tool Survey-Monkey (https://www.surveymonkey.com). Student responses were separated into percentage bands and analyzed accordingly.

The students who completed the questionnaire were then asked to voluntarily join the subsequent focus group interview, and five of them participated.

The interviews were semi-structured and employed an interview guide (see Appendix B). All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. The data from the interviews was analysed using grounded theory, coded and analysed thematically to identify any recurring themes or patterns. In the findings, transcription excepts are notated with speech turns.

Findings

RQ1. What percentage of the language used in class is English, according to the JTEs' and students' perceptions?

In terms of English use, the interviews with the JTEs revealed that there was variation between the JTEs. The questionnaire results indicated, as shown in Table 1, that three quarters of the JTEs used English for less than 40% of their total speaking time. Results for both JTEs and students showed that only a small number of JTEs used English as the main language. The responses of the students varied even within the same class, despite the fact that they had experienced the same lessons together. This could be because the time spent using English was not consistent, and varied from lesson to lesson even when conducted by the same teacher.

Table 1

JTEs' Use of English (Question 1)

JTEs' English Use	JTEs' view (*n*=12)	Students' view (*n*=179)
81 - 100%	2 (16.7%)	29 (16.2%)
41 - 80%	1 (8.3%)	62 (49.2%)
0 - 40%	9 (75%)	88 (34.6%)

Table 2 shows perceptions of English use for student-teacher and student-student speaking activities. In both situations, the results showed that the students' use of English was very limited, and only approximately one quarter of the students used English for more than 40% of their total utterances.

Interesting Connection Between English Use by JTEs and Students

Regarding the amount of English use, an interesting connection was observed between the JTEs and their students. That is, the more JTEs reported speaking English, the more their students tended to report speaking English. Figure 1 shows the time percentage of English use reported by the students of Teacher 1 (T1) and Teacher 3 (T3). These two teachers are compared because of the distinctive consistency in their reported approaches to Japanese /English use compared with the other teachers. The interview revealed that the two teachers have different policies regarding English use. T3 purposefully emphasizes explanations in Japanese for better and clearer understanding, and hardly speaks English in class (as shown in Figure 1). On the contrary, T1 tries to avoid the use of Japanese in class. Interestingly, the students of T1 reported speaking more English, with more than 80% of the students using English for more than 40% of their speaking time, while 80% of T3's students report no more than 40% of English use. The contrast indicates that the amount of English spoken by students in these two teachers' classrooms is influenced by the amount of English used by the teachers.

This result was further supported by students' responses to survey Question 8 ("I believe the more teachers speak English in class, the more students are encouraged to speak English in class"). As shown in Figure 2, 83% of students agreed with this statement to some extent. One third of the JTEs "partially disagree" with this statement indicating that they were less sure about the effect of their English usage in class on the students.

The interviews revealed that the JTEs' basic interpretation of an "English-only approach" sometimes applied only to their own language use and not that of the students'. Also, the English-only approach was often used for particular activities and not the entire class. It is similar to what Leeming (2011) describes as the distinctive understanding of English-only classes in the students' mind, where the

Table 2

Students' English Use for Speaking (Questions 2 & 3)

Students' English Use	JTEs' view (*n*=12)		Students' view (*n*=179)	
	Student→JTE	Student→Student	Student→JTE	Student→Student
81 - 100%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (6.7%)	5 (2.8%)
41 - 80%	3 (25.0%)	3 (25.0%)	56 (31.3%)	126 (26.0%)
0 - 40%	9 (75.0%)	9 (75.0%)	111 (62.0%)	46 (71.2%)

Figure 1

Comparison of English Use Between T1 and T3 Classes (Questions 1-3)

	T1 to Student	Student to T1	Student to Student	T3 to Student	Student to T3	Student to Student
81-100%	8	3	2	1	0	0
41-80%	6	9	9	10	6	4
0-40%	0	2	2	26	31	33
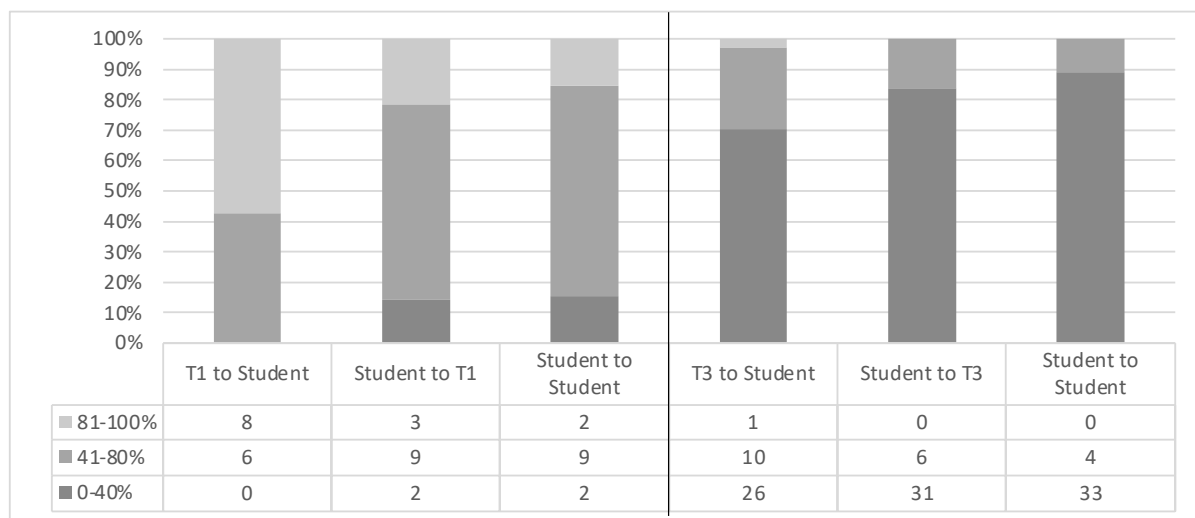
Figure 2

JTEs' and Students' Responses to Survey Question 7 ("I Believe the More Teachers Speak English in Class, the More Students are Encouraged to Speak English in Class")
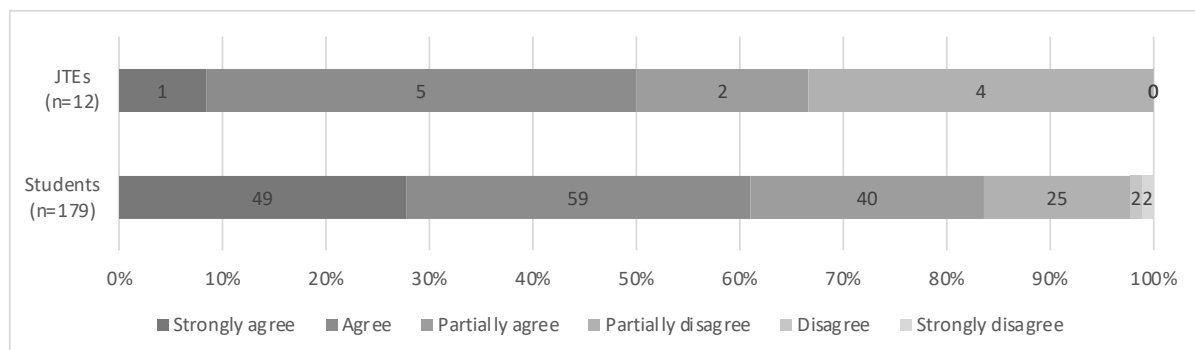
English-only policy is applied to tasks, not "all classroom interactions including non-task related social conversation" (p. 373). In addition, the interviews showed that the JTEs do not consider language choices when preparing a lesson. The language balance might vary because of JTEs improvising during the class, which may lead to inconsistency in English use.

RQ2. In what situations do the JTEs/students think Japanese/English should be used?

Questions 18 and 19 in the questionnaire revealed that both JTEs and students had similar views regarding appropriate situations for Japanese use, as shown in Table 3.

A detailed explanation of the situations listed in

Table 3 follows below.

To Explain Difficult/Abstract Concepts Including Grammar

All the JTEs and 67% of the students believed that difficult or abstract concepts should be dealt with in Japanese. The JTEs found it especially difficult to teach grammar in English, partly because of a lack of experience as learners; as T6 expressed in the interview, "I have never seen a grammar lesson conducted all in English." One JTE expressed the belief that "it should be explained thoroughly in Japanese" (free comments for Question 18). In fact, explicit grammar explanations were often absent in the classes given by JTEs who used a higher percentage of English. Student 1 (S1) in the focus group

Table 3

The Five Most Appropriate Situations for Japanese Use (Question 18)

Situations	JTEs (*n*=12)	Students (*n*=179)
To explain difficult/abstract concepts (including grammar)	12 (100%)	119 (66.9%)
To explain about tests, assignments, or teaching methodology	10 (83.3%)	104 (58.4%)
To explain differences between Japanese and English language	8 (66.7%)	85 (47.8%)
To help students feel more comfortable and confident	8 (66.7%)	77 (43.3%)
To define new vocabulary	6 (50.0%)	127 (71.4%)

Table 4

Inappropriate Situations for Japanese Use (Question 19)

Situations	JTEs (*n*=12)	Students (*n*=179)
To joke around with students	6 (54.6%)	92 (55.1%)
To carry out small-group work	3 (27.3%)	83 (49.7%))
To summarize material already covered	6 (54.6%)	61 (36.5%)
To give instructions for activities	1 (9.1%)	50 (29.9%)
To introduce new material	5 (45.5%)	45 (27.0%)
To check for comprehension	3 (27.3%)	45 (27.0%)
To explain about cultures or situations used in materials	4 (36.4%)	40 (24.0%)

also mentioned that classes conducted in English tended to focus more on using the language rather than understanding the language structure.

To Explain About Tests, Assignments, or Teaching Methodology

More than 83% of the JTEs and 58% of the students answered that it was necessary to use Japanese to explain class policy, assignments, or tests. As T1 elaborated in the interview, Japanese use is crucial in these situations because of such sensitive issues as exams and course work assessment/evaluation. Ambiguity or misunderstanding about class administration "might damage the [teacher/student] relationship."

To Define New Vocabulary

An interesting difference was found regarding vocabulary learning. More than 70% of students agreed on the importance of using of Japanese to help define new vocabulary. However, only half of the JTEs agreed. The JTEs used Japanese to define new vocabulary, although the data showed that they did not believe that they should. In T5's words, "the students have not reached the level [to use an English-English dictionary]" (interview T5).

Inappropriate Situations for Japanese

On the other hand, no clear pattern emerged for inappropriate situations for Japanese use. It might show a flexible attitude towards Japanese, and that Japanese can be used in any situation, if necessary.

RQ3. What reasons do JTEs/students think cause their use of Japanese/English?

The results showed that the students reported a strong preference for clear understanding of lesson content, especially when dealing with something abstract or complex. In this situation, the JTEs reported using Japanese to match the students' preferences. Some of the JTEs also reported Japanese use for the purpose of saving time and because of their lack of English skills.

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Table 5

JTEs' and Students' Response to Survey Question 17 ("If the Students Prefer the Use of Japanese, What Do You Think Could be the Reason? More Than One Answer Can Be Chosen")

Reasons	JTEs (*n*=12)	Students (*n*=179)
They feel less lost	11 (91.7%)	149 (83.7%)
It's more comfortable	5 (41.7%)	57 (32.0%)
They are less tense	4 (33.3%)	47 (26.4%)
Others	0 (0%)	13 (7.3%)

A detailed explanation of the reasons listed in Table 5 follows.

Clear Understanding

The most common situation in which the students prefer to use Japanese is when they feel lost. Some JTEs acknowledged the students' confusion, reporting situations as shown below.

18　T4　When I keep speaking English, they look lost. Some students say "Japanese please" in English.

The interview with T4

36　T6　I tried to teach English through English one day, but some students at the back started saying "*wakaran wakaran* [I don't understand, I don't understand]".

The interview with T6

Some students stated that their teachers "just keep going in English even if the students do not understand" (free comments). T5 warned that those situations could result in some students giving up learning in class (interview T5). In fact, students in the focus group also mentioned a similar experience.

263　S5　[When the teacher speaks only in English] I panic. I don't understand anything….

264　All　Yes…

The student focus group

In fact, the top four situations for Japanese use in Table 3 were those where the students preferred a clear understanding, such as defining vocabulary or explaining grammar.

Cognitive Process

According to Swain and Lapkin (2000), "to insist that no use be made of the L1 in carrying out tasks that are both linguistically and cognitively complex is to deny the use of an important cognitive tool" (pp. 268-269). Some JTEs also mentioned the role of Japanese in cognitive processes.

32　T3　When humans think deeply, they do so in their first language. … It is only in Japanese that we can think deeply, the students need to think in Japanese.

The interview with T3

In fact, T1 also suggested that his students "tend to switch from English to Japanese when they work on something from scratch" (interview T1), since they need to think carefully to come up with new ideas. The complexity of materials also requires a cognitive process as shown below.

251　S2　English classes at school deal with difficult things such as grammar, don't they? I feel okay having conversations in English in *eikaiwa* [private English conversation school] class, our teachers can help me, but I cannot keep up with it if they teach us something difficult in English [at a high school].

The student focus group

Affective Aspects

The students in this context showed some anxiety towards an English-only approach. As shown in Table 6, almost 90% of the students felt nervous to some extent in an English-only environment. T4 expressed in his interview that the "[English-only approach is] too much of a burden" for his students. More than half of the students answered that they

Table 6

Students' Response to Survey Question 15 ("I Believe That an English-Only Policy Would Make Students Nervous")

Strongly Agree	Agree	Partially Agree	Partially Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35.0%	35.0%	17.5%	8.5%	1.7%	2.3%

felt uncomfortable speaking English when the students they were talking with responded in Japanese. In addition, Japanese students tend to be very sensitive about making mistakes (Thompson, 2001) or how they sound to others (King, 2013), which was mentioned in the focus group several times.

Time Efficiency

Time efficiency is one of the advantages of general L1 use (Atkinson, 1993). JTEs have a limited number of classes to finish their course books, so a deductive approach can be timesaving, especially when conducted in Japanese. T2 emphasized the importance as follows.

| 08 | T2 | If the use of Japanese can save time and is more productive, and also if I can use the saved time to do drilling or to provide output in English later, I will use Japanese to explain things. |

                                    The interview with T2

Lack of Experience

JTEs in this study stated that when they were students, they did not experience English classes taught only in English by JTEs. Half of the JTEs briefly mentioned that their English proficiency was not good enough to conduct whole classes in English, in particular, the skills to paraphrase into simple English. T6 also mentioned that he would not know how to conduct a class completely in English since all the English classes he attended, taught by JTEs, were conducted "only in Japanese" and he therefore does not have a model to follow (interview T6).

RQ4. What are the JTEs'/students' attitudes towards mixed Japanese/English use compare with exclusive use of English?

The interview with the JTEs revealed that they want to use more English than they currently do, although they do believe there is a role for Japanese in the classroom. Only one JTE agrees with the exclusive use of English in class, and there were two JTEs who showed strong disagreement with the exclusion of Japanese. For example, T3 expressed some doubt about how suitable the English-only approach would be in their context, wondering "if this way [the English-only approach] is appropriate in Japan, or for Japanese learners" (interview T3). The data revealed that th0se beliefs affect their current practices in class.

Table 7 shows the JTEs and students have a similar ideal percentage regarding Japanese use in class. Most participants believed Japanese should be used less than 40% of class time.

Table 7

JTEs' and Students' Response to Survey Question 7 ("I believe that Japanese can be used in class for --- % of the time")

	JTEs' view (*n*=12)	Students' view (*n*=179)
81 - 100%	0 (0%)	8 (4.5%)
41 - 80%	3 (25%)	47 (26.6%)
0 - 40%	9 (75%)	122 (68.9%)

Students demonstrated a favorable view towards more English use. Almost 70% of the students thought that JTEs and students should use Japanese for less than 40% of class time, and 75% of the JTEs agreed. More than 80% of the students answered that they feel encouraged and comfortable using more English when JTEs also use more English (Questions 8 and 16). However, at the same time 88% of them feel vulnerable if English is used exclusively in class (Question 15). In fact, 82% of the student respondents believed that the use of Japanese in class can help to learn English (Question 11).

The students expected their JTEs to use more English in class, but for the students themselves English use for a limited time and for specific purposes was preferable, as shown in the following focus group interview excerpt:

193	I	Can you continue speaking English, if your friends start speaking Japanese?
194	S3	No. Actually it happens a lot. When we can't say what we wanted to say in English, we compromise and end up explaining in Japanese. But I want to do it in English.
195	I	So, you want to try to explain in English. Is there anyone who finds it easier when your teacher tells you to speak English for a specific task?
196	ALL	(Raised their hands.)
196	I	But you don't want it to continue for a long time?

197   S3   No, I don't want that.

198   S5   It's too tough.

...

202   S1   I hope teachers can set a specific time using English, maybe an English only time.

The student focus group

Discussion and Implications

Due to convenience samples being considered unrepresentative of any population (Fraenkel et al., 2023), the findings of this research might not be appropriate for generalization to other contexts. However, some aspects could be considered applicable to similar contexts. The findings indicate that there are some differences as well as areas of agreement in perceptions towards Japanese/English between JTEs and students.

This research revealed that Japanese was used for more than 50% of class time in the study's sample. English use by both JTEs and students was quite limited in most classes. The JTEs in this study did not consider language choices when planning their lessons. Most of the JTEs said it was not until answering the survey for this research study that they had consciously thought about language choices. Considering that only around 30% of the students prefer Japanese use more for than 40% of the class time, some change is needed to meet the students' preferences. Most of the students reported a preference for a balanced combination of Japanese and English, with an ideal balance of around 60% of the class conducted in English.

In terms of Japanese use, the greatest concern for both JTEs and students is a clear understanding of the language being studied. Use of Japanese to explain class policy and for evaluation is important to retain good rapport between the JTEs and students. This study indicates how both JTEs and students perceive Japanese use to be important for explaining the grammatical differences between Japanese and English.

In addition, the findings indicated that it is beneficial to allow the students an opportunity to use Japanese in a monolingual class, where they can share and discuss their opinions at a deeper level. Teenagers with limited L2 skills tend to feel frustrated when they cannot express themselves so allowing them to occasionally use L1 gives them a sense of achievement and an opportunity to show their intelligence, as noted by Atkinson (1993). The findings also revealed that the students in this context tended to show an inhibition to speaking English which may be related to cultural values (King, 2013; Thompson, 2001). However, at the same time, they also have a strong desire to be able to speak English.

As this study shows some difference in perceptions of Japanese/English classroom use between JTEs and students, a discussion in which JTEs and students consider the benefits of Japanese and English use (Harmer, 2015) and negotiate when and in what situations to use Japanese/English could prove beneficial.

Conclusion

Although this research cannot offer easy generalization for appropriate Japanese and English use in a wide variety of contexts, it can give JTEs an opportunity to reflect on their language choices in class while considering their students' perceptions and preferences. The careful consideration of language choices is important for an appropriate use of Japanese and English in the context of Japanese high school English classes. This study indicates that a deliberate and measured use of Japanese is appropriate in the context of a Japanese high school English language class. It may also suggest that JTEs should re-evaluate the balance between Japanese/English in terms of the current pedagogical approaches encouraged in this context.

By 2025, students finishing their school education will have completed their entire grade school English education under the current CoS guidelines. A re-examination at this date of JTEs' and students' perceptions towards Japanese /English may be a potential area for future study.

Acknowledgement

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Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire (English Translation)

Part 1:

1. How much of the total speaking done by your teacher in class is in English?

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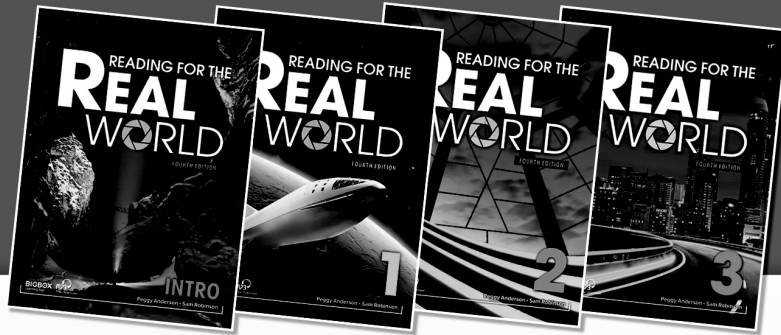
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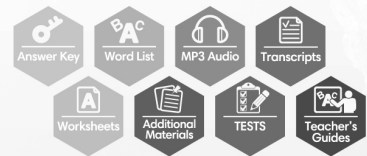
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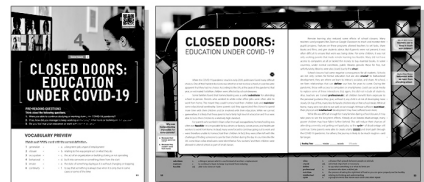
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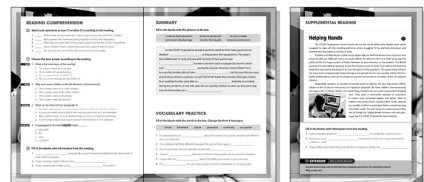
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2. How much of the total speaking done by students to your teacher in class is in English?
3. How much of the total speaking done by students to other students in class is in English?
4. How much do students use English in class including reading, writing, listening and speaking in class?
5. I believe that English teachers should use English in class --- % of the time.
6. I believe that students should use English in class --- % of the time.
7. I believe that Japanese can be used in class --- % of the time.
   <the options for Q1-7> 0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%
8. I believe that the more teachers speak English in class, the more students are encouraged to speak English in class.
9. I believe that the more students speak English, the more their English proficiency improves.
10. I believe that the only way for students to master English is to study in an English-only class.
11. I believe that the use of Japanese in class can help students learn English.
12. I believe that English teachers should use English at all times in class.
13. I believe that in group/pair work, students should keep speaking English even after they finish their tasks.
14. I believe that the students feel uncomfortable speaking English when the students they are talking to speak back in Japanese.
15. I believe that an English-only policy would make students nervous.
16. I believe that the students will be more comfortable speaking English in class when the English teacher speaks English.
    <the options for Q8-16> Strongly agree, Agree, Partially agree, Partially disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree
17. If students prefer the use of Japanese, what do you think could be the reason? More than one answer can be chosen. It's more comfortable, They are less tense, They feel less lost, Others (Please specify)
18. Please mark the situations in which you believe Japanese should be used. More than one can be chosen.
19. Please mark the situations in which you believe Japanese should NOT be used. More than one can be chosen. <the options for Q18-19> To introduce new material, To define new vocabulary, To summarise material already covered, To explain about tests, assignments, or teaching methodology, To check for comprehension, To explain difficult/abstract concepts (including grammar), To joke around with students, To explain about cultures or situations used in materials, To explain differences between Japanese and English language, To respond to questions in Japanese from students, To discipline the class, To carry out tests (such as translation), To help students feel more comfortable and confident, To carry out small-group work, To give instructions for activities, Other

20. Please tell us which class you are in.
21. Please tell us the EIKEN grade you have.

Appendix B

Interview Guide for Semi-Structured Interview

I. JTEs

- Is there any policy when teaching class?
- What are some of the constraints you find yourself under when carrying out your policy?
- Do you share your policies with your students?
- Do you feel your policy and attitudes have been consistent over the years of have they changed in some way?
- What do you think about your use of Japanese/English in class?
- What do you think about students' use of Japanese/English in class?
- When planning lessons, what factors do you consider in addition to the materials?
- Do you think English teachers consider their language choices when they plan lessons?

II. Focus Group for Students

- Do you have any role model for Japanese English speakers?
- What do you think of the amount of Japanese/English that your teacher uses?
- What do you think of the amount of Japanese/English that students uses?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages of the use of Japanese in class?
- What are the advantages or disadvantages of using only of English in class?
- How is Japanese used in your current classes? (both teachers and students)
- Do you think that your English skills would improve if you took English-only classes?
- What do you think would be the difficulties of implementing an English-only approach?

Torrin Shimono & James Nobis

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Email: jaltpubs.tlt.interviews@jalt.org

Welcome to the first issue of TLT Interviews *in 2024! We are delighted to share with you an interview with Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson who is an Associate Professor at Niigata University of International and Information Studies (NUIS). Professor Fujimoto-Adamson authored the book* Globalisation and its effects on team-teaching *(2020). Currently, she teaches academic writing, test taking skills, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis. She received her MA in ELT (English Language Teaching) from the University of Essex, U.K. and her M.Ed. in Applied Linguistics & TESOL from the University of Leicester, U.K. Her research interests are in the fields of thesis supervisory practice, team-teaching in Japanese schools, academic publishing, and English Medium Instruction (EMI). She was interviewed by Nathaniel Reed, who has been teaching English in Japan for more than a decade. In 2015, he completed his MA in Applied Linguistics, writing his dissertation on the roles of assistant language teachers (ALT). During this research he started to understand how deep the unclear objectives of ALTs are, but also how much potential ALTs have. So, he embarked on a journey to bring ALTs together and collaborate constructively with the website* ALT Training Online *(ALTTO [2021]). So, without further ado, to the interview!*

Discussing Challenges of Team Teaching: An Interview With Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson

Nathaniel Reed
ALT Training Online

Nathaniel Reed*: Hi Naoki, thank you for agreeing to this interview. Your recent book,* Globalisation and its effects on team teaching*, is a long time coming as there are so few books written using an ethnographic approach in this context. Could I start by asking your motivations for publishing this book as well as so many articles on team teaching?*

Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson: Hello, Nathaniel. Thank you very much for inviting me and asking about my recent book and team-teaching research. There are two main reasons why I have pursued this area of research. The first reason is associated with my previous teaching experience. I worked as a Japanese teacher of English (JTE) in the 1990s for almost eight years at four junior high schools in Nagano Prefecture. Around that time, I taught with more than 10 Assistant Language Teachers from English-speaking countries. Some of them were from the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program, and the others were directly hired by the local boards of education. I had both positive and challenging experiences through communication with ALTs, students, and school management. Then some questions arose in my mind: Why did we suddenly have to team teach with those teachers from abroad? Also, I wondered why students responded differently during the team-teaching lessons compared to the regular solo lessons by myself. Besides, I wondered why the principal and deputy head treated the ALT and me unequally, although we were teachers working in the same school.

The second reason was related to my postgraduate study in the UK for almost three and a half years from 1998 to 2002. In the first year, I enrolled in an MA in English Language Teaching at the University of Essex and started researching team teaching in Japanese schools. Later, I continued my research in the Doctor of Education course at the University of Leicester for almost a decade, including a distance learning period after returning to Japan. I wrote five assignments and a thesis focused on this specific area. Also, our supervisors encouraged us to publish our coursework, which became the main reason for my motivation to disseminate my study.

Looking at the effects of globalization on team teaching seems like a huge topic to write about in a single volume. Was there a process for choosing what influences to write about?

That's a very good question. Traditionally, it is said that the classroom is a microcosm of the wider society, so the macro level of issues outside the classroom affects the micro level of classroom activ-

ities (Holliday, 1994). However, researchers recently started looking at the meso level, which is between the macro and the micro levels (Canagarajah, 2018; Fukunaga, 2017; Liddicoat, 2014). I applied this idea when I analyzed the influences on team teaching. Firstly, on the macro level, globalization is significant, such as the global economy and international politics between Japan and the United States in the 1980s. Around that time, the trade war between the two countries had intensified, so the JET Program was offered to the United States as a gift (McConnell, 2000, p. 1) from Japan in order to reduce the US trade deficit. Surprisingly, this was the beginning of team teaching.

As you can see, it was not directly related to education. Secondly, the meso level is often related to managerial factors, like middle management in a company. In the case of team teaching, local boards of education in the municipalities and even school management in each institution are included here. Thirdly, the micro level of classroom activities concerns direct stakeholders of team teaching, specifically teachers and students; in particular, how their cultural and linguistic backgrounds affect the classroom dynamics. This idea of three levels of educational practices surrounding team teaching (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2020) is very useful when considering what's happening in the classroom.

You discuss inclusive language education policies in other countries for speakers of other languages. Would a way forward for Japan be to consider more inclusive thinking for students too?

That's right. I quoted a study by Creese et al. (2014) researching a Punjabi language teacher and her students in Birmingham, U.K. Since there is a large Indian community there, Punjabi is frequently used at home. Those students usually attend weekday English school and learn Punjabi on Saturdays at a special heritage language school. Interestingly, the teacher mixed languages during the lesson speaking both English and Punjabi due to a pragmatic communicative need (Creese et al., 2014). The significant point is that the teacher used localized Midlands English rather than standard English (Birmingham is located in the central or Midlands area of England). I think that this is a very good example of an inclusive language education practice.

Also, I had a chance to go to New Zealand, escorting 17 students to Waikato University College in September 2022, and I realized a progressive, inclusive language policy was in place there. Specifically, two Japanese student advisors were allocated, and they assisted my students outside the classroom. In the same way, there was a Chinese student advisor to assist students from China. In New Zealand, all students have the right to access their first language (L1). I noticed that this L1 support offered our students a sense of safety. Nowadays, the number of children having roots in different countries has been increasing in Japan as well, so I definitely believe that an inclusive language education policy is a way forward.

At the JALT International Conference 2017, Daniel Ussher (2018) detailed how JET ALTs come to Japan for a gap year. You make a similar contrast through macro, meso, and micro lenses between JET and Non-JET ALTs: that, for over 30 years, JET ALTs have been employed as part of a political soft power move, and non-JET ALTs work in schools to teach. In what ways do you see this gap in professionalism growing?

Yes, I also noticed a significant gap between JET ALTs and non-JET ALTs when I worked as an English teacher at some junior high schools in Nagano Prefecture in the 1990s. However, around that time, I didn't know what made this happen. To understand the situation clearly, the three levels of perspective: macro, meso, and micro, as I explained in my answer to your second question, are helpful.

The idea of JET ALTs used to create soft power (Metzgar, 2017) can be seen from the macro perspective because they have been recruited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). Soft power can be people and culture, which together affect other countries positively. It is the opposite of hard power, which is equal to military power. In fact, Metzgar (2017) suggested that JET ALTs' duty is outside the classroom; therefore, their backgrounds were varied and expected to create a good relationship in various fields between Japan and the United States. For this reason, JET ALTs' contracts are relatively short—a maximum of five years. However, they work in schools despite having no teaching qualifications. As they have no qualifications, you might ask why they are placed in the educational sector.

In contrast, non-JET ALTs are often hired locally, sometimes in collaboration with the private sector and municipalities. In that case, the meso level of organizational factors are involved because the micro level of educational needs must be met on a long-term basis. Consequently, some non-JET ALTs' contracts are much longer than that of JET ALTs. I know some of them have been working in Japanese schools for more than 20 and 30 years. Unsurprisingly, the gap in professionalism has grown due to the different lengths of the teaching experience between JET and non-JET ALTs. However, I noted that some non-JET ALTs used to be JET ALTs when they were younger and then transitioned from the

JET Program into the private sector. Accordingly, their initial teaching experiences were through the JET Program, and they have remained in the educational sector and so continue to work in Japanese education but no longer for the objective of MOFA's soft power. In fact, one of the non-JET ALTs I interviewed and whose lessons I observed in my book used to be a JET ALT. Eventually, he became a brilliant teacher with a Master of Education. Apparently, that is not an unusual case.

Do you envision any change in ALT hiring practices to be more like those in neighboring Asian countries that use team teaching?

Maybe, that could be an alternative idea. When the JET Program was launched in 1987, more than 800 ALTs were invited from four English-speaking countries: the United States, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand (MEXT, 2002). However, the recruitment policy has been changing over the years. As Kachru (1992) suggested the idea of "three concentric circles" (p. 356) of English speakers around the world, I believe that teaching world Englishes is an important concept to consider. Kachru categorized English speakers into three groups: (1) Inner Circle; (2) Outer Circle; and (3) Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle includes people speaking English as a first language. They are what we call native speakers of English, such as Americans, British, and Canadians. The Outer Circle indicates countries where English is spoken as a second language (ESL), for example, India, Singapore, and the Philippines. They have colonial histories with inner circle countries, so English is an official language. Finally, the Expanding Circle of nations are people speaking English as a foreign language (EFL), including Japanese, Koreans, and Chinese.

Crystal (2003) estimated that the number of outer circle nations is almost double that of the inner circle nations. Surprisingly, the number of the expanding circle nations is three times more than that of the inner circle nations. Under these circumstances, we have to realize that English among the Inner Circle cannot be the only model to learn. Regarding the recent ALTs' nationalities, the outer and expanding circle nationalities have been increasing, such as Filipinos and even Japanese. In my book, an ALT from Poland, an expanding circle nation, appeared and worked effectively with a JTE.

When we think about our students' future working situations, it might be practical to recruit ALTs from neighboring Asian countries. I am currently working at a university in Niigata, and I heard our university graduates who successfully got jobs using English at work mainly communicate with people from neighboring Asian countries, such as Korea, China, and the Philippines. Those university graduates are in manufacturing, such as making machinery and kitchen utensils as well as the service industry; for example, in airports and hotels, and even retailers like supermarkets. For this reason, I am sure there is a need to hire ALTs who have Asian backgrounds.

The landscape of ALTs is changing. There are over 20,000 ALTs currently working in Japan, and there are those with PhDs, decades of experience, children, and even mortgages. There are also over 2,000 ALTs with Japanese nationality. As the annual number of JET ALTs declines and hiring bodies move towards capable teachers living in Japan, is the idea of ALTs being young, inexperienced, and foreign becoming an outdated view of ALTs?

Yes, it is undoubtedly true that the ALTs' educational and linguistic backgrounds have diversified over the years. To be honest with you, I haven't met ALTs with PhDs, but I do know some ALTs with an MA, including you, Nathaniel. In fact, they are serious and hard-working teachers. Most took postgraduate courses outside Japan through distance learning programs while working as ALTs at Japanese schools. Speaking of Ph.D. holders, one of my friends used to be a JET ALT, and he received his Ph.D. in linguistics. He is currently teaching and researching at a Japanese university. I think that it is beneficial that he is able to make his contribution towards team teaching as a researcher now. I also know some ALTs who have long teaching experience, for instance, over 20 years in Niigata. They stand in stark contrast to JET ALTs, who have a maximum five-year contract due to the purpose of creating MOFA's soft power (Metzgar, 2017).

In terms of native Japanese ALTs, I think that they can be good role models for Japanese students. In fact, I had an opportunity to participate in three online lessons for fifth graders in an elementary school in Nagano in February 2021. I was invited at that time because there were no JET ALTs at school because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As you know, international travel was restricted in those days. Therefore, my role was a kind of a Japanese national ALT in the team-teaching lessons. Thanks to the generous support of a JTE and homeroom teachers, their students were able to communicate actively with me during the lessons. This means that the ALTs' nationality does not matter for team teaching. In fact, we have to be aware of the recent concept of English ownership (Crystal, 2003). According to Crystal (2003), since the language does not belong to a specific group of people anymore, particularly

inner circle nations, everybody has ownership of English including Japanese teachers and students.

Team teaching policies in South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan seem more organized and intentionally target effective language education. However, you detail those policies and directives behind ALTs, JTEs, and team teaching in Japan have seemingly endless contradictions. Do you feel that by exposing these realities, somebody up top will listen and provide clearer guidance for language teachers?

The purpose of my book is to raise awareness of all three stakeholders of team teaching, not only the policymakers—somebody up top at the macro level—but also teachers working at the micro level and the educational management dealing at the local boards of education and the individual institutions at the meso level. As McConnell (2000, p. x) stated, team teaching was introduced in a top-down manner, so surely the policymakers need to know how school sites are affected by their national project. In particular, we admit that although the JET Program has had a considerable effect in creating soft power, the educational outcome has not always been achieved. I wrote this book to inform them about what's happening at school sites. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize that we shouldn't just leave the responsibility to the stakeholders at the macro level. Specifically, since the stakeholders at the meso level are between policymakers and teachers, it is necessary for them to try their best to change the status quo by informing policymakers about the reality of the school sites.

As for the direct stakeholders of team teaching at the micro level, I realized that providing online seminars through *ALT Training Online,* which you started, is very helpful for ALTs to improve their pedagogical skills. Hopefully, JTEs will also take action rather than passively accept the current situation. I believe that such a bottom-up orientation (Copland & Creese, 2015) makes a significant contribution to the development of team teaching in Japan.

Thank you so much for your time and wishing you the best with your future team-teaching research.

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Lorraine Kipling & Heather Yoder

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).

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Welcome to My Share, where TLT *readers share their favorite classroom activities for you to use. We hope you are keeping warm through the winter months. Perhaps some of our My Share activities in this issue can help you generate warmth in your classroom!*

Duncan Walsh and Pak Man Au both expand the world of language learning beyond English. Duncan Walsh introduces a secret code which students can use to learn a new language, while Pak Man Au helps students learn common greetings in many languages. Next, Joshua Guernsey has a pronunciation activity which focuses on listening to connected words as well as producing them. Finally, Jennifer Green helps students overcome any language learning embarrassment they may have through dance.

I hope you find some of these ideas useful this winter. Do you have an original activity that you are particularly proud of? If so, we accept contributions of useful and accessible activities from My Share veterans and newbies alike on a rolling basis. Feel free to get in touch with us at jaltpubs.tlt.my.share@jalt.org.

— *Best wishes, Heather*

The Secret Code Quiz
Duncan Walsh

Urawa Jitsugyo Gakuen Junior & Senior High School

duncanwalsh81@gmail.com

Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *World languages, puzzle solving, lifelong learning*
- » Learner English level: *Intermediate to advanced*
- » Learner maturity: *Junior high school and above*
- » Preparation time: *50 minutes*
- » Activity time: *50 minutes*
- » Materials: *Worksheet (Appendix)*

Is it possible to practice your English skills while learning another foreign language? Absolutely! The Secret Code Quiz challenges Japanese students to match English statements with corresponding words written in an unfamiliar script—Korean. These mystery words are English or Japanese loanwords in Korean, such as 크리스마스 [kuriseumasu], globally-known Korean words such as 김치 [kimchi], or the names of popular places or people such as 하라주쿠 [Harajuku]. By referring to the clues on the worksheet (Appendix), the students should be able to decipher the pronunciation of each item, apply their prior knowledge to recognize its meaning, and then utilize their English reading and speaking skills to complete the task.

Preparation

Step 1: Familiarize yourself with The Secret Code worksheet (Appendix) demonstrating how Korean words are created using blocks of syllables.

Step 2: Make a note of the following syllabic blocks: 마 [ma], 머 [mae], 사 [sa], 서 [sae] 펜 [pen], 핀 [pin], 렌 [ren] and 린 [rin]. (Copy and paste into Google Translate for pronunciation).

Step 3: Prepare the quiz with 16 phonetically recognizable Korean words and 16 corresponding English statements (see Appendix for examples). These words and statements can be edited to focus on target grammar or language content.

Step 4: Print one worksheet for each student.

Procedure

Step 1: Ask the students if they know any languages using a writing system different from Japanese and English and what they think about Japanese as a writing system. Briefly discuss their experiences and opinions.

Step 2: Write the following on the board: 마 = ma 머 = mae 사 = sa. Then ask the students to guess how to write 'sae' in Korean.

Step 3: Confirm the answer: 서. Clarify that two different symbols combine to make one syllabic block.

Step 4: Write the following on the board: 핀 = pin 펜 = pen 린 = rin. Ask the class to guess how to write 'ren' in Korean.

Step 5: Confirm the answer: 렌. Clarify that three symbols combine to make one syllabic block.

Step 6: Hand each student the worksheet entitled "The Secret Code" (Appendix). After directing the students' attention to the secret code and accompanying clues, instruct them to attempt the practice activity, "What food do I like?"

Step 7: Confirm the answers: pizza, sushi, udon, hamburger. Clarify that syllabic blocks join to make words.

Step 8: Assign students into pairs. Distribute "The Secret Code Quiz" worksheet.

Step 9: Explain that the students will now compete to match English sentences with Korean words. The fastest code breakers win! Start the race!

Step 10: Direct any early finishers towards the extension activity, which includes simple practice activities such as writing their name in Korean.

Step 11: After twenty minutes, check the answers and congratulate the wining pair.

Step 12: Ask the race-winning students to explain how they approached the task. Highlight any sensible strategies they may have used.

Conclusion

Educators in the 21st century should teach students the importance of proactive life-long learning. The Secret Code Quiz demonstrates to the students that they can teach themselves. It also provides an opportunity to explore a new language and culture, while offering a valuable insight into the time-consuming nature of the students' native language, Japanese.

Appendix

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

International Greetings
Pak Man Au

Ehime University

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Quick Guide

- » Keywords: *Greetings, foreign languages, memory*
- » Learner English level: *Low beginner to low intermediate*
- » Learner maturity: *Elementary school to university*
- » Preparation time: *10–15 minutes*
- » Activity time: *5–10 minutes*
- » Materials: *Handout, flashcards, magnetic blackboard, magnets*

This engaging warm-up activity helps students to practice simple greetings in a variety of languages. It asks students to match the greeting to a country where that language is spoken. In my university freshman class, I was surprised that some students confused a Spanish greeting for English, which was the reason for the creation of this activity. Through becoming accustomed to various international greetings, students also learn not to assume that commonly heard greetings pertain to the English language only. This is especially important in Japan, where knowledge of other languages besides English is minimal even though people come here from all over the world.

Preparation

Step 1: Create a handout of simple greetings in popular languages from around the world, as well as a list of countries where they are spoken (see Appendices).

Step 2: Create sets of small flashcards with both the greeting and corresponding country. Various greetings can be chosen (see Appendices). This will be used for the "matching memory" game that students will play.

Step 3: Prepare the classroom to allow for pairs or small groups.

Procedure

Step 1: For homework, distribute the handout and have the students review it to become familiar with the greetings and their associated countries, prior to class.

Step 2: Explain that students are going to play a memory game, using the flashcards that were prepared.

Step 3: Conduct a demonstration for the class. Have the flashcards turned over and mixed so that the greetings and countries cannot be seen. Flip one of the flashcards over. After that, flip another flashcard. If it matches the associated country, the student says both the greeting and the country and collects both cards. For example, "Hola" and "Spain".

Step 4: Put students into either pairs or groups of 3.

Step 5: Students will flip flashcards to match the country where the language is spoken, in a memory-style game.

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Step 6: Once all the cards are collected, the student with the most flashcards wins the game.

Step 7: After all the groups are finished, choose several students to come to the blackboard at the front of the class and match the international greeting and country, using the provided magnets.

Step 8: At the end of the activity, test the students by saying the country and English greeting and having the students say the international greeting, as a final review.

Variations

Variations of this activity are to include more common phrases from the countries already chosen and to have students learn about greetings in more difficult languages. These variations will allow students to expand their knowledge of such greetings and phrases.

Conclusion

This activity increases students' understanding of common greetings heard around the world, which can be mistaken for English greetings, especially in Japan. With some students assuming that English is the mother tongue in many countries around the world, this activity helps students to understand that although English is the lingua franca, it's not the only language worth learning.

Appendices

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

Improving Fluency With Connected Speech

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Quick Guide
  - » **Keywords:** *Pronunciation, connected speech, linking sounds*
  - » **Learner English level:** *Intermediate and above*
  - » **Learner maturity:** *High school and above*
  - » **Preparation time:** *10-15 minutes*
  - » **Activity time:** *30-40 minutes*
  - » **Materials:** *Worksheet (Appendix A), T-chart (Appendix B)*

Recognizing linking sounds allows learners to understand natural speech patterns as they become more fluent in spoken English. This pronunciation activity is designed to practice /w/ and /j/ linking sounds in connected speech. Students read phrases and, based on linking sounds, organize them into a T-chart. Afterwards, learners practice their pronunciation skills using the targeted linking sounds. This is an accessible, low-stakes pronunciation activity to practice linking sounds and build student confidence with pronunciation.

Preparation

Step 1: Print a worksheet with prepared phrases for each pair (see Appendix A). Phrases should include /w/ and /j/ linking sounds. Examples: 'I am', 'you are', 'to eat', etc.

Step 2: Print a T-chart for each student (see Appendix B). T-charts separate information into two categories such as pros/cons, facts/opinions, or, in this activity, /w/ and /j/ linking sounds.

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the topic of connected speech (continuous speech) and linking sounds. /w/ and /j/ linking sounds occur when words ending with vowel sounds are followed by words starting with vowel sounds.

Step 2: Write examples on the board. Example sentence: The teacher will go to‿/w/‿a meeting after her class. Example phrases: I‿/j/‿am, he‿/j/‿ate, you‿/w/‿are, two‿/w/‿hours.

Step 3: Read examples to the students with emphasis on the linking sounds. Repeat together as a class with students emphasizing the linking sounds.

Step 4: Divide students into pairs and give each pair a worksheet (see Appendix A) and each student a T-chart (see Appendix B).

Step 5: Write the phrases 'no one' and 'they are' on the board. Read the phrases to the class and have students indicate whether they hear a /w/ or /j/ sound. Repeat if needed to demonstrate 'no one' uses a /w/ linking sound and 'they are' uses a /j/ linking sound. Students write each phrase into the corresponding column in their T-chart.

Step 6: Tell students to work in pairs to organize the remaining phrases into the T-chart. Student pairs are encouraged to say the phrases out loud as

they organize them into the T-chart.

Step 7: Monitor progress and provide feedback wherever necessary. As pairs finish, the teacher can check responses individually or as a class.

Step 8: Once answers are checked, encourage students to practice linking sounds. Student A reads the phrases one-by-one. Student B listens and repeats the phrase back to their partner and reports which linking sound they hear.

Step 10: Once Student B has correctly identified the linking sounds, tell students to switch roles and repeat.

Step 11: To check comprehension, ask students to work in pairs to read some prepared sentences (see Appendix A) and identify the connected speech and linking sound.

Step 12: Review answers as a class.

Extension

Ask students to write a story or dialogue using phrases from the lesson to practice and perform in pairs.

Conclusion

This low-stakes activity provides students with practice using linking sounds to improve pronunciation skills and fluency. This task helps learners increase awareness of linking sounds and connected speech in their own spoken English. Students build confidence in both their speaking and listening skills as they work towards improving fluency.

Appendices

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

Let's Dance! Get Embarrassed and Laugh Together

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Quick Guide

- » **Keywords:** *Ice breaker, dance*
- » **Learner English level:** *All levels*
- » **Learner maturity:** *Junior high school, high school, university*
- » **Preparation time:** *20 minutes*
- » **Activity time:** *20 minutes*
- » **Materials:** *Projector, speakers*

Students are hesitant to embarrass themselves. Additionally, they prefer doing things in groups rather than standing out. The aim of this activity is for students to do something that might otherwise be embarrassing while still acting as a group. Students enjoy this activity and learn that doing something embarrassing can also be fun. They feel more comfortable making potentially embarrassing mistakes while speaking English in subsequent activities.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare the classroom for videos and music to be played.

Step 2: Prepare a video with multiple short dances (e.g., Ed People, 2022) and a dance song with a repetitive beat (e.g., *Around the World* by Daft Punk).

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the activity explaining that speaking English and presenting in front of others can be embarrassing, and that that is okay. Tell the students that the activity's goal is to do something that people might find embarrassing: dancing. A joke about traditional Japanese radio exercises fits nicely here.

Step 2: Play a short clip of the video and tell students to carefully watch and remember the dances.

Step 3: Tell the students that everyone will mimic the dances together while the video is playing. Model the activity by playing the video again and mimicking a few of the dances yourself (it is not necessary to practice beforehand). Assure the students that it is okay to not do the dances well, pointing to yourself as an example.

Step 4: Have the students stand up and spread apart. Play the video and have all students try to mimic the dances while it plays. The teacher should also mimic the dances with the students.

Step 5: Next, put the students into pairs. Tell the

students that they must come up with an original dance move together. Model some simple dance moves, telling them that the moves do not need to be difficult or complicated. Play the dance song with a repetitive beat on repeat while the students create their dance move.

Step 6: After dance moves have been decided, put students into new groups with at least five students in each group. Students should not be grouped together with their previous partner.

Step 7: Ask students to stand in a circle with their group and decide who will show their dance move first. With the music playing, the first student shows their dance move to the group. The person to their left repeats the first dance move, then does their own dance move. The third person repeats the dance moves they saw, then adds their own. This repeats until the last person in the group does all the dance moves.

Step 8: The students then return to their original partner and show as many of the dance moves that they remember to their partner.

Step 9: Before moving to the next activity in class, remind the students that while the activity was silly and possibly embarrassing, it was not the end of the world, and that quite a few of them even had fun.

Reassure them that speaking English after this will seem easy compared to the dancing they just did.

Variation

As an initial ice breaker, students can say their names while they do their dance moves. The following students must repeat their classmates' names while doing their moves.

Conclusion

This activity works especially well for speech or presentation classes. You may also mention that being able to work through nerves is a valuable skill outside of language learning as well. While there is no direct English practice in the activity, the students are more comfortable with each other after the activity and not as afraid to speak up during following activities.

Reference

Ed People. (2022, August 5). *Best of favorite dance moves* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOvmKHtbaUA

[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.

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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.

Baamboozle: A Simple and Easy-to-Use Interactive Quiz Application

Matt Banham
Osaka Metropolitan University

Using games in the classroom can increase a learner's enthusiasm towards a subject on a subconscious level and can increase participation of lower-level students (Mee Mee et al., 2020). There are many online teaching games that can be used in the classroom, but few are as simple to set up as Baamboozle. Baamboozle is an online quiz game that can be played face-to-face or online with students. It is easy for students to understand and can quickly be used as a short game to make classrooms more fun and interactive. While many of the games are aimed at children, they can also be enjoyed by adults in tertiary education and business English classes. Although there is paid version of this application which offers more games, this review will focus on the free version.

How to Set it Up

It is very simple to create a Baamboozle account. Simply create an account at https://www.baamboozle.com/sign-up. Games can be found using a range of filters (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Search Filters
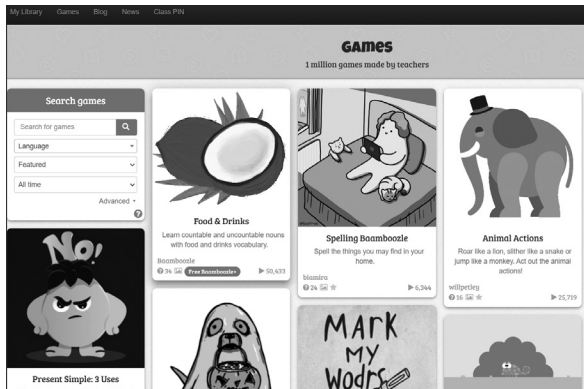
Once a game is selected, the teacher can view all of the questions in the quiz (see Figure 2). This is a good opportunity to check that the level of the quiz is appropriate for the class and find any unusual or inappropriate questions. If there is a lot of new vocabulary in the quiz, the study or slideshow tool can be used to teach the class. The slideshow tool shows a picture of the items which can then be elicited from the students.

Figure 2

Viewing the Questions
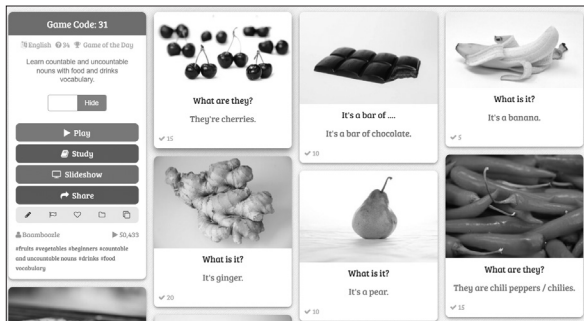
When the class is ready to play, the teacher clicks the play button and chooses the style of game. There are currently ten game styles to choose from; however, the only game available to free users is Baamboozle. After selecting Baamboozle, the teacher then chooses the number of teams or players, up to eight, and the grid size (see Figure 3). The grid size determines the number of rounds based on how many groups of students are playing. In my experience three rounds is a good amount as students tend to lose interest after that. On this screen, the teacher can also deselect any questions they do not wish to be a part of the quiz. The numbers on the game board can also be changed, to colours or animals for example, to make it easier for very young learners.

Figure 3

Game Options
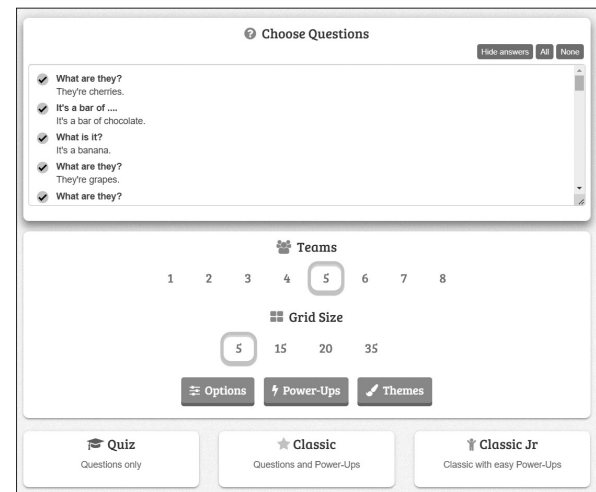
After all the selections have been made, the quiz screen is shown and the game can begin (see Figure 4). The first team tells the teacher which tile they would like to select and the question is revealed. The teacher can then decide if the student answered the question correctly or not.

Finally, the type of quiz needs to be selected. Quiz mode is a question-only mode, Classic mode has power-ups which are random tiles that give bonus points or allow teams to take points from another team, and Classic Jr mode is the same as classic mode but is aimed at younger students.

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Figure 4

The Game Board
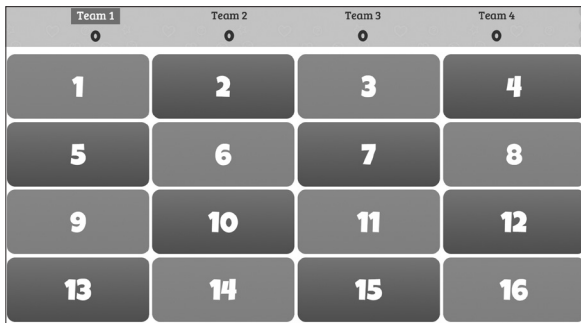
Implementation in Class

There are multiple ways that Baamboozle can be implemented in both online and face-to-face classes. As the game is completely controlled by the teacher, it can be used online by sharing the screen with the students and having them say the answers. The same method can be used in face-to-face classes by simply projecting your screen. Baamboozle can be used at any point during the lesson, but I have found it works best as a short final review activity. The students enjoy making teams and working together to answer questions based on the lesson.

Baamboozle also allows you to make your own quizzes, so teachers can use it as a review tool. It works very well for reviewing vocabulary and grammar, but can also be used for more general trivia quizzes such as flags of the world or capital cities. Teachers can also create quizzes based entirely on their own materials. In my classroom, students tend to get rather excited discussing possible answers to questions, so providing some discussion-related classroom English can increase the opportunity for English conversations to occur.

Benefits

Many online game applications like Kahoot or Quizlet require students to join the game using their phones and create a nickname. However, when adding online games to a classroom, teachers must consider their students' abilities to use these technologies (Pho & Dinscore, 2015). With Baamboozle, the students do not need to download or log in, so it is very quick to set up, and there are no barriers for students who cannot use phones or tablets easily.

All parts of the game are entirely controlled by the teacher, which can save time and keep the game moving. This also means taking pauses during the game, to remind students of grammar rules, for example, is possible. The huge number of quizzes that have been made by teachers means there is almost always something available that can suit a class, and thanks to the simple interface, it is very easy for teachers to quickly make a quiz of their own.

Drawbacks

There are also some drawbacks to the application. The free version of Baamboozle only has one game available to play. While this is the most enjoyable game, it can get a little boring if the games are allowed to go on for too long or if it is used too often throughout a semester. The free teacher-created material can also be hit and miss. There are a lot of quizzes with confusing questions or erroneous answers, so the teacher needs to check every quiz before using it in the classroom. Unfortunately, there is no way to edit a question other than removing it entirely.

The power-ups given during play can also occasionally cause students to complain about the fairness of the game. However, in classes where the students take their game scores very seriously, this feature can be turned off. The free version allows up to four teams, while the paid version permits eight. This means that the free version is good for small classes, but the teams can get a bit large if there are more than 20 students. In those cases, I would recommend using the paid version.

Conclusion

Overall, Baamboozle is a very simple game that is quick to set up and easy for students to understand. While it does require the teacher to check the quizzes they use, it is still a very useful tool and a great way to quickly review a point or simply add some fun into the classroom.

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Mee Mee, R. W., Tengku Shahdan, T. S., Ismail, M. R., Abd Ghani, K., Pek, L. S., Von, W. Y., Woo, A., & Rao, Y. S. (2020). Role of gamification in classroom teaching: Pre-service teachers' view. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education, 9*(3), 684–690. https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v9i3.20622

Pho, A., & Dinscore, A. (2015). Game-based learning. *Tips and Trends*. Association of College and Research Libraries and American Library Association. http://acrl.ala.org/IS/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/spring2015.pdf

Google Apps for Language Learning

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In this paper, I will share some ideas for using Google applications both to digitize paper-based activities and to create new digital activities that help students share their ideas within groups and across the class. I also share some standard functions and features of Google Apps with which the teacher can track students' progress and collect data that can be used for follow-up projects. The two sets of examples explored here are supplemental activities for Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), an approach that uses images to help students learn critical thinking skills, and a paper-based Classmate Interview (McGuire et al., 2023). I hope I've included enough to get the reader started and I hope these ideas inspire creative new cooperative applications.

Example 1: Google Apps

Below is an example of three steps in a lesson using Google Apps to supplement a VTS activity. Briefly, in VTS, students view images that are curated to be at a level at which they can answer three questions: "What's going on in this picture?", "What do you see that makes you say that?", and "What more can we find?" Unlike a traditional teacher-facilitated whole-class VTS activity, I immediately have students answer the VTS questions individually and in groups.

Step 1: Google Sheets VTS Vocabulary/ Translation

As shown in Figure 1, students input the keywords that reflect their answers to the three VTS questions into the cells in column B, and the words are translated into Japanese in the matching cells in column C. For example, the formula in C5, *=google-translate(B5,"en", "ja"*, is translating the word "bed" in B5 into Japanese. Students get immediate feedback on the accuracy of their words and also get a sense in English and Japanese of other students' ideas.

Figure 1

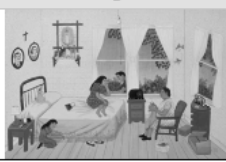*Google Sheet VTS Vocabulary/Translation Activity*

Figure 2 shows the pivot table that displays the number of words each student has inputted, sorted by the ID number students inputted in Column A (see Figure 1). The steps for creating a pivot table are: (1) click on Insert in the menu bar, (2) choose pivot table, new sheet (to start a new sheet in the current one); (3) choose Rows to group the list of student ideas, and (4) choose Values and Count to get a count by ID number. For future activities, teachers can simply copy a previously used Google Sheets workbook, replace the image, and reset the answers.

Figure 2

Pivot Table for Vocabulary/Translation Activity
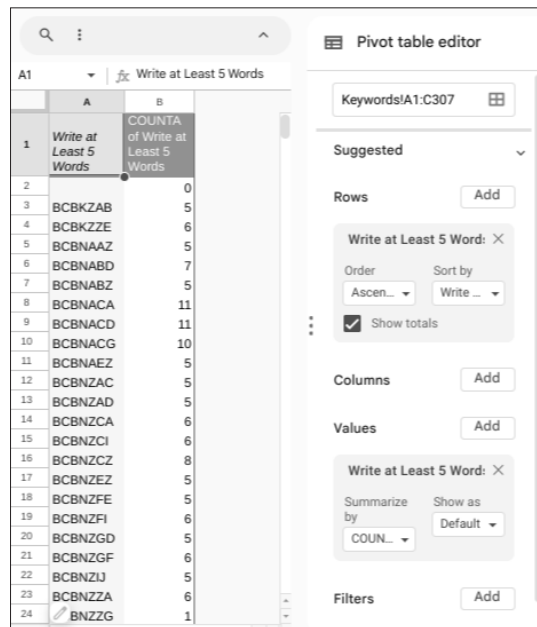
Step 2: Google Forms "I think___ because___"

As an easy way to get students to share, I have them input their three required answers and two optional bonus answers to the first two VTS questions ("What's going on in the picture?" and "What do you see that makes you say that?") and respective keywords, into a Google Form. I provide the format "I think _____ because_____." for their answers to make the task easier for my lower-level students. The Google Sheet as outputted from a Google Form (see Figure 3) offers a small sample of the range of ideas and vocabulary that even my lower-level students produce using VTS. Having students input information, such as class or ID, makes sorting the output by classes and group making assessment easier. Students then share their answers as in Steps 3a and 3b below.

Figure 3

*Google Sheet Output from Google Form*

Step 3a: Google Slides Variation 1: Keyword Sticky Notes

In this Google Slides activity, students in each group share their work on their own page. Figure 4 shows a table with different-colored rows in which students input their IDs and full names. Students make copies of the sticky notes matching their color and input five of their 10 keywords. Students can look at other groups' slides and the teacher can display all the slides on the overhead (In Google Slides, click View, then Gridview.) Google also offers versioning (Click File, then Version history.) by which the teacher can track student participation. The reader may see many ways this activity might also be used for brainstorming.

Figure 4

Sample Google Slide with Sticky Notes and Table for Student Data
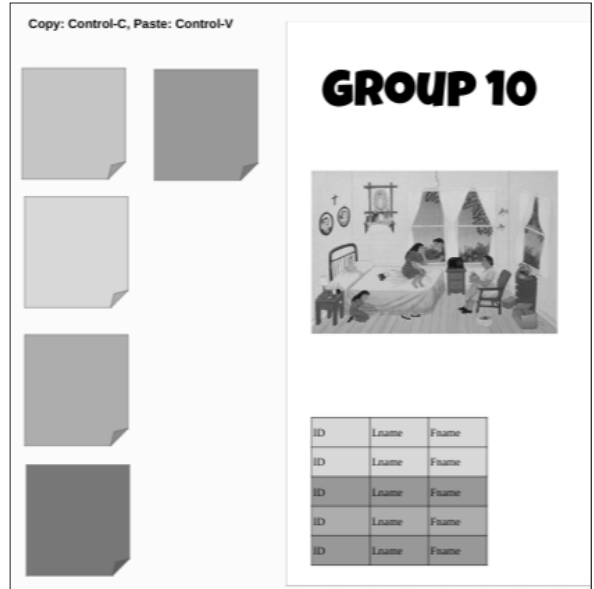
Students then group sticky notes with similar ideas together, as shown in Figure 5. This acts as a sort of mini word-cloud by which they can see their own and other groups' ideas.

Figure 5

Anonymized Group Slide with Grouped Sticky Notes
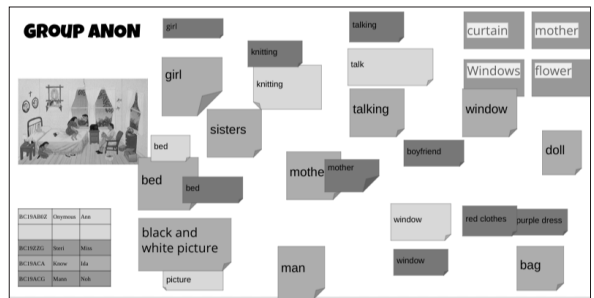
Step 3b: Google Slides Variation 2: Student Comments

A variation of the Google Slides activity for higher-level students is to have them each type in their "I think___ because ___" responses to the VTS questions. Figure 6 shows a Google Slide using VTS images from The New York Times' website (search for "NYT VTS"). Comments from students around the world can also be viewed on the website. Low-

er-level students might be asked to input just one "I think___ because ___" idea along with their sticky notes.

Figure 6

Group Slide with Longer Student Responses and Group Response

Example 2: *The English Gym* Google Sheets Classmate Interview

Figure 7 shows my digital adaptation of the Classmate Interview (McGuire et al., 2023) activity. In Google Sheets, students use a dropdown menu to choose which five of the 10 questions from the unit they'd like to ask and then fill in the interviewed students' names and answers. Teachers using Google Classroom can easily view students' progress. Alternatively, share a clickable link with students by replacing the word */edit* at the end of the link in the browser to */copy*, which when clicked will create a new copy on their Google Drive. Students can then email their finished pages to the teacher or upload them to a class folder.

Figure 7

Digitized Classmate Interview

Figure 8 shows a sample dropdown menu for the 10 questions. Highlight the cells into which you want to add the dropdowns (e.g., A4 to A13) and then click Insert and choose Dropdown. For Criteria, choose Dropdown (from a range) and input the range of cells from which the dropdown options will come (e.g., =$A$3:$A$13), that is, the 10 sentences for students to choose from. Putting "10 Questions" at the top makes it show as the first option. Before sharing this, I hide Column A and Rows 9 to 13 from the students.

Figure 8

Dropdown Menu for Classmate Interview

Figure 9 shows a conditional formatting feature I added later to change the color of the cells as students input data. I kept the command simple: if the text changes from the word "Answer," the color of the cell will change. I chose the color using the color beaker under *Custom* to change from gray (as in Column H in Figure 7) to blue. After I added this feature, the rate of completion seemed to increase significantly.

JALT THT SIG *Laos 2024 Program*

We have been invited to assist with the following programs:
1. *Exploring Inner Space, Mindful Education* led by Trish Sumerfield
2. Lao TESOL Proceedings. Mentor Lao writers online. Submit an article for publication.
3. Assist with the development of test materials (Lao Ministry of Education and Sport)
4. Stay for a year. Are you retired or on leave? Work with English teachers and students at the National University of Laos. No salary, but lots of warm heart-warming experiences.
5. Present on fee paying tertiary education opportunities in Japan for Lao students
6. Assist with planning English education programs for the *Save the Children Fund* in refugee camps on the Thai/Burmese Border.

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Figure 9

Conditional Formatting Feature for Classmate Interview

Conclusion

Google Apps provide useful ways for students to collaborate and learn from each other, and the data enable teachers not only to track students' progress but to share students' ideas with the entire class. The data can easily be used in third-party apps such as Quizlet for vocabulary, AnswerGarden for word clouds, or even in Google Forms to check what students learned through their activities. The formats for the Classmate Interview and the Google Slide activity can be adapted to any activity in which students interview or interact with others. While there is a bit of a learning curve in getting started, the results are well worth the initial effort.

References

McGuire, S., Honeycut, J., Huang, C., Keith, S. J., & Shiraishi, C. (2023). A collaborative university-wide communication English curriculum development project. *Bulletin of Nagoya University of Arts*, *44*, 101-119. https://www.nua.ac.jp/research/files/pdf/70a398e6baa3a6f0c591244cc9af2064.pdf

[JALT PRAXIS] YOUNGER LEARNERS

Martin Sedaghat & Emily MacFarlane

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

Gesturing Grammar
Adam Blankenship

Yuna didn't get prepositions. Her class had spent three weeks on four of them. Articles and the *be*-verb were occasionally dropped, but most of the eight-year-olds in the class could look at a picture and explain the positional relationship between two or more objects. Only Yuna was really struggling. In the final review week, the students were paired together, moving objects around felt boards and asking each other questions. Yuna's partner put a duck under a picnic table and asked, "Where's duck?" Yuna stared at the floor. Her partner crossed her arms and sighed loudly. I sat down with them and demonstrated the answer. It was too late. Yuna looked up at me and said in Japanese, with tears welling in her eyes, "I'm stupid."

I was desperate. Some kids never recover from sobbing in front of classmates. I brought Yuna and her partner into the kitchen and gave them some cups. I filled the cups with water and started pantomiming the flow of the water into the cup with my fingers, having them repeat *in* with a gesture: "Water is in the cup." I made simple gestures for each of the words in the sentence—inventing gestures on the fly—and had them repeat the sentence one word at a time while making similar gestures. I did the same for the other prepositions, moving the cup *under* the sink, *by* the refrigerator and *on* the microwave, all while getting them to repeat a gesture for each word in the sentence and using exaggerated, clownish gestures for the prepositions. Yuna laughed, and by the end of the review, she got it. She got the meaning of the prepositions, the sentence structure, and after some more practice, the interrogative form. Her partner even came up with the perfect gesture for *where*, spreading her arms

far apart and wiggling her index fingers in different directions.

Six years after Yuna and her partner taught me the importance of gesturing, I use it in every lesson I teach. In lower-level classes, I gesture every word I say when teaching and practicing targets. I also have students gesture every word they say as they speak. The gestures are produced redundantly with speech: a distinctive gesture is made for each word in the sentence as the word is spoken. In one 75-minute lesson, lower-level students will gesture more than 100 times. In higher-level classes, gesturing is used extensively to reinforce key grammar concepts and improve vocabulary retention, particularly for abstract words.

Research-backed Method

Research over the past 40 years has proven the benefits of gesturing, for both teachers and students (Abner et al., 2015). Much of the research has focused on memory. Can a student remember words better when they practice them with a physical movement representing the meaning of that word? Research has consistently found that they do (Jarbou et al., 2022). Neuroscience studies have tried to explain the mechanisms behind this by hypothesizing "memory traces" left in the brain when a gesture is made (Macedonia & von Kriegstein, 2012). Very simply put, when students gesture, they use a broader, richer area of their brains and catalogue language into memory as images or motions, which then can be accessed when retrieving the words. More recent evidence from neuroscientists seems to prove older theories on dual-coding or the coding of language using two separate parts of the brain.

Gestures as Training Wheels

Our school hasn't conducted empirical studies, but our results with gesturing are consistent with the research. In fact, we've found many benefits beyond what's mentioned in the literature. Overall, students have a deeper understanding of what they learn, including grammar. They exhibit better short-term and long-term retention of both words and sentence structures. Using gestures as "training wheels," they are more confident in presenting their ideas. And they feel less anxiety with correction, knowing that the teacher can flash them a gesture to help when they stumble. Some of these benefits are challenging to quantify and measure, possibly explaining why they're largely missing from the research.

Our system is mostly homespun. After watching the effect gesturing had on Yuna and other students who needed different methods to understand concepts, I attended a year-long Japanese sign language (JSL) course which served as an invaluable primer. For many concrete objects and abstract ideas, we adopt standard JSL signing. But for the most part, we've used trial and error to build our own catalogue of gestures that are used for every word and grammar we teach.

Using Intuition

The gestures for most concrete words are intuitive. We gesture the shape of a tangible noun or sometimes an action associated with a noun (e.g., driving for the word *car*). For verbs, we pantomime the action. Gestures that show the physical form of an object, often called iconic gestures by researchers, are easy enough to devise. You do what's natural. Gesturing, after all, is a natural and common way to communicate. We do it all the time to reinforce what we're saying, to augment what we say, and sometimes just to help ourselves think. Not surprisingly, for concrete objects, the students themselves are often better than teachers at devising distinctive iconic gestures.

Metaphorical Gestures

What's been particularly tricky—and ultimately rewarding for both the students and the school— has been the gesturing of grammar. For abstract grammatical concepts, we use a variety of representational gestures often called metaphorical gestures by researchers.

Be Verb

The *be*-verb is a good example. Conjugation of irregular verbs stumps even the brightest young students. *Be* is often used from lesson one of any young learner's program, with *am*, *is*, and *are* all jumbled together during introductions. It helps students to represent the grammatical concept of a person right from the start in the form of redundant, co-speech gestures. You're not teaching them the grammar explicitly, but you're gesturing to help them distinguish between the words and eventually understand the differences. Gesturing is just the first step for young learners; it plants the seeds of their understanding.

We use an index finger pointing downward for *am* while the other fingers are closed in a fist (see Figure 1). It vaguely resembles the letter *I* and at the same time clearly indicates singularity. "I am Adam" would be represented by an index finger pointed directly at your face (not to be mistaken for an index

finger to the chest, which means "me"), an index finger pointing directly downward, and a side-to-side, open hand movement in front of yourself, indicating your name (another metaphorical gesture).

Figure 1

Am Gesture

We gesture *is* with an index finger pointing downward and the thumb extended outward, perpendicularly to the index finger (see Figure 2). Though two fingers are used, the image is still singular and yet distinctive from *am*. The outward thumb can represent *he*, *she*, or *it*.

Figure 2

Is Gesture

For *are*, we point the index finger and middle finger downward and move them in a quick circular motion to represent the plural (see Figure 3). You might use three fingers or four, but it's easier and clearer to juxtapose two against one.

Figure 3

Are Gesture

Spacing and Timing

Spatial considerations are important in distinguishing meaning with gesturing. The *be* gestures are made close to the body so as not to confuse them with similar gestures for *this*, *it*, *that*, and the plurals *these* and *those* when used in other contexts. In JSL, signers often use similar gestures to mean completely different things, and the viewer distinguishes them based on context and subtle differences in hand movements.

Timing is also important. When introducing new targets with new gestures, it helps to exaggerate body movements and pause a few seconds between each gesture to allow the students enough time to visualize the action and record the word and the accompanying image in their brains. As you get better at gesturing, you can make finer distinctions and accelerate.

Auxiliary Verbs

Similarly, auxiliary verbs *do* and *does* are very hard for young learners to grasp. We use a fist for *do* (see Figure 4) and a *shaka* sign, with the thumb and pinky extended outward, for *does*, with the thumb and pinky representing *he* and *she* (see Figure 5). We further distinguish between *do* the auxiliary and *do* as an action verb, with one fist lowered and close to the body for the auxiliary and two fists raised in the air for the action verb. When answering third-person present-tense questions (e.g., He swims in a pool.), a student will point a finger in the direction of a male student, pantomime the action swim, and then make a quick *s* motion in the air with their index finger to symbolize the *s* on the end of the verb.

Figure 4

Do Gesture (Auxiliary)

Gesturing is essential when teaching tenses. One of the great benefits of learning introductory JSL is understanding how signers use their entire bodies to represent tense. A typical signer will explain what she did today by starting her story on one side of her body and gradually moving her signing to the other side of her body, like the hands of a clock moving across its face with the passage of time. For future tense, she'll present an action in front of her body, and for past tense, some of the signs will motion backwards to indicate the action was completed. JSL has wonderfully intuitive grammar.

Figure 5

Does Gesture

For a video showing one of our students introducing himself using some of the gestures explained above, please go to candokids.jp and select the 独自教法 tab. The student uses almost 30 distinctive gestures in the span of just a minute. You'll understand a lot of what he says even without audio. He's been one of my best students for years. For a presentation day project, a couple years ago, he wrote the script to a wordless book and told it to the audience. It took 20 minutes and he gestured every word he said, hundreds of times, represent-ing different tenses, person, possession, and other grammatical concepts.

Managing Expectations

Gesturing grammar doesn't solve confusion over person, tense, and other hard-to-learn grammar. Even after extensive gesturing, students will still make mistakes, albeit far, far fewer in my experience. Gesturing also doesn't teach them grammar in an explicit way. However, it's a critical step in communicating the grammar. Again, you're just planting the seeds of understanding. Keep your expectations in check.

Faster, Better

In our experience, during speaking tasks, eight-year-old students, like Yuna, will make less than half the errors she'd make without learning language with gesturing. Moreover, a class of eight-year-olds like hers will pick up prepositions in two classes instead of three and they'll apply it faster in novel situations, like venturing outside the classroom and using learned language to explain new situations. Again, that's anecdotal evidence after six years of teaching without gesturing and six years of rigorous, systematic gesturing.

We plan to conduct empirical research in the next two years to measure the effects of gesturing and test our observations. We hope to further the research on gesturing and by explaining how gesturing benefits not only the simple memorization of words in L2, but also the comprehension of advanced grammar. Generally, the benefits carry over from speaking into writing but this is harder to determine because of the limited amount of writing young learners do in our program.

Acclimation Period

Don't expect your students to adapt to it immediately. Gesturing is natural. Co-gesturing each word redundantly isn't. It'll take kids time to get used to. But what has amazed me more than anything is how students have grown accustomed to it. You'd think many students would rebel against such a rigorous system. They haven't. They're smart enough to know it's helping them learn. Also, it's an essential tool for correction. Showing a student, a gesture when they're lost or make a mistake is a far better approach to correction than feeding them answers orally or stopping them cold—and they know that themselves. That extra step of visualizing the language from the teacher's gesture, and then recalling the language as both a verbal input and as an image

or motion, makes a substantial difference in helping them understand and retain the language.

Flexibility

Finally, many advanced studies on gesturing note the importance of mismatches, or gestures that seem to conflict with what's being said. For young learners, I think it's effective to have them faithfully recreate your gestures at first. But as they get used to gesturing, you'll find they create their own individual styles of gesturing. There's nothing wrong with that. It can mean the student is using gestures not just to help recall language, but add information to their speech and represent language in their own original way.

Good teachers judge their performances on how their slowest students—kids like Yuna—perform. It's easy to teach quick, motivated learners. It's the slower ones we need to reach with new, innovative methods. Over the years, we developed dozens of original methods to ensure that all kids, no matter their natural aptitude for learning, can keep up with their peers and feel confident in their abilities. Gesturing is simply the best method we've found for getting all kids of all abilities to speak better and retain their language skills.

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[JALT PRAXIS] BOOK REVIEWS

Robert Taferner & Stephen Case

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

Email: jaltpubs.tlt.reviews@jalt.org
Web: https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/book-reviews

This month's column features Ben Joicey's review of Asian Issues Practice in Critical Reading.

Reviewed by Ben Joicey, Aoyama Gakuin University

Asian Issues: Practice in Critical Reading

[Alistair Graham-Marr, Hugh Graham-Marr, Lewis Malamed, Martha Robertson, & Nicola DiNunzio, Joan Bailey. Abax ELT Publishing, 2019. (Textbook, audio files and Teacher's Notes are available online). ¥2,700. ISBN: Level 1: 978-1-78547-087-5; Level 2: 978-1-78547-088-2; and Level 3: 978-1-78547-089-9.]

Asian Issues Practice in Critical Reading is a textbook series that has an emphasis on critical thinking (CT) and a focus on east Asian topics. The series has three levels from A1 to B1 of CEFR. The textbooks are divided into seven chapters, with two parts each. Each part can easily provide the basis for two 90-minute
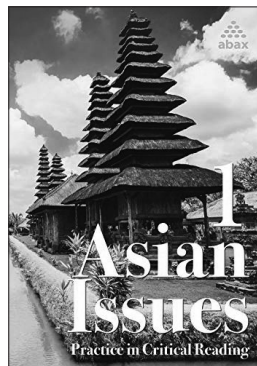
classes, so each textbook is suitable for a two-semester course. The series has some well-chosen CT techniques that use the higher-order thinking skills of analysis and evaluation (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Additionally, the series covers some useful but often overlooked grammatical structures. It also has a quite engaging balance of input and spoken output activities that establish a good rhythm and tempo between the activities.

Each of the seven chapters is typically based on a theme that provides a contemporary topic of debate. Some of the themes, such as *values* and *environment*, are repeated across levels, but the specific topic varies. For instance, level 3 has biodiversity and multiculturalism under those themes respectively, whereas level 2 has *Asian family values* and fish farming. Some of the chapters are based on more everyday themes, such as entertainment, with movies appearing as a topic at levels 1 and 3. This combination of weightier and lighter topics is valuable because it not only gives the students some light relief, but it also demonstrates that CT skills can be used in any area of life.

The chapters are divided into halves, A and B, which are further divided into ten subsections. Part 1 has three warm up exercises. A photo-based elicitation warmup introduces the theme of the chapter. Next, there is a lexis input exercise. These appear in different forms, such as a cloze exercise or matching words to definitions. The warmup exercises end with some discussion questions related to the theme of the chapter. Part 2 is a reading that varies from approximately half an A4 page at level 1 to a full page at level 3, and part 3 is comprised of comprehension questions. Part 4 includes an exercise in which the students have to scan what they have already read for one minute and then write missing words into the summary. In part 5, students practice the reading skill of inferring the meaning of words from context and matching them with a choice of definitions.

In part 6, *Critical Reading*, the reading skills vary, such as finding main ideas and the use of the CT skill that is introduced in the chapter. In part 7, students practice the CT skill of that half of the chapter and connect it with the reading. Part 8 presents grammatical forms with practice exercises. Both of those parts might require thoughtful supplementary activities by the teacher. Part 9 consists of a second reading activity with comprehension questions. Part 10 includes either a spoken or written output activity of varying types, although it is often a presentation. Different output activities, such as group discussions, can be added by the teacher. This organization of parts 1 to 10 is repeated in the second half of the chapter, even though it introduces a new CT skill and a new grammatical form. The series is well structured in this way to communicate the understanding and function of CT skills while allowing students to practice more standard reading skills. The CT skills vary from use of general higher order thinking skills of analysis and evaluation to more precise techniques for CT, such as arguments from analogy and formal logical fallacies (Hadley & Boon, 2023; Joicey, 2022; Paul & Elder, 2019).

The series has several other virtues. One is that discussing topics of potential interest in Asia might be more compelling than talking about the Anglophone national cultures that feature in many EFL classroom textbooks. Another virtue is that the readings are at an appropriate length to prevent excessive time being consumed on them, allowing more time for input reinforcement and production activities, even though that is less useful if a course is intended to develop more extensive reading capabilities. As was noted, there are some useful grammatical structures, which are well chosen, as they tend to be weak points for Japanese students in writing. Some examples are use of *although*, infinitives of purpose, and *that* for reporting clauses. Perhaps the principal virtue of the series is that the focus on CT skills for potentially personally relevant topics seems more engaging for students than only a focus on more standard reading skills.

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Recently Received

Julie Kimura & Derek Keever

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A list of texts and resource materials for language teachers is available for book reviews in *TLT* and *JALT Journal*. If none of the titles we have listed appeal to you or are not suitable for your teaching context, please feel free to contact us to suggest alternate titles. We invite publishers to submit complete sets of materials to Julie Kimura at the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison postal address listed on the Staff page on the inside cover of *The Language Teacher*.

Recently Received Online

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

* = new listing; ! = final notice — Final notice items will be removed on February 29. 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

Bake sale—Kamata, S. Gemma Open Door for Literacy, 2022. [Laura Murata is a professor and a single mother. Kazu, the father of her daughter's friend, is also raising his son on his own. Laura and Kazu meet at a holiday bake sale and plan to go out for dinner on Christmas Eve. The Open Door Series comprises graded readers written for those who struggle to read. A lesson plan is available on the publisher's website.]

Essential writing 1: From sentence to paragraph—Kenney, J. Kinseido, 2023. [This introductory writing textbook for beginner and pre-intermediate level learners covers the rules and elements of sentence structure and emphasizes aspects that Japanese learners of English find challenging. Aimed towards those with a TOEIC L & R score of 400-500.]

* Globalisation and its effects on team-teaching—Fujimoto-Adamson, N. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020. [The author reveals the connections among global issues, policymaking, and local practices as they relate to team-teaching in English language classes in the Japanese junior high school context. Examining this particular context provides the reader with valuable insights as well as a model of research methodology into team-teaching in wider context—a greatly under researched subdiscipline.]

* Language support for immigrants in Japan: Perspectives from multicultural community building—Hattori, K., Shinya, M., & Otachi, K. (Eds.). Rowman & Littlefield, 2023. [In this edited volume, contributors examine language support practices in both formal and non-formal education, ranging from night school to community-based language classes. The contributors encourage the development of systems in Japan that foster equitable and inclusive language policies.]

New frontiers—Hong, T., Powell, G., Koe, T., & Scafaru, M. Compass Publishing, 2020. [This six-level course helps teenage students learn about English in the 21st century. Aimed towards those with a CEFR of A1-B2.]

On point (2nd ed.)—Anderson, P., Foster, L., Robinson, S., & Hong, T. Compass Publishing, 2022. [This new edition includes new and updated readings on current topics. Students can participate in engaging activities to build specific reading and thinking skills, as well as guided writing tasks related to each topic. In addition, discussion activities help students form and support their opinions. Online materials include audio files as well as other resources.]

Promoting reflection on language learning: Lessons from a university setting—Curry, N., Lyone, P., & Mynard, J. (Eds.). Multilingual Matters, 2023. [This book was written by academics working at a university in Japan to present an overview of their efforts to promote learner reflection within their institution. The authors also provide practical tools and activities for teachers to become better equipped to facilitate student success and satisfaction.]

Re-envisioning EFL education in Asia—Muller, T., Adamson, J., Herder, S., & Brown, P. S., (Eds.). iTDi, 2023. [The authors re-envision EFL teaching and learning through chapters that address contemporary 21st-century issues in which Asia comes into its own as a center of language teaching pedagogy and research. Both teachers and researchers will learn how to re-envision language teaching in their own contexts.]

SGDs × discussion—Yoshihara, R., Hayashi, C., Itoi, E., Iwamoto, N., & Morrell, A. Kinseido, 2022. [Students learn about a wide range of world issues through reading passages and then discuss SGDs as ways to deal with them. Self-study audio download is available.]

* Talking point—Harris, J. Leeming, P. Abax, 2021. [This two-book series takes a task-based approach to making presentations. Units focus on academic talks given by a variety of English speakers. Students have access to the publisher's LMS, which includes video and audio listening activities, as well as voice recognition.]

! What is language?—Kane-Hinohara, E. Perceptia Press, 2023. [What is Language? follows a CLIL approach. Each of the 15 units is scaffolded for learners, with a progression from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. There is a mix of communicative focus-on-form tasks through explicit teaching of the Academic Word List and academic language skills. Productive tasks include pair work in scaffolded discussions and individual presentations. Audio tracks are available for download.]

David McMurray

Readers of this issue's Teaching Assistance column can pick up practical ideas on how to teach an English education course to education majors. A graduate student reveals how learning English can be encouraged from the very first day of classes through role-plays and social interactions with peers in the classroom. Grounded in the author's readings on social constructivism and her understanding of active learning, this essay offers a practical strategy for role-playing a scene from a film to help teachers and their students who are beginning a new semester to seize the day.

Important Strategies for Teaching English From the Very First Day

Mizuki Shima

The International University of Kagoshima Graduate School

I enrolled in an English teacher training program offered by a graduate school at a private university in Kyushu in April 2023. Soon thereafter, I was thrilled when a professor asked me to be a Teaching Assistant (TA) for an *English Oral Communication* class, a required course for first-year majors in foreign languages. This paper will highlight the teaching strategies I observed and my experiences assisting students in this conversation class. I will introduce my ideas about how Japanese students can be motivated to speak in English and why it is important for teachers to adopt active learning strategies.

I have always really enjoyed learning foreign languages, and setting a personal goal to become proficient in speaking English as a foreign language has helped me deal with challenging situations in my own life. When I was a high school student, my father passed away, so I was really depressed. For over one year, I focused on studying English intensively on my own and that concentration helped me to feel better. I received a pre-level 1 certificate on the EIKEN language test.

My dream is to become a certified English teacher for junior or senior high school students. I have wanted to be an English teacher ever since I graduated from college four years ago. Even after graduation, I visited the school almost every week and voluntarily took part in two classes. This social interaction deepened my confidence to communicate in English. In addition, I helped my college juniors to practice for a *rakugo* performance in English. Rakugo is a traditional Japanese style of storytelling. When students recited their stories, I tried to make them feel excited about public speaking so that they would not lose their motivation.

I hoped that the opportunity to be a TA would make my life brighter. I trained for my position by reading about active learning (AL), and by taking part in role-plays with classmates at graduate school. To motivate the students and allow them to take part in the class, I was informed through my readings that AL could be useful. According to a *Nikkei Shimbun* (as cited in Iron Will English, 2022) report on the current reality of education in Japan, the linguist, Shirai Yasuhiro claimed, "English education in Japan has an overwhelmingly small amount of input." He meant that it is important for learners to have access to large amounts of comprehensible listening and reading materials. Students in Japan have few opportunities to express and describe themselves fully, so students tend toward introversion. Perhaps students need to dig deeply into whatever learning resources are available and deepen their interest in a particular topic rather than simply skim it. *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (n.d.) defines AL as:

> an approach to instruction that involves actively engaging students with the course material through discussions, problem solving, case studies, role plays and other methods. Active Learning approaches place a greater degree of responsibility on the learner than passive approaches such as lectures. Active Learning activities help promote higher order thinking skills such as application of knowledge, analysis, and synthesis. Active learning activities engage students in deep rather than surface learning, and enable students to apply and transfer knowledge better.

In my graduate school classes I learned that AL is based on the theory of constructivism, which emphasizes that learners construct or build their understanding. Social constructivism suggests that learning happens primarily through social interaction with others, such as a teacher or a learner's peers. Jean Piaget (1896–1980), a psychologist and founder of constructivism, researched the cognitive development of children, observing that their knowledge was individually built up, bit by bit. In the process of making meaning, children replace or adapt their existing knowledge and understanding with deeper levels of understanding. Learning happens as knowledge moves from short- to long-term memory. University of Minnesota (n.d.) claimed the outcomes of AL include: "The benefits of using such activities are many, including improved critical thinking skills, increased retention and transfer of new information, increased motivation, improved interpersonal skills, and decreased course failure." Research by Owens et al. (2017) revealed a mutual influence between active learning and emotional states. AL affects student motivation positively. In turn, the overall impact of motivation moderates key learning characteristics, such as attention and memory consolidation.

Figure 1

The Author (Left) Interacts With Peers to Deeply Learn About Poetry

Once I had deeply studied theories connected to AL, I helped my graduate studies professor of English teach his first class for first-year non-majors. At the beginning of the class, he showed a ten-minute scene from *Dead Poets Society* (1989). In the film, the English teacher Mr. Keating, who was played by Robin Williams, took his students to see photographs of their seniors and read out the poem, *To the Virgins to Make a Much of Time* by

Robert Herrick (1648). My professor performed in the same way in this class. Due to the large number of students, he assigned them to two groups. I led 22 students to a flower garden on campus, where I recited Herrick's poem (see Figure 1). Then I guided the group to a mural. I performed the same way that Mr. Keating did in the movie. I asked each student to put their ears to the painting, and then I whispered, "Carpe diem, carpe diem." When I spoke to the painting, my students were intrigued, though they seemed confused and did not appear to understand why I was whispering at the painting (see Figure 2). One female student said later, "I was nervous." Some of the students looked like they were embarrassed to follow my instructions to look at the faces of their alumni on the mural, but most students wrote positive comments in their daily journals. For example, another female student wrote, "The teacher was really friendly, and I enjoyed taking the first class." Another female student said, "I had a good time." One male student claimed, "It was my first class, but I was relieved that there was no difficult English. I want to do my best and enjoy English." One female student admitted, "It was my first class. It was difficult but a lot of fun. I would like to do my best next time." I realized that most Japanese students were shy, and this behavior affected their actions in the class.

Figure 2

The Author Reenacts a Scene From the Film Dead Poets Society

From the outset of a lesson, it is important to inform students of the learning purpose and meaning. The course of study for junior and senior high schools clearly stipulates that English learning should have learning objectives and incorporate

the students' intentions into the learning activities. According to Inagaki and Hatano (1989), "when people feel a real need and have a purpose, they are naturally willing to study. Therefore, if you can present the purpose of learning at school and make students feel the necessity, they will naturally be motivated to learn" (p. 41).

I observed firsthand from my teaching practice that if there is necessity and intellectual curiosity, people will naturally learn. The most important strategy to motivate students is to show them ways to constantly take part in every class, whether it is reciting a poem, performing rakugo or reenacting a dramatic film scene. AL encouraged the students I encountered in my classrooms and provided them with an opportunity to talk about themselves. I feel closer to achieving my dream of becoming an English teacher. In the future when I teach foreign languages as a professional, I would like to emphasize the importance of setting goals and incorporating AL to create inspirational lessons for all my students.

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[JALT PRAXIS] WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Jerry Talandis Jr. & Kinsella Valies

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

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Have a Conversation With Your Writing: An Interview With Philip McCarthy

Jerry Talandis Jr.

In this first ever interview for *The Writer's Workshop*, I spoke with Philip McCarthy, an associate professor at the University of Sharjah (UAE). Dr. McCarthy has been teaching for over 30 years in various countries, including Turkey, Japan, Britain, the United States, and the United Arab Emirates. His primary research focus has encompassed applied natural language processing, discourse science, and foundational writing. He has made significant contributions to the development of automated writing evaluation tools, including *Coh-Metrix* (McNamara et al., 2014) and *Auto-Peer* (McCarthy et al., 2021). Additionally, Dr. McCarthy co-authored the L2 writing textbook, *Writing the Research Paper: Multicultural Perspectives for Writing in English as a Second Language* (McCarthy & Ahmed, 2022). One standout aspect of this book is an innovative technique called the *plausible question contention* (PQC), which promotes cohesion in writing by generating and answering plausible questions at the end of each sentence. In our conversation, which was edited for length and clarity, we explore the application of the PQC for professional writers like teachers and researchers to enhance the cohesiveness of their writing by framing it as a conversation. We also discuss the role that new AI tools like ChatGPT can play in supporting this conversational approach to improving the clarity of one's writing.

ARTICLES

JALT PRAXIS • TEACHING ASSISTANCE

JALT FOCUS

Jerry Talandis Jr.*: One of the things I was struck by in your book was the way you liken good cohesive writing to having a conversation, not with someone else, but with yourself. However, before we get into the details of your approach, it might be best to begin by defining some key terms. What is cohesion, and how does it differ from coherence, a concept it is often associated with?*

Philip McCarthy: I think that's a great question, and I love it when people ask that. You'd think such concepts were set in stone, but in my experience, the literature is not settled on what they mean exactly. Some have spoken about cohesion being at the local, sentence-to-sentence level, while coherence is at the global level. So, the two ideas are very, very different. I tell my students that when I say cohesion, I'm going from sentence to sentence. And when I say coherence, I'm looking at every sentence as it relates to the thesis or to the globality of the text. And I then tell them, "Don't worry about it!" Just focus on good writing and don't worry about abstract concepts.

That's a good point! In your chapter on coherence, you discuss one of the biggest causes of incoherency, the curse of knowledge. What is that all about?

Yes, the curse of knowledge. That's a great question. I think with professional writers and with students, they all share this problem. It's so difficult for any writer to separate themselves from what they know and to understand what the reader doesn't know. This is the challenge of teaching itself. I know what I know, but I don't know what you don't know. And I don't know what it is that you do know. You know the feeling, right? Putting these things together is so hard, which is why I look at writing as being this conversation.

   And the most important feature in writing for me is a full stop. A full stop is the opportunity where we mentally process information. We don't just pause for breath—we pause to process what we have just read. As we do, our minds cannot help but to generate questions and expectations and predictions for what comes next. If we're conscious of this process, of what we do at full stops, then we can be conscious of what we need to write next. This awareness is what gets us past the curse of knowledge. Will my reader know what this means, or am I just demonstrating how smart I am? With some of my students, I've noticed there's definitely the urge to "show him that I'm smart." With professional writers, you tend to forget what it is that other people don't know that you do. There's almost a humility in being a bad writer.

Interesting. So, I can see that knowing your audience is key, right? Part of the decision-making involved when you're choosing words or what to say depends a lot on who you're writing for, the situation, and what it calls for.

Yes, that's right.

So, this leads me to an innovative technique you've developed to help students enhance cohesiveness within a text. You've called it the Plausible Question Contention, or PQC, and it is designed to get writers past this curse of knowledge. Could you describe this technique and how it works?

Sure. What I invariably do with my students is start them off with a sentence, which I spring on them out of the blue, like: "Last week, I went to Chicago." They look at me for a while because they have no idea why I've said this. And slowly, it's almost as if they can't help it, they'll say something like, "Why did you go there? Or like, "What did you do?", or "Did you have a good time?" And that's it. You cannot help but to process the information and generate a question. So, to get past the curse of knowledge, to be cohesive in your writing, that's exactly what you've got to do when you come to a full stop. That's what your mind does, and you feel uncomfortable until you've done that. And there's probably like ten other questions you could reasonably, plausibly, put out there. So, the object isn't necessarily that you come up with the *best* question, although that's great if you can. To be cohesive, you just have to at least answer a *plausible* one. It doesn't really matter which one it is, as long as it's plausible. Because when the reader reads the next sentence, the information will be easily processed because it is the answer to a plausible question generated from the first sentence.

So, imagine, if you had a high-speed camera that could capture at a million frames per second, what's going on in your mind as you're about to write that next sentence. Imagine you could see all of these questions popping up as they come to you, and then the one you end up going with as you continue to write. If we could really slow things down, we'd see that we're constantly and naturally generating and responding to questions as we write. With this PQC technique, we're essentially making a largely unconscious process conscious. By putting active attention on the decisions we make when writing, even sentence to sentence, we're able to bypass the curse of knowledge. Am I understanding it correctly?

Yes, yes, yes. Exactly.

How would you recommend a professional writer to utilize this sort of technique?

Well, when you have a conversation with your writing, and you generate plausible questions based on something you've written, ask yourself, "Which is the most interesting one? Which one do you think my audience most needs to know? Which one relates most to my thesis?" In the course of reflecting on these questions, you'll see where you can go with your narrative and where you cannot go. This will enable you to choose your next sentence. As for the 3rd sentence, you have to bear in mind that there are two sentences that have come before that you now have to reconcile.

I see. That's very practical. It strikes me that the PQC technique is one possible antidote to long and windy writing.

Yes, exactly. If your sentence is so long that you can't generate a question, then your cohesion has been lost before you even get to the full stop. That's why these long and winding sentences are not helpful to anyone. If you can't generate the question, neither can your audience. You're not going to be cohesive. Go back and fix your pre-question.

Also, for professional authors, I can see the PQC as helping with moments when you get stuck with writer's block, of not knowing what to write next. By generating plausible questions, you give yourself options and ideas for possible ways forward.

Yes, exactly.

These days we have access to new generative AI tools like ChatGPT, which could be a way of generating these types of questions. What do you think about that?

Yeah, that would be such an ethical and productive way of using AI. It's just sitting there, very happy to be a conversation partner. If you type in some text and ask it to generate plausible questions about what could come next, then you're not asking it to generate text for you, which allows you to avoid ethical plagiarism problems. If we set it up so that instead of generating the answers, it generates the questions, then you, as the writer, can sit back and realize, "Oh, yeah, that's a good idea. I want to write about that next," and you'll be the one writing, not the AI.

I can imagine how especially powerful this can be for novice academic authors, such as a teacher who's preparing their first paper for publication on some classroom research and perhaps is feeling quite overwhelmed, or for authors for whom English is not their first language. With ChatGPT, they could write

a prompt like, "What are some possible plausible questions that could follow on from this sentence or paragraph?" GPT would then list a bunch of questions from which the author could generate further ideas on what to write next.

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. You know, even if all you've got is a topic, you can generate questions from that. Then you can build your thesis and then generate questions from that. ChatGPT will endlessly sit there generating things that it doesn't know yet, but it would like to know based on what you've written. It's back and forth, question and answer, just like a conversation.

Yes, that's right. So that's pretty cool. By generating questions after each sentence or each section and moving on step by step, it's a really interesting way of going about the writing process. Finally, you also mention in your book some specific techniques for fixing cohesion issues. Could you elaborate on those?

Yeah, there are three things that are going to help you most with that next sentence: *recycling*, *transitionals*, and *this + noun*. For example, if you write, "The role of music can be helpful in therapy," words like *role* and *therapy* can be recycled in the next sentence. Students are so often taught at lower levels to not repeat words in a sentence, but they can be repeated between sentences to enhance cohesion. There are also these wonderful transitions, such as *however* or *in addition* that tell the reader exactly what's going to come up in the next sentence. Similarly, you can use *this + noun*, as in *this problem*, *this solution*, or *this issue* to take what has gone before and lead it forward. So, these are some specific words that can help authors as they go about answering the questions that have been generated.

Okay, to wrap things up, we've got the problem of the curse of knowledge; how that contributes to a lack of coherence in writing; and the PQC as a way of moving beyond this situation by generating plausible questions after each full stop, which enables authors to think more clearly about the choices they're making as they go about expressing their ideas. AI tools like ChatGPT can be called upon to facilitate this conversational process. Finally, we have specific cohesive devices and strategies such as recycling, transitionals, and this + noun, which are common ways of building cohesion. Anything else to add?

Just to emphasize that again, if your sentences are so long that you can't generate questions from them, then your cohesion has been lost. If you can't generate the question, neither can your readers.

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[JALT FOCUS] SIG FOCUS

Michael Phillips

Collaboration, in all its forms, is a cornerstone of JALT activities and the same goes for SIGs. JALT currently has 30 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 what these groups believe and do. Past SIG Focus *columns are available at* https://jalt-publications.org/tlt/departments/sig-news • *Email:* jaltpubs.tlt.sig.focus@jalt.org

Global Englishes SIG
Ben Joicey
Coordinator

I joined JALT a little belatedly and when I did, I was surprised to see that there wasn't a SIG for Global Englishes (GE). Consequently, I moved to establish one and to find supportive and like-minded people who were also interested in building the community. These key people became the founding officers without who the SIG could not have come into existence. They kindly introduce themselves below.

Scope and activities

GE is a broad field, so not everything can be attended to here, or in any depth, but hopefully there is enough to convey a general understanding of the situation.

GE brings together the two prior concepts of *world Englishes* and *English as a (multi) lingua franca* (ELF). The former, sometimes referred to as pluricentrism, is the notion that English now exists beyond the original linguacultures of its mother tongue communities in varieties that should be considered equivalent, both factually and evaluatively. The pluralization expresses the belief that such Englishes are independent and autonomous of English in its mother tongue communities yet remain identifiable as English despite any differences. Regardless of these theoretical claims, the way English is used globally varies from its original linguacultures to some extent is anyway self-evident. The question then is what that means for teaching.

Turning to ELF, it is premised on the fact that foreign language speakers of English are now the majority type of speakers of English, and that most English interactions are between them. The addition of multi to lingua refers to the possibility that English may be used in combination with other languages in various global situations. As second language speakers may express themselves differently to those for whom English is their first language (native speakers), this has potential implications for what should be taught. There is already a significant body of research into ELF and its pedagogical implications.

The GE SIG has an annual conference and an annual research journal. Please feel free to make submissions in Japanese or English. If you are interested in getting involved (we are especially keen to find a new membership chair), or you would like to know more, please contact us via the email on our website (https://jaltgesig.wordpress.com/).

Officers

Tim Andrewartha (Publicity Chair) became interested in GE while doing his MA in TESOL and teaching at an English conversation school in Japan. Since then, he has taught at several universities, where he has conducted research into implementing GE in the classroom. He currently teaches at Asia University in Tokyo.

Ma Wilma Capati (Program Chair) is currently an assistant professor in the Essential English Center at Kanazawa Institute of Technology. She earned her master's degree in TESOL from Soka University, Tokyo. Her research interests include gender in education, multilingualism, and translanguaging. She is also interested in task-based learning (TBL) and teaching presentation skills to Japanese university students.

Gregory Paul Glasgow (Member-at-large and founding Treasurer) is an associate professor in the Department of English at Kanda University of International Studies. He is a critical applied linguist who combines insights from postcolonial theory, critical realism, and contemporary sociolinguistics to examine language ideologies, policies, and practices in TESOL. He is also interested in GE pedagogy. He holds a PhD in applied linguistics from the University of Queensland.

Gareth Humphreys (Publications Chair) has worked in higher education in the UK, Spain, Vietnam, Angola, and Japan. He teaches on English communication and intercultural educational programmes at Sojo University, Kumamoto. In 2020, he completed his PhD at the Centre for Global Englishes, University of Southampton.

Ben Joicey (Coordinator) teaches at Asia University. His teaching interests include lexical develop-ment, critical thinking, TBL, SLA, and the relevance of GE to pedagogy. His theoretical interests are in the mereologies of linguistics and sociolinguistics and their ontological and ethico-political entailments. In addition to a MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL, he has a MA and a MphilStud in Philosophy.

Andrew McMahon (Membership Chair and Treasurer) first began thinking about the unique status of English in the modern world while teaching French and German at the secondary level in the UK. He now enjoys working with colleagues and students from all corners of the globe as an English lecturer at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Beppu, Oita.

Additionally, recently we have been joined by Saran Shiroza and Chie Tsurii as Japanese publications editors.

Introducing New JALT Associate Member: goFLUENT

About goFLUENT

goFLUENT, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, is the world's leading B2B provider of hyper-personalized solutions that accelerate language skills by blending technology, content and virtual human interaction on any device.

Today, learning and development leaders of more than 1,000 international corporations in 100+ countries trust goFLUENT's award-winning digital language learning solutions to speed up the acquisition of language skills needed to build confidence, empower career growth, and establish a more inclusive global culture.

In addition to English, goFLUENT provides language solutions in Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Russian, Korean, Arabic, and Japanese. goFLUENT is present in 20 countries across all continents and has helped millions of people become better communicators in the languages of business.

Furthermore, we aim to thoughtfully design events, providing support for students to craft a prosperous career in the future.

For more information, visit https://www.gofluent.com or send an email to japan@gofluent.com.

goFLUENTについて

goFLUENTは、スイスのジュネーブに本社を置き、あらゆるデバイスでテクノロジー、コンテンツ、バーチャルなヒューマンインタラクションを融合し、語学スキルを加速させるハイパーパーソナライズされたソリューションを提供する世界有数の語学のプロバイダーです。

現在、100カ国以上、1,000社以上のグローバル企業の人材開発(L&D)リーダーは、goFLUENTの受賞歴あるデジタル語学学習ソリューションに信頼を寄せ、自信を獲得し、キャリアの成長を促進し、よりインクルーシブなグローバル文化を確立するために必要な語学スキルの習得を加速させています。

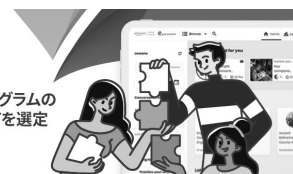高等教育機関においても、生徒が将来のキャリアを掴み取れるよう支援いたします。同時に教職員のスキルも向上させます。

また、英語に加えて、スペイン語、フランス語、中国語、ドイツ語、イタリア語、ポルトガル語、オランダ語、ロシア語、韓国語、アラビア語、日本語の言語ソリューションを提供しており、世界20カ国で展開し、何百万人もの人々がビジネス言語でより良いコミュニケーションを取れるよう支援しています。

詳細については、こちらをご確認ください。

- ホームページ: https://www.gofluent.com/jp-jp/
- メールアドレス: japan@gofluent.com

Amazon、キャリア・チョイス・プログラムの英語研修パートナーにgoFLUENTを選定

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 • Lifelong language learning • Materials development • Pragmatics, pronunciation, second language acquisition • Teaching children • Testing and evaluation

　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.

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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 sign-up page located at:

https://jalt.org/joining.

JALT
THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING
全国語学教育学会

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

May I Have a Few Minutes of Your Realtime?

The other day, at the end of an afternoon class, as I was saying random goodbyes to my students, three of them suddenly jumped up and said, "Sensei! Be real! Be real!" They then held up their phones one at a time and demanded I pose for selfies with them. I'm not the kind to reject an offer for a photo op, but I couldn't help taking a little offense at their inference that I hadn't been "real" in my interactions with them during class. So I pressed them on it: "Why are you asking me to 'be real' with you now? Don't you think I'm real when I teach?"

An all too familiar flotilla of confused looks surfaced on their faces as they gazed back at me and tried to interpret what I was asking them. Then one of them raised her phone and said, "No, look. It's BeReal time! The *apuri* (app)!" At once the spell of inertia was broken and all three of them, nodding excitedly, showed me their own versions of the phone app BeReal, each displaying the pictures we had just taken. Apparently, the end of my class had coincided with one of BeReal's randomly occurring two-minute posting sessions, during which users are supposed to stop what they're doing to share quick, unplanned photos of themselves wherever they are, whatever they're doing, whoever they're with. It's supposed to be the "anti-Instagram" because the time limit discourages them from preparing rehearsed or over-produced content.

We can all agree, can't we, that most SNS apps have totally lost their well-meaning original purposes? There's almost nothing instant about Instagram, with reel after reel of staged street cons, quick-cut cat-vid compilations, marriage proposal stunt bloopers, and so on. (I confess that "Crash Dash" videos are a guilty pleasure for me, real or not.). We've started calling these apps "Fakebook," "Shamstagram," or "TrikTok" for all the "reality" we find there. Twitter strayed so far from its "140 conscientiously curated characters" premise that it changed its name to "X," which in many contexts means, "I don't even know how to write my own name."

So when BeReal says it wants to upset the SNS status quo with its "be spontaneous, no faking" rules for photos and videos, I'm tempted to just smile my broccoli-in-the-teeth smile and play along.

After all, as a rule, I'm in favor of anything setting itself up as "anti-[insert trendy behavior/product here]." I worry, though, that the way BeReal conditions its users to react to irregularly timed posting sessions might end up reducing their attention spans even lower than SNS already has. With most apps, you can at least choose when and how much to focus on producing your "instant" reel. BeReal could turn us into preoccupied drones who spend the day with "When? When?" churning in the back of our minds as we nervously plot interesting places to be or poses to make when the notification comes. I don't think it's too much to speculate that—for some people—a BeReal notification combined with large doses of caffeine could be a coronary risk.

BeReal even admits in its own advertising that it causes distracted behavior. On its download site in Google Play—right after promising to challenge your creativity and to show your friends who you really are—it says, "BeReal may cause accidents, especially if you are riding bikes." It really says that! "Causes accidents" is *not* my idea of a principled selling point. I certainly hope that my gastroenterologist doesn't give in to BeReal prompts to take a quick selfie during gallbladder surgery.

You might surmise by all this cyber-sniping that I'm out of touch with the SNS world. But as a matter of fact, it turns out that even my Japanese college students might be behind the times with BeReal, which apparently had its heyday in Europe four years ago. In cyber-time, that's eons. According to the *New York Times*, BeReal peaked in the USA in 2022, but its regular activity dropped by more than half the following year. Former users confessed that they grew tired of daily notifications reminding them that they were in the same place, doing the same lame day job that they were doing the day before. BeReal made them feel BoRing.

This statement is as good a way as any of illustrating my personal SNS philosophy: Those who have a life tend to live it, while those who don't have a life tend to "upload content." For me, the ideal "be real" app would be one that notifies me to shut it off immediately and go for a bike ride.