
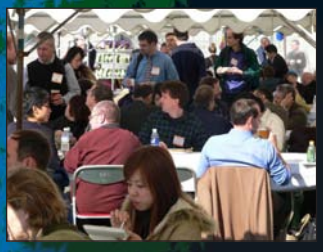




The Language Teacher

ISSN 0289-7938
¥950

JALT2005 Pre-Conference Special Issue

- Plenary Speaker articles from:
  - *-Jennifer Bassett*
  - *-David Nunan*
- Featured Speaker articles from:
  - *-Wiley Blevins*
  - *-Martha Clark Cummings*
  - *-Clyde Fowle*
  - *-Kathleen Graves*
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  - *-Susan Stempleski*

June, 2005 • Volume 29, Number 6
The Japan Association for Language Teaching
全国語学教育学会

– JALT2005 Featured Speaker Workshops –

What to look forward to this year.

RW: "Hey, Marc. What are these Featured Speaker Workshops they've got advertised here in the June Pre-Conference Supplement?"

MH: "Well, Rob. Those are special two-hour sessions where the speakers get down and dirty on a topic dear to them. I've been going to these workshops for years. They're probably the main reason I go, other than to browse the materials exhibit and catch up with people I haven't seen since the last conference."

RW: "Sounds interesting. But why do they cost extra? Are they really that special?"

MH: "YEAH! I mean, these people are veterans with years of experience. Highly respected teacher trainers, or up-and-coming educators with new and innovative ideas. And to top it off, there's a maximum of 40 people accepted for any session. It's almost like having a private class with these people. No large auditoriums where you'd be lucky if they even have any Q and A."

RW: "Well, you make it sound real great. But is it really worth the extra money?"

MH: "It sure is! Why not stick around on Monday afternoon and find out. You won't be missing out on anything, as there aren't any other sessions going on at that time. I mean, what are you going to do? Go home and relax (hah, hah)?"

RW: "The thought did cross my mind ‹grin›."

MH: "Go on. Try it out. I'm planning on taking two sessions in. I mean look at the line-up in this *TLT*. It's as good an offering as I've ever seen."

RW: "All right, Marc. You've convinced me. I'll try one out. Who do you recommend?"

MH: "That depends on you. Why not read through the various speaker articles in the June TLT or look in the Pre-Conference Supplement and go from there. You can also visit the conference website at ‹conferences.jalt.org/2005/› and get more information."

RW: "Thanks. I'm really starting to get excited about this year's conference. Something new for me to check out."

For more information, visit
‹conferences.jalt.org/2005/›

Foreword

JALT2005: Sharing Our Stories

Welcome to the Pre-conference issue of *The Language Teacher*. The conference is our yearly opportunity to gather together to learn, conduct organizational business, and share our research, materials, insights, talents, a meal, a drink, and, perhaps, a song or two at late-night *Karaoke*. The 2005 JALT National Conference will be held on the weekend of October 7-10 at Granship, Shizuoka and the conference theme is *Sharing our Stories*.

Two of this year's Plenary Speakers have contributed papers to this issue. **Jennifer Bassett** writes about adopting a normal reader role, and **David Nunan** discusses styles and strategies in the language classroom. Articles have also been contributed by Featured Speakers, **Wiley Blevins, Martha Clark Cummings, Clyde Fowle, Kathleen Graves, Michael McCarthy, Deborah Phillips,** and **Susan Stempleski**. Each has written briefly about the topic upon which they will present in Shizuoka. The topics range from fluency to reading, writing, and needs assessment.

Of course, the regular columns are also here. **Alun Davies, Takayuki Nakanishi, Steve Powell,** and **Brett Collins** each offer ideas for you to use in your classroom in this month's *My Share.* In the *Perspectives* column you will read about how some larger chapters are helping smaller rural chapters. Additionally, in *TLT Wired* there are some practical guidelines for *Polishing Your Presentation*, of interest to those who are planning to use technology in their presentations either at JALT 2005, or in other circumstances.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of *The Language Teacher*, and that it will inspire you to come along to the conference in October. We also hope that it will enable you to peek inside the world of JALT and to think about how you can be involved!

Kim Bradford-Watts
TLT Co-Editor

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June, 2005

2005年JALT年次大会は「ストーリーの共有」というテーマのもと、10月7から10日まで静岡グランシップで開催されます。今月はプレ・コンファレンス特集号として、二人のプレナリー・スピーカー、Jennifer Bassett氏とDavid　Nunan氏の論文をご紹介します。前者は多読学習について、後者は学習スタイルと方法について論考します。また、フィーチャード・スピーカーであるWiley Blevins, Martha Clark Cummings, Clyde Fowle, Kathleen Graves, Michael McCarthy, Deborah Phillips, Susan Stempleskiの諸氏は、言語の流暢さからリーディング、ライティング、評価に至る様々なトピックについて寄稿しています。

いつものコラムでは、Alun Davies, Takayuki Nakanishi, Steve Powell, and Brett Collinsの諸氏によるMy Share。そして、Perspectives。さらに、TLT Wiredでは、テクノロジーを用いた口頭発表に役立つガイドラインが示されており、JALT年次大会の発表者を含め大いに参考になることでしょう。

では、今月号をお楽しみください。そして、10月に皆さんと年次大会でお会いできることを楽しみにしております。

TLT / Job Information Centre Policy on Discrimination

The editors oppose discriminatory language, policies, and employment practices, in accordance with Japanese and international law. Exclusions or requirements concerning gender, age, race, religion, or country of origin should be avoided in announcements in the JIC Positions column, unless there are legal requirements or other compelling reasons for such discrimination, and these reasons are clearly explained in the job announcement. The editors reserve the right to edit ads for clarity, and to return ads for rewriting if they do not comply with this policy.

TLTでは、日本の法律、国際法および良識に従って、言語、政策および雇用慣習の差別に反対します。JICコラムでは性別、年齢、人種、宗教、出身国（「英国」、「アメリカ」ではなく母語能力としての国）に関する、排除や要求はしません。そうした差別がなされる場合には、明確に説明されるべきです。編集者は、明瞭に求人広告を編集し、かつこの方針に応じない場合には求人広告を棄却する権利を持ちます。

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JALT2005 Speaker Article Abstracts

Adopting a normal reader role
Jennifer Bassett

The complex cognitive skill called 'reading' encompasses many different processes and is employed for many different purposes. Amid the competing pressures and urgencies of educational establishments, the kind of unhurried, pleasurable reading commonly called 'extensive reading' does not readily flourish. Yet stories and story-telling are an intrinsic part of all our lives, and narrative texts at appropriate language levels can offer learners enjoyable encounters with the foreign language outside the classroom. All the more reason, then, that the extensive reading material available to learners should be of a high standard, employing all the devices of the story-teller's art.

複合的な認知技能であるreadingには異なるプロセスが多々含まれており、様々な学習目的に利用できる。しかしながら昨今の教育制度や競争社会の重圧のもとで、extensive reading (多読)と呼ばれる学習法は広く取り入れられていないのが実情である。元来、本や物語は人生また社会の本質を伝えるものであり、物語性のある適切なレベルのテキストは学習者にとって楽しい外国語との出会いとなる。そのため、多読学習には物語のおもしろさを伝える工夫と高い水準の教材が求められるのである。

Styles and strategies in the language classroom
David Nunan

A growing body of research has investigated the learning styles and strategies of language learners. One strand of research has sought to identify relationships between biographical variables such as first language background and educational experiences with learning strategy preferences. A second strand has looked at the effect of strategy training on learners' approaches to the learning process. A third strand has looked at the notion of the good language learner.

In this paper, I will present a state of the art look at the learning strategy research that has been carried out over the last twenty years. I will then describe a large-scale study into the learning styles and strategies of university students in Hong Kong. This research seeks to identify and describe the language learning practices of good learners that differentiate them from less effective learners. The study is based on a corpus of data from several hundred undergraduates at the University of Hong Kong and looks at the attitudes and beliefs of both effective and ineffective learners as well as at their in-class and out-of-class behavior.

In the final part of the paper, I will explore some of the pedagogical implications of the research, and will describe some of the practical steps that teachers can take to sensitize learners to the strategies underlying their own approaches to learning. Questions for further research and ways in which teachers can explore styles and strategies in their own classrooms will also be presented.

語学学習者の学習スタイルと学習者の方略について研究が今日さかんに行われている。

- 第一に、どの学習方略を好むかについて、母語の知識などの生得的な変数と教育経験との間の関連性を調査。
- 第二に、トレーニング方法が学習者の学習プロセスに与える効果を調査。
- 第三に、優秀な語学学習者の概念を調査。

ここでは最初に、過去20年以上にわたり行われてきた学習方法の研究を振り返りながら、その「最先端の」学習方略を提示する。そして香港の大学生の間で広く採り入れられている学習スタイルと学習方略について説明する。この研究では、学習効果の低い学習者と一線を画す優秀な学習者の言語学習法を見出し、説明していく。本研究は、香港大学の学部生数百名から入手したコーパスを基にしており、高い学習効果がみられる学生と学習効果がみられない学生の学習に対する信条や学習態度、そして授業内外における行動についても考察している。

後半部分では、この研究による教育的な意味を探り、学習者自身に自分に合った学習方略を身に付けてもらうための教師の実践的方法をいくつか述べる。また同時に教師が教室内で試行錯誤の結果見つけ出した学習スタイルと方略におけるさらなる研究や方法に対する疑問についても述べていく。

The importance of reading fluency and the English language learner
Wiley Blevins

Reading fluency is an essential component of any language curriculum. A focus on the speed and accuracy with which English language learners can identify letters, sound-letter correspondences, and words can assist students in developing their English reading skills. Six research-based ways to build fluency are (a) modeling reading, (b) providing direct instruction and feedback, (c) providing reader supports, (d) doing repeated readings of one text, (e) using phrase-cues texts, and (f) engaging in wide reading.

リーディングの流暢さはどの言語学習カリキュラムにおいても重要な構成部分をなしている。英語学習者が文字、音と文字の対応、そして単語を、迅速かつ正確に認知するよう指導することは、彼らのリーディングスキルを発達させるために有効である。筆者はリサーチが実証する流暢さを培う6つの方法– (1)モデルリーディングを聞かせる(2)授業中の指導および練習 (3)さまざまな音読練習 (4)ある文章の反復練習　(5)文の区切りを明示したテキストの使用 (6)レベルに合った本の多読 –について論じる。

The untold story: Writing our language learning histories
Martha Clark Cummings

Collaborative writing of language learning histories for language teachers, described here, takes place in five steps: Mining the past, going deeper through our senses, reaching out to our discourse community, benefiting from what we learned from our peers, and sharing with the wider community.

本論では、語学教員の言語学習歴のコラボラティブ・ライティングを5段階で行う:過去を掘り起こす、感覚を通してより深く洞察する、ディスコースコミュニティへと広げる、仲間から学んだことを役立てる、そしてより広いコミュニティと共有しあう。

Simply read! Introducing reading for pleasure
Clyde Fowle

This article looks at some of the advantages of encouraging learners to read extensively for pleasure. The article addresses some common questions teachers have about introducing extended reading into a language programme and aims to provide a clear idea of the issues involved, as well as suggesting practical ideas for its successful introduction. Some contentious questions, such as whether or not tasks accompanying extensive reading are a good thing, are also considered.

本論文は,学習者に楽しみのために英文を多読させることの効果について考察する。論文の中では,語学の授業に多読を導入するにあたって教師がしばしば直面するいくつかの問題点を取り上げ,その本質を解明することを目指すとともに,多読の授業を成功させるための具体的なアイデアを提示する。多読の授業におけるタスクの必要性など賛否両論のあるいくつかの問題についても触れる。

Needs assessment as ongoing teacher-learner dialogue
Kathleen Graves

Traditionally, needs assessment takes place prior to or at the beginning of a course. However, in order to be responsive to learners' needs as an ongoing part of teaching, assessment needs to become a dialogue between teacher and learners.

In this workshop, participants will start by articulating their own understanding and experience of needs assessment. Building on what they already know and do, we will explore a set of frameworks for understanding the scope of needs assessment (Graves, 2000). We will experience a variety needs assessment activities for all levels and skills that include using pictures, charts, questionnaires, problem-solving activities and narratives. Participants will then have hands on experience with designing their own needs assessment activities, both a redesign of an activity they already use in their classroom and a new activity.

従来の方法では、ニーズ評価は、コースが始まる前、またはコース開始直後に行われてきた。しかし、教えることは継続的なことと捉え、学習者のニーズに敏感に答えるためには、ニーズ評価は、教師と学習者との対話の形にならなければならない。このワークショップでは、参加者が自身のニーズ評価に対する理解と経験を話してみることから始める。参加者がすでに知っていること、行っていることを基礎として、ニーズ評価の範囲を理解するための枠組みを探っていく(Graves 2000)。絵、図表、アンケート、問題解決のアクティビティ、ナラティブを含む、すべてのレベル、スキルに対応した、さまざまなニーズ評価のアクティビティを体験する。そして次に、参加者が、自らの授業で既に使っているアクティビティを修正したり、新しいアクティビティを作ったりすることを通して、ニーズ評価のアクティビティを実際に作ってみる体験をする。

Fluency and confluence: What fluent speakers do
Michael McCarthy

Fluency in a second language is a poorly understood notion. In this presentation we analyse, using corpus evidence, how speakers create the kind of flow associated with the perception of fluency. Fluency does not depend on being a native speaker or just talking fast; it is a complex symphony of communicative features and strategies which second language learners can make use of even with limited resources.

Getting ready for the *Next Generation iBT TOEFL*
Deborah Phillips

The *Next Generation iBT* (Internet-based Testing) is a new and different version of the TOEFL test. If you are used to the paper or CBT (Computer-based Testing) versions of the TOEFL test and are thinking that the iBT version is similar, you are going to have quite a surprise when you see it. If you are a teacher who prepares students for the TOEFL test, it is important to know what this new version of the TOEFL test is like and what you can do to prepare your students for it.

Developing fluency: Some suggestions for the classroom
Susan Stempleski

Now that English has become the world's second language (the world's lingua franca) it is difficult—and in some situations impossible—to be active and successful in international business, politics, scholarship, or science without significant competence in English. A central concern of many teachers and learners of English is fluency—what Cummins (2000) refers to as conversational language. As fluency—the ability to express oneself clearly, confidently, and easily—is increasingly recognized as an important goal for English language learners around the world, and as English is being introduced to more and more, and younger and younger learners around the world, it is important to examine the concept of fluency more closely. What exactly does it mean to be fluent in a language? How do people achieve fluency? What classroom approaches and activities are most conducive to the development of fluency?

英語が第二外国語及び世界共通語となった現在、国際社会におけるビジネス、政治、学問、科学の分野において英語能力なしで活躍し成功することは困難であり、ほとんどの場合不可能といってもいい。多くの英語の教師と学習者は、「会話的な言葉」(Cummins, 2000)、つまり「流暢さ」に一番の関心を寄せている。いまや、伝えたいことを明確に、自信をもって難なく伝えることのできる流暢さを身につけることが世界中の英語学習者の目標と言えよう。英語学習者の数が増大し、低年齢化しつつあるこのような状況下においては、「流暢さ」の概念を詳しく検証することが重要である。一つの言語において「流暢になる」とはどのようなことだろうか。一体流暢さは実際にどのように身につけるのであろうか。「流暢さ」を高めるためには、授業ではどのような方法で、又、どのようなアクティビティを行うことが最も効果的だろうか。今回の講演では、この様なことについて検証したいと思う。

Adopting a normal reader role

Jennifer Bassett

Oxford University Press

Plenary Speaker

> Texts of all kinds, including literary texts, are used as data for language teaching. They are designed or adapted and pressed into service to exemplify the language and provide practice in reading. These are commendable pedagogic purposes. They are not, however, what authors or readers of texts usually have in mind. The reason we read something is because we feel the writer has something of interest or significance to say and we only attend to the language to the extent that it helps us to understand what that might be. An important part of language learning is knowing how to adopt this normal reader role, how to use language to achieve meanings of significance to us, and so make texts our own. (Widdowson, 1993, p. v)

Learning how to adopt a *normal reader role* within the confines of an educational system is fraught with difficulty. Language instruction is concerned with covering the syllabus, getting through the course book, meeting targets, preparing for tests and examinations, all of which require learners to attend to the language to a greater or lesser extent. Reading classes are often devoted to intensive reading rather than extensive reading, and may also involve tasks like decoding, translating, and analysis. Reading extensively is sometimes considered a luxury, and *easy* narrative texts or graded readers regarded as contributing little to language development; in short, reading for pleasure is seen as antithetical to the serious business of education.

This attitude can also be found in L1 learning environments. Here is a writer of texts, a prize-winning author of children's literature, writing about government educational policy in the UK:

> My last point concerns reading. I recently read through the sections on reading in key stages 1 to 3 of the national literacy strategy, and I was very struck by something about the verbs. I wrote them all down. They included *reinforce, predict, check, discuss, identify, categorise, evaluate, distinguish, summarise, infer, analyse, locate* . . . and so on: 71 different verbs, by my count, for the activities that come under the heading of "reading". And the word *enjoy* didn't appear once.

weblink: www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/articles/2005/06/bassett

> If we forget the true purpose of something, it becomes empty, a mere meaningless ritual. The purpose of what I do as a writer is to delight. I hope that the children who read me will do so because they enjoy it. (Pullman, 2003, p.2)

An extensive reading programme can offer learners the time, space, and encouragement to find enjoyment in the reading of literary texts, to experience the magic of engaging with the alternative reality of a story – to read not as a duty or an irksome chore, but because they feel the writer "has something of interest or significance to say" to them.

It would be naive, however, to pretend that learners jump at the chance of following an extensive reading programme, that they will avidly consume books and clamour for more. Story-telling through the medium of the printed word has to compete with the easy charm of visual media, such as films, videos, television soap operas, and *anime* . Watching a story on a screen is a very different experience to reading a story in a book. Tolkien (1964) saw a radical distinction in that "all art that offers a *visible* presentation ... imposes one visible form. Literature works from mind to mind and is thus more progenitive. It is at once more universal and more poignantly particular" (p. 67). He goes on to give this illustration of a reader using the text to activate a discourse of their own:

> If a story says "he climbed a hill and saw a river in the valley below", [...] every hearer of the words will have his own picture, and it will be made out of all the hills and rivers and dales he has ever seen, but specially out of The Hill, The River, The Valley which were for him the first embodiment of the word. (Tolkien, 1964, p. 67)

This narrative imagining is a fundamental part of human cognition (Turner, 1996). Nonetheless, for many learners the visual media can satisfy an appetite for stories with much less apparent effort than the reading of a book, and a book written in a foreign or second language to boot. "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," an old English proverb says. You can place books in front of learners, ask them to read so many pages, so many chapters, by such and such a date, but you cannot *make* them enjoy the experience. So we must be fair to learners. If we are going to cajole, persuade, and manoeuvre them into extensive reading, there should be two sides to the bargain. What we give them to read must be worth reading.

How do we define what is worth reading? In terms of fiction, the answer is clear cut. Above all, stories must be well written and well crafted. Texts must also be designed to make learners' experience of reading successful, encouraging them to repeat the experience, and to enter that virtuous circle of positive reinforcement. Extensive reading is not a quick fix; its benefits are subtle and incremental. Repeated and regular exposure to patterns of lexical association and the cohesive devices of extended text will gradually improve reading fluency, assist the processes of automaticity, and increase learners' confidence in their ability to achieve meanings of significance to them. To realize these aims, texts must always be "well within the linguistic competence of the students in terms of vocabulary and grammar" (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 8). In addition, a richly varied range of reading material should be available. Motivation for reading is a characteristic of the reader, not the text, and allowing or enabling learners to choose what to read is part of the democracy of reading.

These are commendable pedagogic purposes but they are not sufficient in themselves. The heart of the matter is the story-telling. This is the engine that drives the whole enterprise of extensive reading:

> It's craftsmanship. Your aim must be to tell a story as well as you can, shaping it and bringing the emotional currents to their ... peak of emotional swishing about. You turn the raw materials, and all those loose bits of imagination and experience and memory, into something that stands up like a table with four legs and that doesn't fall over when you put your elbows on it. (Pullman, in Vincent, S., 2001, p. 5)

That is what learners need and deserve: solid, sturdy tables that do not fall over; stories with strong cohesion and continuity—"a causal chain, closed at beginning and end, and bound together internally by links of probable and necessary consequence" (Lowe, 2000, p.62). It is immaterial whether the story is an original or an adaptation of an existing work of fiction. It is immaterial whether the story is a thriller, a romance, a ghost story, a detective mystery, or a fictionalised biography. What matters is the story-telling, the craft that can produce stories to engage learners,

move them, make them gasp or shiver or smile—or even enrage them.

Graded readers have been given, thanks to Day and Bamford (1998), the new description of *language learner literature*, a welcome shift of emphasis from the pedagogic to the literary. There is no reason why writing fiction in a reduced code should be different in principle from any other kind of fiction writing. Any writer "has to make projections about possible readers and anticipate their reactions, thereby enacting a discourse by proxy so to speak, and providing a text as a partial record of it" (Widdowson, 1996, p. 68). Writing for a community of L2 or FL learners requires a writer to make particular projections; assessing readers' likely schematic knowledge, the propositional weight that the language should carry, the appropriate information load for the story exposition, and so on. There is usually a syllabus giving the limits of the language code to be used, but this should be treated as a springboard, not a straitjacket. If a writer feels that "[i]t's like trying to box in a telephone booth" (Vincent, M., 1986, p. 212), then either the story is ill-conceived for the language level, or the writer is not suited to the task. A more creative approach might be one like this:

> "Writing has laws of perspective, of light and shade, just as painting does, or music. If you are born knowing them, fine. If not, learn them. Then rearrange the rules to suit yourself" (Capote, in Hill, 1957, p. 4).

In my talks at the JALT2005 conference I plan to look more closely at the story-teller's craft, and how a writer using a reduced code can still perform the alchemy that creates an alternative reality for a reader. Dorian Gray, in Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, knew well the fear and wonderment that mere words could evoke: "Words! Mere words! How terrible they were! How clear, and vivid, and cruel! One could not escape from them. And yet what a subtle magic there was in them!" (Wilde, 2004, p.29).

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Jennifer Bassett has worked in ELT since 1972, and for the last seventeen years has been writing and editing stories for language learners. She is

the series editor of the *Oxford Bookworms*, a series of graded readers with over 160 titles, and also series co-adviser with H. G. Widdowson of the *Oxford Bookworms Collection*, volumes of unadapted short stories. She has worked on syllabus design for writing in reduced codes, and is the author of more than 30 original or adapted stories for English language learners. Her current areas of interest are narratology and English as a creative medium for storytelling in World Englishes.

Styles and strategies in the language classroom

David Nunan

The English Centre, University of Hong Kong

In recent years, there has been growing interest in incorporating into teaching a focus on learning processes as well as language content. It is believed that such a focus helps students to become more effective learners and facilitates the activation of learner-centered instruction. Learners who have developed skills in learning how to learn can exploit classroom learning opportunities effectively, and are better equipped to continue with their language learning outside of the classroom.

In this article, I will begin by defining key terms. I will then devote the bulk of the article to reviewing what recent research has to say about learning styles and strategies in the language classroom, focusing in particular on the issue of the *good* language learner, looking at whether such learners exhibit characteristics that differentiate them from less effective learners.

Learning strategies are the mental and communicative procedures learners use in order to learn and use language. Learning styles are the general orientations to the learning process exhibited by learners. A rule-of-thumb distinction that I make is that styles reside within the learner, while strategies reside within the learning task. (For an excellent introduction and overview, see Christison, 2003.)

For many years now, researchers have been interested in the following questions related to learning styles and strategies:

- What is the relationship between learning strategy preferences and other learner characteristics such as educational level, ethnic background, and first language?
- Do effective learners share certain strategy preferences?
- Can strategies be taught?
- Does strategy training make a difference to second language acquisition?

Research on learning styles and strategies

Despite the current interest in learning styles and strategies, investigations into the effect of learner strategy training are relatively uncommon,

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and results are rather mixed. An early study by Cohen and Aphek (1980) looked at the effect of strategy training on vocabulary acquisition. They found that certain techniques such as the paired associates technique did result in successful acquisition. At about the same time, Carroll (1981) looked at inductive learning. In this study, it was found that the ability to study samples of language and induct the rules governing that particular aspect of language was an aspect of language aptitude. In other words, good learners seem to be skilled at using inductive strategies. O'Malley (1987) studied the effect of different types of strategy training (metacognitive, cognitive, and socioaffective) on different language skills, and found that the training had a significant effect on speaking, but not on listening.

The good language learner has been the focus of several studies over the years. In 1987, Jones, Palincsar, Ogle, and Carr set out to determine whether there were differences between effective and ineffective learners in terms of their awareness of different types of strategy. They found that effective learners are aware of the processes underlying their own learning and seek to use appropriate learning strategies to control their own learning. Nunan (1991) also found that one of the characteristics of the good language learner was an ability to reflect on and articulate the processes underlying their own learning. Similarly, in an overview of research into strategy training, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) found indications that more effective learners differed from less effective ones in their use of strategies. In particular, they found that students who were designated by their teachers as more effective learners use strategies more frequently, and use a greater variety of strategies, than students who were designated as less effective.

In a seminal investigation, Rubin and Thompson (1983) suggest that good or efficient learners do deploy different characteristics from poor learners as they go about learning a second language. These are set out as follows:

Good learners

- find their own way,
- organise information about language,
- are creative and experiment with language,
- make their own opportunities, and find strategies for getting practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom,
- learn to live with uncertainty, develop strategies for making sense of the target language without wanting to understand every word,
- use mnemonics (rhymes, word associations, etc. to recall what has been learned),
- make errors work,
- use linguistic knowledge, including knowledge of their first language, in mastering a second language,
- let the context (extra-linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world) help them in comprehension,
- learn to make intelligent guesses,
- learn chunks of language as wholes and formalised routines to help them perform beyond their competence,
- learn production techniques (e.g., techniques for keeping a conversation going), and
- learn different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation.

In a major study of learning styles among adult learners of English as a second language, Willing (1988) obtained data on the learning preferences of 517 learners. Willing was looking for possible correlations between learning preferences and biographical variables. The principal means of data collection was a questionnaire that learners completed in the course of an interview. Low proficiency learners were interviewed in their first language. One of the major aims of the investigation was to explore possible learning style differences attributable to different learner biographical variables. It is widely accepted by teachers that such things as ethnicity, age, and so forth will have an effect on preferred ways of learning. The variables investigated by Willing were as follows:

- ethnic group,
- age group,
- level of previous education,
- length of residence in Australia,
- speaking proficiency level, and
- type of learning program (e.g.,whether in full-time or part-time courses).

The study came up with several surprising findings. In the first place, there were certain learning activities which were almost universally popular. In several instances, these were activities which did not enjoy similar popularity amongst teachers, as was shown in a follow-up investigation of teachers' preferences by Nunan (1988). For example, error correction by the teacher was highly valued by almost all learners, while student self-discovery of error was given a low rating. For teachers, the reverse was true. Perhaps the most surprising finding was that

none of the biographical variables correlated significantly with any of the learning preferences.

> ... none of the learning differences as related to personal variables were of a magnitude to permit a blanket generalization about the learning preference of a particular biographical sub-group. Thus, any statement to the effect that 'Chinese are X' or 'South Americans prefer Y', or 'Younger learners like Z' or 'High-school graduates prefer Q', is certain to be inaccurate. The most important single finding of the study was that for any given learning issue, the typical spectrum of opinions on that issue were represented, in virtually the same ratios, within any biographical sub-group. (Willing, 1988, pp. 150-151)

This finding, which runs counter to the folk wisdom of the classroom and staffroom, suggests that personality factors are more significant than sociocultural variables and educational background for learning strategy preferences. Of course, the fact that the study was conducted in a second rather than foreign language environment may have had a significant effect on the outcomes, and it would be useful to replicate the study in foreign language contexts.

In an ongoing study, Nunan and Wong have brought together the work of Willing into biographical variables and strategy preferences with the good language learner. In this study, it was found that good learners differed from poor learners in certain critical areas in particular, in terms of:

- their overall learning styles,
- their preferred learning strategies,
- their attitude towards and liking for the language, and
- their willingness to activate their language and take risks outside of the classroom.

Conclusion

In this article, I have provided a brief introduction to the subject of learning styles and strategies. At the beginning of the article, I provided working definitions of styles and strategies before summarizing what we have learned from over twenty years of research into learning styles and strategies in language pedagogy. In this review, I focused in particular on the good language learner, an area of particular interest.

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David Nunan is Professor of Applied Linguistics and Director of the English Centre at the University of Hong Kong. He has published over 100 books and articles in the areas of curriculum and materials development, classroom-based research, and discourse analysis. He is one of the most prolific authors of English language textbooks, with over 20 million students worldwide using his books yearly.

He served as TESOL President in 1999-2000. In 2004, he was named as one of the thirty most influential Australian professionals working in Asia, and in 2004 was named in a list of the most influential Australians worldwide.

The importance of reading fluency and the English language learner

Wiley Blevins, Director of Special Projects at Scholastic Inc. New York City

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Featured Speaker

Several years ago, after numerous trips to Israel, I began studying Hebrew. I was fascinated by this ancient language, which has astonishingly made a modern resurgence. Since Hebrew doesn't employ the English alphabet, I was forced to learn a whole new set of symbols and sound-spelling correspondences. At first these strange-looking squiggles and lines were meaningless to me. I tried everything I use with my students to learn them as quickly as possible. I wrote each letter as I said its sound. I created a set of flash cards and went over the cards several times a day at increasing speeds. I even found a computer program that focused on learning the letters and contained mastery tests. After a couple weeks I felt ready to tackle my first simple Hebrew text. As I began to read, I struggled through every word—I searched my mind for each letter-sound, blended the sounds together, and then tried to recall the meaning of the word I had just pronounced. Often, by the time I worked my way to the end of a sentence I had forgotten what was at the beginning. My slow, labored, and inefficient reading was characteristic of one who has not yet acquired reading fluency. The mental energy I had to expend to complete each simple task simply left me with no ability to have a meaningful experience with this text. This is an all-too-common experience for our English language learners. If each aspect of learning to read—learning the letters of the alphabet, sound-letter correspondences, how to blend words, and word meanings—isn't mastered to a point of *automaticity*, then general reading suffers.

So, what is reading fluency and why are we not focusing our attentions enough on it? Fluency is "the ability to read smoothly, easily, and readily with freedom from word recognition problems" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 85). Fluency is necessary for good comprehension and enjoyable reading (Nathan & Stanovich, 1991). A lack of fluency is characterized by a slow, halting pace; frequent mistakes; poor phrasing; and inadequate intonation (Samuels, 1979)—all the result of weak word recognition skills.

Fluent reading is a major goal of reading instruction because decoding print accurately and effortlessly enables students to read for meaning. That is, students who decode words effortlessly can focus more of their conscious attention to making meaning from text. A fluent reader can:

1. read at a rapid rate (pace—the speed at which oral or silent reading occurs);
2. automatically recognize words (smoothness/accuracy—efficient decoding skills);
3. phrase correctly (prosody—the ability to read a text orally using appropriate pitch, stress, and phrasing).

Automaticity theory, developed by LaBerge and Samuels (1974) helps explain how reading fluency develops. Automaticity refers to knowing how to do something so well you don't have to think about it. As tasks become easier, they require less attention and practice. Think of a child learning to play basketball. As initial attention is focused on how to dribble the ball, it is difficult for the child to think about guarding the ball from opponents, shooting a basket, or even running quickly down the court. However, over time, lots of practice makes dribbling almost second nature. The player is ready to concentrate on higher-level aspects of the game.

For reading, automaticity refers to the ability to accurately and quickly recognize many words as whole units. The advantage of recognizing a word as a whole unit is that words have meaning, and

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less memory is required for a meaningful word than for a meaningless letter. The average child needs between 4 and 14 exposures to a new word to recognize it automatically. However, English language learners need 40 or more exposures to a new word. Therefore, it is critical that students get a great deal of practice reading stories with these words to develop automaticity (Beck & Juel, 1995; Samuels, Schermer, & Reinking, 1992).

How to develop fluency in the English language classroom

There is much that can be done in the English language classroom to build reading fluency and accelerate learning. This ranges from overlearning the alphabet and each sound-letter correspondence to reading simple, connected text with ease and understanding. Rasinski (2004) and others have identified six key ways to build fluency that can be easily added too most existing curriculums. Let's take a closer look.

1. Model fluent reading

Students need many opportunities to hear English texts read. This can include daily teacher read-alouds and books on tape. While you read aloud to students, periodically highlight aspects of fluent reading. For example, point out how you read dialogue the way you think the character might have said it or how you speed up your reading when the text becomes more intense and exciting. Talk about fluency—how to achieve it, and why it's important. Constantly remind students that with practice they can become fluent readers. An important benefit of daily read-alouds is that they expose students to a wider range of vocabulary and increase the amount of comprehensible input—critical for our English language learners.

2. Provide direct instruction and feedback

Formally teaching the basic aspects of reading and providing enough practice exercises for students to achieve mastery is essential. Here are some ways to include lots of this needed instruction and practice in your classroom.

- **Conduct speed drills**. Quick-paced, short, timed practice exercises that review previously-taught skills are beneficial. Students need time and repetition to master skills. For many English language learners, little practice occurs outside the classroom. Therefore, these speed drills (which can be used as warm-up exercises) are helpful. Plus, they're a lot of fun! They will help students rapidly recognize letters, words, and spelling patterns.
- **Find alternatives to round-robin reading**. Round-robin reading is one of the most harmful techniques for developing fluency. During round-robin reading, students read aloud only a small portion of the text. Although they are supposed to be following along with the other readers, often they don't because they are nervously skipping ahead to find their portion of the text, anticipating what they will have to read, unable to follow or distracted by the too slow or too rapid reading of their classmate, or bored by the procedure. It is absolutely essential that students read a lot every day. When they're reading a new story, it is important that they read the entire story—often more than once.
- **Teach appropriate phrasing and intonation**. Guided oral reading practice and the study of punctuation and grammar can help. Studying grammar fosters fluency because grammar alerts the reader to natural phrases in a sentence. For example, being able to identify the subject and the predicate of a sentence is one step in understanding phrase boundaries in text. Try providing students with short passages color-coded according to subject and predicate to assist them in practice reading. For teaching intonation and punctuation, use some or all of the following. Have students:
  - recite the alphabet as a conversation. *ABCD? EFG! HI? JKL. MN? OPQ. RST! UVWX. YZ!*
  - recite the same sentence using different punctuation. *Dogs bark? Dogs bark! Dogs bark.*
  - practice placing the stress on different words in the same sentence. *I am tired. I am tired. I am tired.*
  - practice reading sentences as if talking to a friend.

3. Provide reader support (choral reading and reading-while-listening)

Research has shown that oral reading is very important for the developing reader. It appears that young children need to hear themselves read, and they benefit from adult feedback. There are several ways to support students' oral reading without evoking the fear and humiliation struggling readers often feel when called on to read aloud. Here are the most popular techniques:

- **Reading aloud simultaneously with a partner or small group**. With this technique, students can float in and out as appropriate without feeling singled out. For best results, have students practice reading the selection independently before reading it with their partner or the group.
- **Echo reading**. As you read a phrase or sentence in the text, the student repeats it. This continues throughout the text. You can also use a tape recording of the text with pauses for the child to echo the reading.
- **Reader's theater**. Students choose a favorite part of a book, practice reading it aloud independently until they're confident, and then read it aloud to the class. Or, use simple decodable plays available in professional books or online sources.
- **Choral reading**. Reading together as a group is great for poetry and selections with a distinct pattern. Remind students to "keep your voice with mine" as you read.
- **Paired repeated readings**. (Koskinen & Blum, 1986). A student reads a short passage or story to their partner and gets feedback. Then the students switch roles.
- **Books on tape**. Select and place appropriate books on tape in a classroom listening center or send them home for students to enjoy. Have students follow along as the book is read, reading with the narrator where possible. Find those recordings in which the pace is slow, so students can really follow along to make that text-to-speech match.

4. Repeated readings of one text

Repeated reading, developed by Samuels (1979), has been shown to increase reading rate and accuracy and to transfer to new texts. As a child reads a passage at his or her instructional level, the teacher times the reading. The teacher then gives feedback on word-recognition errors and the number of words per minute the child read accurately and records this data on a graph. The child then practices reading the same section independently or with a partner. The process is repeated and the child's progress plotted on the graph until the child masters the passage. This charting is effective because (a) students become focused on their own mastery of the task and competing with their own past performance, and (b) students have concrete evidence that they are making progress. In addition, repeating the words many times helps English language learners build a large sight-word vocabulary.

5. Cueing phrase boundaries in text

One of the characteristics of proficient (fluent) readers is the ability to group words together in meaningful units—syntactically appropriate phrases. "Proficient reading is characterized not only by fast and accurate word recognition, but also by readers' word chunking or phrasing behavior while reading connected discourse" (Rasinski, 2004).

One way to help students learn to recognize and use natural English phrase boundaries—and thus improve their phrasing, fluency, and comprehension—is phrase-cued text practice. Phrase-cued text is a short passage marked by a slash (or some other visual) at the end of each phrase break. The longer pause at the end of the sentence is marked by a double slash (//). The teacher models good oral reading, and students practice with the marked text. Later students apply their skills to the same text, unmarked. Here's an example:

In the summer/I like/to swim/at the beach.//
Although it's very hot/I like the idea/
of being in the cool water
all day.// Summer truly is/
my favorite time/of the year.//

6. Providing students with easy reading materials

Students need an enormous amount of individualized reading practice in simple, decodable materials (Beck & Juel, 1995; Samuels, Schermer, & Reinking, 1992). It is critical that practice-reading materials be at a child's independent reading level, NOT at the child's frustrational level. In other words, the student's reading accuracy (the proportion of words read correctly) should be above 95%. Therefore, wide reading needs to be layered onto the existing language curriculum for all English language learners. Classroom collections of leveled books will greatly assist in meeting this goal.

As we move our curriculum from purely oral exercises to a mix of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, we need to be aware of those techniques that will assist English language learners in becoming fluent readers. These techniques and others are a good starting point for our classrooms in Japan and abroad.

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Wiley Blevins is the author of *Building Fluency: Lessons and Strategies for Reading Success* as well as several other professional resources on fluency, phonics, phonemic awareness, and teaching children to read nonfiction. Blevins is currently the Director of Special Projects at Scholastic Inc. in New York City. He has traveled and spoken extensively throughout the world and has written curriculum for English schools in Asia. Blevins is a graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The untold story: Writing our language learning histories

Martha Clark Cummings, University of Aizu

Sponsored by Teachers College, Columbia University in Tokyo, Japan

Featured Speaker

It is the business of writing, and the responsibility of the writer, to disentangle the significant...from the random and meaningless and irrelevant... (Welty, 1956, para. 14)

Last summer, in the sweltering heat and humidity of Tokyo, twenty-five teachers and I, in "TESOL Classroom Practices," the first course in the MA in TESOL Program at Teachers College Japan, decided it was time to investigate the origins of some of our beliefs about language learning and teaching. We did this by participating together in a collaborative language learning history writing workshop. At first there was some trepidation. Some of us had not had much experience writing in English, others could do academic writing, but were less certain about dealing with the more expressive parts of the task. However, several hours later the room was buzzing with the excitement of teachers sharing their stories.

The steps we took in writing a language learning history were these:

- Mining the past—remembering, generalizing, specifying (inspired by Bruffee, 1992).
- Reaching out to members of our community (Peer Coaching).
- Benefiting from what we have learned (Revision).
- Sharing with the wider community (Publication).

Part One: Mining the Past

Brainstorming

Have one person in the group start off by writing *language learning* on the white board or at the top of a piece of paper. From then on, everyone in the group calls out words or phrases that they associate with language learning or with any word that has been added to the list. Try to keep your contributions concrete, but if you have to choose between calling out an abstraction, or stopping the activity, call out the abstraction. The recorder—the person writing down the words and phrases—who can also contribute to the list and ask for clarification, may need a helper as the pace picks up. The list should be written as quickly as possible and at random. Do not try to organize anything during the brainstorming part of the activity.

Work for about ten minutes or so. Then, work in groups of three or four and try to put the words on the list into categories. Share your categories with the whole group. Discuss the value of this brainstorming.

Going Deeper: Using your senses

In the words of Ray Bradbury:

> Why all this insistence on the senses? Because in order to convince your reader that he is really there, you must assault each of his senses, in turn, with color, sound, taste, and texture. If your reader feels the sun on his flesh, the wind flutter his shirtsleeves, half your fight is won. The most improbable tales can be made believable, if your reader, through his senses, feels certain that he stands in the middle of events. He cannot refuse, then, to participate. (Bradbury, n.d.)

Before beginning to write, make a list of specific scenes or key moments in your language learning history that come to mind. For each scene, make another list of sensory details—sights, sounds, smells, textures, temperatures, tastes—that describe that particular scene. Try to have at least five for each sense. More is better.

Writing the first draft

Write the true story of your experience(s) as a language learner. Focus on the parts of the story that deeply moved you, upset you, made you

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angry, or made you laugh. Write in language that fits the experience. Do not try to sound academic. Tell the story in the most vivid and intense way that you can, using all of your senses to help you remember. Give lots of detail, but write only as much as you need to tell the whole story. Do not go off on tangents. Make a note of other ideas that come up so you can write those other stories later. For now, don't worry about grammar, punctuation, spelling, or proper English. Just get the story down on paper. Write until you are satisfied that we will understand the experience you had.

Some things to consider including: How old were you when you started learning? What motivated you to learn? Were you in school, or in a community of native speakers, or both? What approaches did your teacher use? Were they effective? Why, or why not? How did your teacher deal with grammatical or pronunciation errors? How did this make you feel? What strategies did you use to learn the language? Which ones worked? What role do you think your personality played in your ability to learn the language? How did you do on tests? What was the most difficult or easiest aspect of learning the language?

Part Two: Reaching out to Members of the Community

Sharing our writing with our peers is always difficult at first and increasingly rewarding as we continue to engage in this practice. Here are some guidelines for how to get started. I recommend that you follow them scrupulously at first. At this stage of our writing process, we need encouragement and support. Donald M. Murray said that we should only show our writing to someone who makes us want to hurry back to our desks and write more. Be one of those people!

Oral sharing

Read your history to your partner.

- Rules for reader:
  1. Do not apologize, explain, or stall. Just read.
  2. Do not stop. Do not add. Just read what you wrote.
- Rules for listener:
  1. While your partner is reading, do not interrupt. Do not ask questions. Pay attention.
  2. After listening:
     - Say back the crux of what you heard and understood--what you learned.
     - State a couple of things you liked about the account.
     - State a couple of things you'd like to know more about.
- Exchange papers with another student (not the one who responded to you orally). Read their history and write a brief response, stating:
  - a couple of things you enjoyed about their story.
  - anything you think you have in common.
  - any insights you gained about language teaching and learning.
  - some part of the story you would like to know more about.

Part Three: Benefiting from What We Learned from Our Peers: Revision

Review your original text and the written response. Then (1) respond to any comments you find interesting or noteworthy, especially the estimation of you as a learner; (2) add a brief account of what you learned about yourself from the activity; (3) write a brief summary of yourself as a language learner (no more than a page). Then, also briefly (no more than a page),

sketch the kind of language class which would be particularly helpful to you and which would help you fulfill your various goals.

When you have done this, you will be ready to start revising! First, cultivate an attitude that allows for revision. Murray (as cited in Withrow, Brookes, & Cummings, 2004) puts it this way:

> I enjoy cutting, reordering, developing, shaping, polishing my drafts. Never have I failed to make a text better by my revising and editing...Nonwriters think of revision as a matter of tinkering, touching up, making presentable, but writers know it is central to the act of discovering (p.175).

Sharing with the Wider Community

After revising, and sharing our work again with a trusted friend or colleague, it is time to send our stories out into the world, to share our insights with others, students and other teachers, who may benefit from them.

Is there a place for these stories in the world of Second Language Acquisition Research? Of course there is! A language learning history can be viewed as a kind of case study, about which van Lier (2004) states:

> ...in the practical world in which case studies are conducted, *particularization* may be just as important *if not more so* than *generalization.* By particularization I mean the insights from a case study can inform, be adapted to, and provide comparative information to a wide variety of other cases... Furthermore, if two cases provide apparently contradictory information about a certain issue...this can provide much food for thought and further research, this being of great benefit to the field (p. 11).

These stories deserve to be heard and will lead us to a better understanding, not only of ourselves, but of our students and our classroom practices.

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Martha Clark Cummings is associate professor and academic writing courseware leader at the Center for Language Research at the University of Aizu and invited professor in the MA in TESOL program at Teachers College, Columbia University in Tokyo, Japan. She has taught at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, the New School Online University, and the City University of New York. She has a BA in French literature from New York University and an MA and EdD in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University. She has written about cross-cultural pragmatics, language and gender, the teaching of writing, and first person narrative as a research tool in second language acquisition research, and is co-author of two ESL writing textbooks, *Changes* and *Inspired to Write* (Cambridge University Press). She is also a fiction writer and has published a collection of short stories, *Mono Lake*. She has won grants and awards for her fiction writing from the Wyoming Arts Council, the Astraea Foundation, Money for Women, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. She has recently served on the nominating committee of TESOL.

Simply read! Introducing reading for pleasure

Clyde Fowle, Regional Consultant/Trainer for Macmillan Education, East Asia

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Featured Speaker

Many teachers bemoan the fact that their students do not read books, arguing that new forms of media and entertainment are killing reading for pleasure. This is as true among teachers teaching native speaking learners as those teaching in ESL/EFL contexts. This article will focus on how a positive attitude to reading might be fostered in learners, including young learners, as well as considering some of the practicalities of encouraging students to read for pleasure.

1. How can students be introduced to reading in English in a fun way?

The key here is to consider reading from the learners' perspective and not impose your own value judgements on the selection of materials. The following checklist should help teachers ensure that the selection of reading material is learner focused:

- Reading should focus on areas of interest to the students.
- Texts should be appropriate in terms of content; both linguistic and actual content are important.
- Books/stories should look appealing, with attractive covers, pictures, and illustrations.

The context in which reading is introduced/done should be positive and supportive. This relates to the attitudes to reading as well as the physical environment. Nuttall states, "It is much easier to teach people to read better if they are learning in a favourable climate, where reading is valued not only as an educational tool but as a source of enjoyment" (1996, p. 127). If a change of learning environment is possible this is likely to help students differentiate reading for pleasure from other classroom activities.

2. How can students' reading skills be developed in a systematic fashion?

This is a difficult question and will depend largely on the skills that the learners already have, both in reading in their own language and in English. However, as a starting point, especially for young learners, the teacher reading/telling stories to the class is a good way to get them hooked on books. You may also like to experiment with both reading stories from a book and telling stories from memory. Zaro and Salaberri believe that "... storytelling in it's true form only takes place when the story is told to the class face to face when the storyteller can use illustrations, visual aids and even mime and gesture to help comprehension" (1995, p. 5).

With young learners it is important to start with very simple stories with plenty of contextual support and choose stories with repetition in them that reinforce the language naturally. Don't be afraid to re-read stories to children as they love to become familiar with a story and this helps them develop independence as readers. Total physical response (TPR) activities are very popular with young learners and involve learners in the story, as well as contextualising language and aiding their memory.

It is important not to forget that you are encouraging reading for pleasure, and, therefore, you should try to maximise understanding and enjoyment simultaneously. Also remember to provide students with plenty of opportunities to read, so that their reading skills develop naturally and rapidly.

3. How can they be encouraged to read extensively?

It is important that we do not lose sight of what we are doing when we talk about extensive reading. Prowse (2000) is clear about this and maintains that "The aim of an extensive reading programme is simple: to get learners to read as

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many books as possible" (p.10). It is useful to remember this and not become judges of what and how our learners read. We are all individuals with different tastes and those of the teacher are unlikely to be the same as those of the majority of the learners. Therefore we should bear the following points in mind:

- Learners should be able to choose genres they enjoy.
- A choice of levels of reading materials should be available, as most classes include mixed levels of language ability.
- When/where and at what speed students read will vary according to individual styles and preferences.

Developing a class library can give students access to a wide variety of texts relatively cheaply. If there is a budget within the school, readers can be bought and learners can borrow them. If this is not possible, students may be asked to buy one book each and these can be used to form a class library.

4. What are the benefits of extensive reading?

The benefits of extensive reading are innumerable, both in terms of linguistic and personal development, and there is extensive research supporting the value of extensive reading for wider language learning (Elley, 1991; Krashen, 1993). The global linguistic benefits are summarised clearly by Nuttall, who states, "The best way to improve your knowledge of a foreign language is to go and live among its speakers. The second best way is to read extensively in it" (1996, p. 128).

More specific benefits are listed below, although this list is in no way exhaustive:

- Increased exposure to the target language.
- Faster reading skills.
- More sophisticated reading strategies.
- Increased vocabulary range.
- Better understanding of the structure.
- Personalisation of language learning.
- A positive attitude to the target language.
- Increased self-confidence in the language.
- More learner independence.

The potential benefits of extensive reading make it far too positive a learning device to be disregarded by language teachers.

5. What materials can the teacher use that will engage their learners in extensive reading?

As with the first question above it would seem that it is the learners' perspective that is important. Far too often teachers dictate what learners ought to be reading. However, if these texts are not of interest to the learners, the danger is that they may not read anything. Teachers must, therefore, ensure that a wide variety of attractive books are available to accommodate the interests of different learners. This should include varied fiction (e.g., crime, humour, classics, poetry, horror, etc.) as well as non-fiction (e.g., reference books, factual/cross-curricular texts, manuals, etc.). Books with accompanying recordings also often appeal to beginning readers.

Books at different language levels should be available so that students can read alone without problems and move on to more challenging texts as and when they build up their skills and confidence. As Nuttall maintains, "... to become an effective reader, it is far more useful to read a lot of easy books than a few difficult ones" (1996, p. 130). The model in the figure overleaf illustrates the link between comprehensibility, enjoyment, and extent of reading.

6. Are tasks necessary/desirable for extensive reading?

This is currently an area of debate amongst teachers and theorists in reading methodology. Learners' views also vary: some like to have comprehension questions and feedback on their reading and others prefer to just get on with it. Prowse (2000) strongly believes that the fewer tasks we set learners when we are trying to encourage reading for pleasure the better. He argues, "Our aim is for readers to be read as real books, and real books don't have questions at the back! Worksheets can be provided for students that [sic] want them, but it is a mistake to insist on them" (p.11). There is also a general consensus of opinion that the testing of extensive reading is not a good idea. Nuttall believes that "...as soon as marks come in, reading for pleasure becomes reading for credit" (1996, p.142). Teachers will have to decide if and how extensive reading is to be assessed and the impact this may have on the learners' reading.

7. What task types might be most useful/least damaging to the development of a reading habit?

Generally, if tasks are to be used they should not interfere with the reading process. *While-reading* comprehension tasks should probably be avoided as they distract the learner from the main aim, extensive reading for pleasure. Tasks/ activities designed to stimulate learners' interest in the reading materials are a better idea. These may include:

- Pre-reading prediction activities that help to get students interested in books.
- Information gathering activities on the books available, organised like treasure hunts, can help raise students' awareness of what is available and the way books are laid out.
- Tasks/activities designed to help learners reflect after reading are also a good idea. These might include keeping a reading record, and some students may like to write simple book reviews/reports to help their friends select books in the future.

Conclusion

It would seem that introducing our learners to extensive reading for pleasure, with a view of encouraging the development of a reading habit, is an important task. Teachers must take a learner-focused approach to reading and select reading materials that will engage and interest the learners in their classrooms. Have fun with your learners and remember that you may be opening up the world to them through instilling in them a love of books.

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Clyde Fowle is Regional Consultant/Trainer for Macmillan Education, East Asia. He has 15 years' experience of teaching English, managing language programmes and teacher training in Asia. He holds an MA in TESOL from Sheffield Hallam University and has published several articles in the field of ELT. He is co-author of *Synergy*, a new 4-level integrated skills course for Asia published by Macmillan.

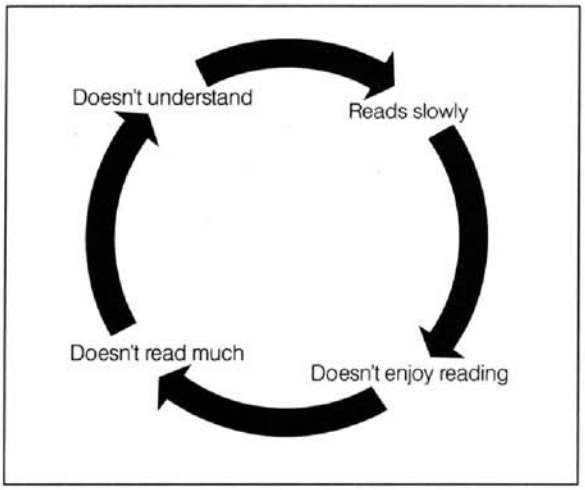

Figure 16 The vicious circle of the weak reader

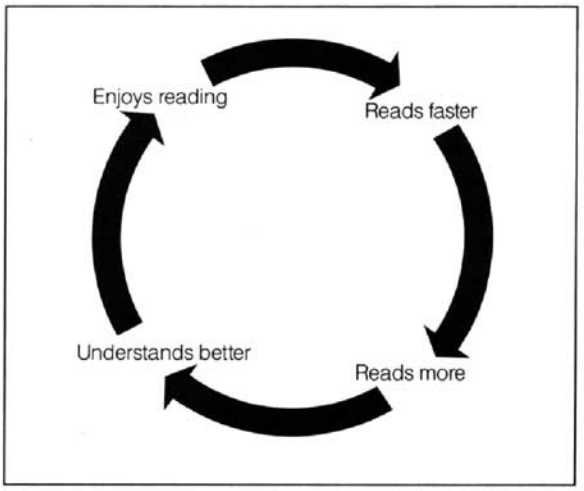

Figure 17 The virtuous circle of the good reader

Note. From *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language* (2nd ed.) (p. 127), by C. Nuttall, 1996, Oxford: Macmillan. Copyright © 1998 by Macmillan Publishers Limited. Reprinted with permission.

Needs assessment as ongoing teacher-learner dialogue

Kathleen Graves, School for International Training

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The KWL (Know, Want to know, Learned) chart is an instructional tool that is commonly used with school age learners in the US and other countries (Ogle, 1989). One version of the chart looks like this:

*What do I **k**now about the topic?*	*What do I **w**ant to know about the topic?*	*What have I **l**earned about the topic?*

Figure 1. KWL chart

The use of the KWL chart is a good example of needs assessment as ongoing teacher-learner dialogue. Prior to studying a topic such as the origins of the First World War (Franson & Vazquez, in press), learners fill in the column with what they know about the topic. This is then discussed in small groups, or in the whole group. With young children, teachers may work with one large chart and fill in learner responses. Then learners fill in the middle column with what they want to know about the topic. Again, this is discussed with others. After a unit of instruction on the topic, learners fill in the third column and compare their responses.

In order to understand the relationship between the KWL chart and needs assessment, I would like to first define what I mean by needs assessment. As depicted in Figure 2, the purpose of needs assessment is to define the gap between what learners know and can do (A) and what they need to know and be able to do (B) in order to make curricular decisions about how a course of instruction can bridge the gap (C and D).

Needs encompass not only language and content needs, but interests, attitudes, and learning preferences (Graves, 2000). The view of needs assessment outlined in Figure 2 allows us to work with it at both the macro level of a course and the micro level of units of instruction or lessons within a course. At the macro level of a course, for (A) we need information about the learners' proficiency level, content knowledge, interests, and learning preferences. For (B), we

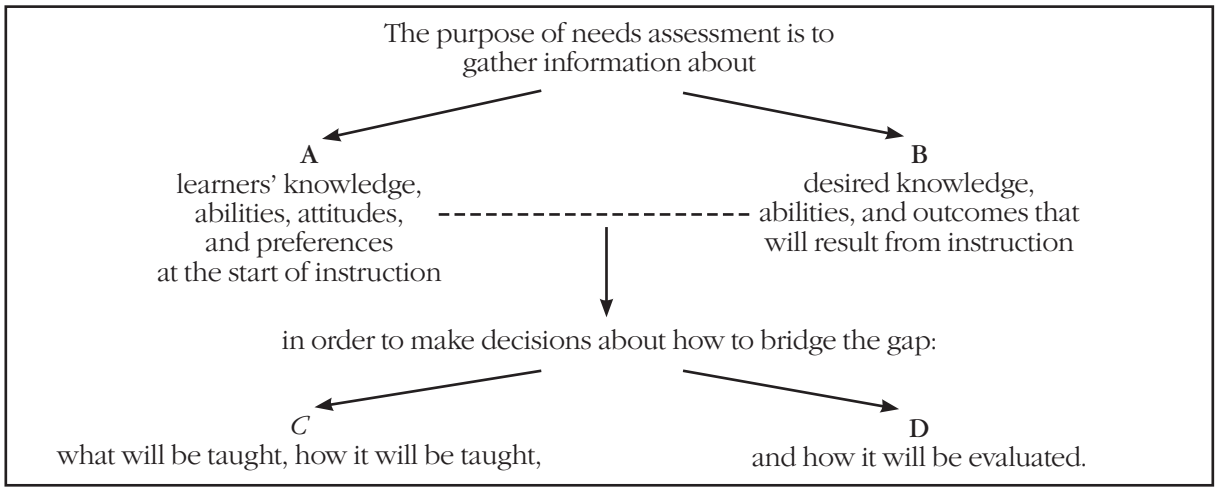

Figure 2. Purpose of needs assessment

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need to know the expected outcomes of the course, the learners' goals, and how they will use what they learn in the course. This information helps us to gear the course to the appropriate language level, to plan learning activities that suit the learners, and to provide content that helps them reach the expected outcomes (C and D). Similarly, at the micro level of a unit or lesson, we aim for certain outcomes based on what students know, what they need to know, and how they learn.

When needs assessment is an ongoing part of teaching, it becomes a dialogue between teachers and learners: the teacher works in partnership with the students to identify and meet their needs. The classroom becomes a learning community in which the members are mutually engaged in working together to learn (Wenger, 1998). Such a view challenges traditional conceptions of schooling whose aim is for students to learn subject matter as determined by the institution and the teacher. In the traditional view, knowledge comes from the teacher and is poured into the learners. In a learning community, knowledge is distributed among the members (Brown, Ash, Rutherford, Nakagawa, Gordon, & Campione, 1993). In a traditional classroom, learners do not expect to be consulted about their learning. In fact, social conditioning is so strong that learners are likely to think the teacher lacks authority if she asks them to express their needs. Ongoing needs assessment changes the role and power dynamics in the classroom by putting learners and their learning at the center so that they become more active agents in their own learning.

Classroom time is limited, and so it is important for teachers to incorporate needs assessment as part of regular instruction. In other words, needs assessment activities need to also contribute to learning the subject matter. Let's look at how using the KWL chart is an example of ongoing needs assessment. The teacher initiates the dialogue: *What do you already know about the topic?* This is gathering information about (A) in Figure 2. Through the discussions, learners become aware of what they already know and what others know thus increasing the knowledge pool. Knowledge is distributed among the members. The second question, *What do you want to know?* asks learners to take the initiative in determining what they want to learn. This provides a map of the learners' understanding, not only for the teacher but for the learners as well. The teacher can gear her instruction (C) to both what is in the *know* column (confirming what they know, or helping them to correct misperceptions) and in the *want to know* column. If she cannot respond to everything in the *want to know* column, she can suggest that students take initiative to find out the information on their own. Finally, the *What have I learned?* column is one way of evaluating what has been learned (D).

Having students create and use rubrics is another example of needs assessment as ongoing dialogue. In a language classroom, for example, the teacher initiates a dialogue with the students by asking *What do you need to do to improve your speaking skills?* The word *improve* asks students to assess both (A) their current speaking abilities and (B) desired speaking abilities. Students discuss their answers in small groups. The whole group combines ideas and determines priorities with the help of the teacher. Together they create a rubric such as the one in Figure 3.

	most of the time	some of the time	needs improvement
speaks clearly (pron-unciation)			
uses a variety of vocabulary			
speaks smoothly (without hesitation)			
speaks loudly			

Figure 3. Sample rubric for speaking

The teacher provides speaking opportunities (C), such as role plays, presentations, or interviews. Students then use the rubric to assess themselves and others (D). By creating the categories, learners develop their awareness of what speaking involves and of themselves as speakers. Using the rubric focuses on their performance and allows them to evaluate both what they have improved and what they need to improve.

Initially, learners do not know how to identify their needs because they are used to having their needs identified for them. For the dialogue to be productive, teachers must set clear, specific parameters for identification of needs and goals,

as in the two examples discussed in this article. As learners become more adept at articulating needs, and as teachers develop classroom activities to help meet them, the classroom becomes a thoughtful, dynamic learning community.

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Kathleen Graves is on the graduate faculty at the School for International Training (SIT) in Vermont, USA. She has taught English in Taiwan, Japan, the US, and Brazil and has worked with teachers for over twenty years in the areas of reflective pratice and materials and curriculum development. She is the author or editor of two books on curriculum development, *Teachers as Course Developers* and *Designing Language Courses: A Guide for Teachers*. Kathleen oversaw the development of the SIT TESOL Certificate Course, offered in Thailand and Japan, as well as at sites in the US, South America, and Europe. She is a former Chair of the TESOL Publications Committee and is the editor of the 8 volume TESOL Curriculum Development Series. She is the co-author with Donald Freeman and Linda Lee of the new ICON series, published by McGraw Hill.

Fluency and confluence: What fluent speakers do

Michael McCarthy, Universities of Nottingham, Pennsylvania State, and Limerick

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Featured Speaker

In many respects the nature of fluency in spoken language is under-researched, despite the fact that the term is deeply embedded in lay linguistic perceptions as well as in professional considerations. For instance, the words "I am fluent in [language x]" will return tens of thousands of hits on Google and the term *fluency* is used widely in the applied linguistics and language teaching literature. Lennon (1990) underlines the less than sharp delineation of the concept in noting that the term *fluency* is often used as a cover-all for general oral proficiency, as well as to refer to a more restricted component of proficiency (e.g., in the way it often appears as one of a list of factors for assessment of proficiency in oral examinations). Most dominant in the literature over a long period, however, has been the debate on *fluency* versus *accuracy* (Brumfit, 1984; Hammerly, 1991; Richards, Platt, & Weber, 1985). Fluency (viewed as unfettered, meaning-focused performance) is often assumed to be something different from accuracy (viewed more as reflective, form-focused performance), though Brumfit (1984) notes that fluent language does not necessarily imply inaccurate language. Furthermore, both are studied as variables in investigations into the output of task-based learning, where conditions such as the presence or absence of pre-planning are seen to affect fluency, or accuracy, or both (Ellis, 2003; Foster & Skehan, 1999).

What is spoken fluency?

Fillmore (1979) famously characterized fluency as including the ability to talk at length without abnormal pauses, the ability to talk coherently, employing *semantically dense* sentences, the ability to have appropriate things to say in a broad range of contexts, and the ability to be imaginative and creative in language use. Later, Brumfit (1984) argued that fluency involved *natural* use of language and that continuity and speed were involved. Schmidt (1992) includes an element of *automaticity*, or the ability to retrieve language forms immediately and without conscious searching, in the characterization of fluency. In dictionary entries too, we find an emphasis on rate of speaking and automaticity. Hartmann and Stork's (1976) definition of fluency includes the notion of automaticity and *normal conversational speed* (p. 86). Automaticity presumably brings with it the accuracy of form which the fluent native speaker seems to display effortlessly. Another dictionary entry, by Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985), includes mention of native-like rhythm, intonation, stress, and rate of speaking. This aligns with the frequent attention paid to prosodic factors in fluency, so-called *phonological fluency* (Pennington, 1989). Some linguists additionally point to other factors that must be held in consideration in adjudging fluency, such as distinguishing knowledge *about* language and the procedural ability to *use* it appropriately (Fillmore, 1979; Schmidt, 1992).

Other, less researched factors

The question I wish to explore here is whether an emphasis on rate of talk, lack of pausing, the presence of particular phonological qualities such as natural rhythm and stress are the whole of (or even the most important part of) the story. If we look at native speaker corpora of natural language use, we find ourselves in the presence of large numbers of what would typically be judged as fluent speakers, who perform accurately in the sense that none of the lexico-grammatical principles—such as normative grammar and appropriate collocation—are violated. But we will not always find those speakers performing at speed, not pausing, using ideal rhythm, and so on. In fact their performance often appears dysfluent by some of the criteria mentioned above. In the following extract from the North American spoken component of the Cambridge International Corpus, the speakers are talking

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about what to do and where to go in Italy. The conversation does not seem to present any problems of comprehension to the interlocutors, and, as already stated is *accurate*, yet it seems in parts, by any standards, disjointed:

A: Where would you tell me to go? And then to a two week trip. Where would you tell me to go?
B: Okay. Um well let's see. You're gonna want to... You're gonna want to see I mean since you're there for two weeks you're you're probably gonna you know you're just gonna have to see the ... You're not gonna have time to really wander around and so you're gonna want to go where the churches are and+
A: Uh-huh.
B: +the museums are+
A: Uh-huh.
B: +so I would say go to Rome and go to Florence and point... I mean I could you know I could probably tell you small small little churches that aren't you know the huge uh Saint Peters+
A: Right.
B: +like this but...
A: But in made the honor in the guide books or whatever.
B: Right.
A: Uh-huh.
B: Right. Right. Um you know but so I'd say definitely hit the big cities and I don't know some people are no and my friends parents went over there and they asked me the same question and they were renting a car just and that really allows you a lot of freedom because especially in I mean all over Italy really there are just these tiny you know tiny towns that ha= you know that are easily accessible by car+
A: Uh-huh.
B: +with like monasteries and woods. It's big and that you just sort of have to pull off and be like 'Oh I don't know what this is all about but let's [laughing] just+
A: Let's check it out.
B: +park and go see'.

What then, makes these speakers fluent, or should we condemn them as dysfluent and as bad examples, especially for language pedagogy? In some senses they do live up to the classic criteria for fluency: they talk continuously, appropriately, without awkward pauses. Where speaker B does pause (indicated by ...) it is usually in order to re-cast the utterance, something native-speakers and non-native speakers need to do constantly, though in the non-native this is often deemed to be evidence of a problem or of poor proficiency. On the other hand, sentences are left half-finished, and there are numerous apparent redundancies and hesitations.

I would like, nonetheless, to suggest that three significant aspects of the conversational extract make it a model of fluency rather than dysfluency.

(1) The speakers do fulfill some of the central criteria established in the literature, as discussed above.

(2) Both speakers use formulaic chunks, one of the key elements contributing to speech rate and conversational flow, but only recently beginning to be fully researched in corpora of spoken language use.

(3) The conversation itself is fluent. Speakers contribute to each others' fluency; they scaffold each other's performance and make the whole conversation flow. There is a confluence in the talk, like two rivers flowing inseparably together.

In relation to (2) the conversation contains high-frequency chunks which occur in the top 1000 list for that length of chunk in the spoken segment of the Cambridge International Corpus (the rank is in parenthesis, based on the 2-word chunk frequency list, the 3-word list, etc.):

And then (14)
I mean (12)
You know (1)
You're gonna (665)
I would say (227)
Or whatever (502)
I don't know (2)

There are also chunks of lower frequency—*let's see, let's check it out*, etc. Chunks, by their nature, are retrieved whole; they are not created anew each time; they are part of that automaticity which enables effortless accuracy. They operate either as sentence frames to which new content may be attached (e.g., *you're gonna ...*) or as pragmatically specialized units, i.e., self-contained units which have developed specific pragmatic functions (e.g., *or whatever*, used to refer vaguely to shared categories). They are typically spoken quickly and as one tone unit; they are thus part of phonological fluency as well as lexico-grammatical fluency. The rest of the utterance (i.e., the newly synthesized, non-chunked content elements) can be spoken more slowly without

damaging fluency. The reverse (slow chunks and fast content) is more difficult to contemplate as sounding fluent. Speed is not everything, at least not constantly rapid talk; some parts of conversations may be uttered rapidly, but it may often be desirable to slow down in crucial parts of one's message.

In relation to characteristic (3), a socioculturally embedded notion of conversation sees speakers as supporting one another, in other words as "scaffolding" each other's performance, in Vygotsky's terms (Vygotsky, 1978), either by back-channeling (*uh-huh, right*) or by predicting and completing each other's turns (B: ... *but let's* [laughing] *just*+ A: *Let's check it out.*). The conversation, and its flow, are seen as a *joint* responsibility, and our perception of fluency, I would argue, is much influenced by the cooperatively created flow of talk, rather than just the talent of one individual speaker.

Conclusion

In sum, the notion of fluency has its roots in linguistic qualities related to lexico-grammatical and phonological flow accompanied by apparently effortless accurate selection of elements, created by individual speakers, and in the ability of participants to converse appropriately on topics, but also, crucially, in the ability to retrieve chunks, and in the degree of interactive support each speaker gives to the flow of talk, helping one another to be fluent and creating a confluence in the conversation. Judging a speaker on monologic performance, on an oral examination where assessors hold back from interacting like normal conversational partners, or basing measures of fluency on solo performances of read speech analyzed by speech recognition software which counts speech rates, pauses, and so forth. (Cucchiarini, Strik, & Boves, 2000), would seem to be missing a great deal of what fluency really is.

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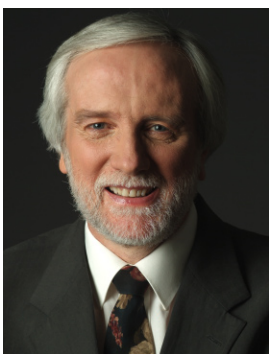
Acknowledgement

The author is grateful to Howard Siegelman, of Cambridge University Press, New York, for his incisive comments on the first draft of this paper.

Michael McCarthy is Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Nottingham, UK, Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics at the Pennsylvania State University, USA, and Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Limerick, Ireland. He is author, co-author, or editor of 33 books, and author or co-author of 69 academic papers. From 1994 to 1998 he was co-editor of *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford University Press). He is co-director (with Ronald Carter) of the 5-million word CANCODE spoken English corpus project, and the one-million word CANBEC spoken business English corpus, both sponsored by Cambridge University Press, at the University of Nottingham. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He has lectured on language and language teaching in 37 countries and has been actively involved in ELT for 39 years.



Getting ready for the Next Generation iBT TOEFL

Deborah Phillips

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Featured Speaker

The Next Generation iBT (Internet-based Testing) is a new and different version of the TOEFL test. If you are used to the paper or CBT (Computer-based Testing) versions of the TOEFL and are thinking that the iBT version is similar, you are going to have quite a surprise when you see it. If you are a teacher who prepares students for the TOEFL, it is important to know what this new version of the TOEFL is like and what you can do to prepare your students for it.

What is the Next Generation iBT?

You might be thinking, "Just how is the iBT different from the paper and CBT versions?" Well, it is different in a lot of ways, but some of the main ways that it differs are the following: a change in the sections of the test, the addition of integrated skills, new kinds of passages, and new kinds of questions.

Test sections

One dramatic change in the Next Generation iBT is that of the sections included in the test. The structure section, a permanent part of both the paper and CBT versions of the TOEFL, does not exist in the iBT version. A speaking section has been added in its place to create four sections: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Grammar will be tested based on how grammatically correct written and spoken responses are, rather than in a section of its own.

Integrated skills

Another change in the test is the inclusion of tasks that integrate several language skills. Whereas prior versions cover only one language skill per section, the iBT includes tasks incorporating several language skills together. There will be tasks that require the test-taker to:

- listen to a passage and then speak about it.
- read a passage, listen to a related passage, and then speak about how the ideas in the two passages are related.
- read a passage, listen to a related passage, and then write about how the ideas in the two passages are related.

New kinds of passages

The kinds of passages on the Next Generation iBT have also changed. There are still reading passages on academic topics, but the passages on the iBT are much longer. The reading passages on the paper and CBT tests are around 350 to 400 words in length, while the reading passages on the iBT are 600 to 700 words in length. The listening passages are also much longer, but that is not the only change. The listening passages also have more natural language, with Australian and British accents in addition to American accents, pauses and stammering, umms and errs, and mistakes and corrections.

New kinds of questions

On top of all of these changes, there are also many new kinds of questions on the Next Generation iBT. In reading, there will be new kinds of questions on rhetorical purpose, paraphrasing, overall inferences, and overall organization of ideas, in addition to the more familiar questions on main ideas, details, vocabulary, and reference. In listening, in addition to the familiar questions on main ideas, details, inferences, and overall organization, there will be new kinds of questions on function and stance. In the writing section, there is a new integrated task in addition to the familiar 30-minute personal essay. All of the speaking questions are new, with two independent tasks and four integrated tasks.

What Should Be Included in Preparation for the Next Generation iBT?

You may now be wondering, "Just what can I do to prepare my students for this new test?" Well, there are many things you can do, and quite a few of them are similar to what you did to prepare your students for earlier versions of the TOEFL.

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You still need to work on reading for main ideas, details, inferences, understanding vocabulary in context, and pronoun reference. You still need to work on listening for main ideas, details, and understanding overall organization of listening passages. You still need to work on the skills involved in writing personal essays. However, this is not all. On the iBT, there are many new, higher level language and academic skills that are being tested, and you need to prepare your students for these more difficult skills. New skills to be taught are found in each of the four sections of the iBT: reading, listening, writing, and speaking.

Reading

In the reading section of the iBT, various skills now need to be emphasized. Students need to be able to read long passages and recognize the key points quickly rather than focusing only on the details. Students also need to be able to recognize rhetorical purpose—they need to understand not just what the author is saying, but why the author is saying it. Another skill students need to master is the ability to recognize accurate restatements of long, difficult, and involved sentences.

Listening

A variety of skills are also required in the listening section of the iBT. Students need to be able to listen to very long passages and recognize the key points quickly. Note taking is allowed on the iBT, and taking notes on the key points of a listening passage should be emphasized. It is also important for students to be able to recognize function and stance. They need to be able to recognize why a speaker says something, or what the speaker's feeling or opinion is. In addition to these skills, students need to be able to understand natural language because the listening passages on the iBT will have more natural sounding native language, not the careful language of previous versions of the TOEFL test.

Writing

The writing section on the iBT features both a personal essay and an integrated writing task. These tasks require writing that is fluid, organized, cohesive, and grammatically correct. The new integrated writing task also requires specific skills. Students must take notes on the key points of a reading passage and listening passage. They must then synthesize the key points of the two passages in an overall topic statement showing how the ideas in the two passages are interrelated and paraphrase the key ideas to create support for the topic statement.

Speaking

The speaking section on the iBT is new, along with all of the skills necessary for success in this section. The speaking tasks require responses that are fluent, organized, cohesive, grammatically correct, and well pronounced. In addition, the integrated tasks require test takers to take notes on the key points of reading and listening passages, to synthesize these into an overall topic statement, and paraphrase the key points in support of the topic.

Developing fluency: Some suggestions for the classroom

Susan Stempleski, The City University of New York

Sponsored by Thomson Learning

Featured Speaker

Now that English has become the world's second language, it is difficult—in many cases impossible—to be active and successful in international business, politics, scholarship, or science, without significant competence in English. Fluency is increasingly recognized as an important goal for learners and has become a central concern in many English language teaching programs. The New Generation TOEFL, to be introduced in September of 2005, will include semi-spontaneous speaking tasks which emphasize speaking fluency by requiring test takers to deliver extended oral responses to written or oral prompts. Rogers (2004) discusses the *washback effect* (the way in which classroom teaching is changed by the nature of a test) of these changes and predicts that they will shift the emphasis in TOEFL preparation classes from learning grammar rules to building fluency.

As the emphasis in English classrooms shifts toward building fluency, teachers seek practical strategies that contribute to the development of fluency and activities that they can readily use in their own classroom situations. The purpose of this article is to provide teachers with a brief overview of the concept of fluency and some example classroom activities that contribute to its development.

What do we mean by *fluency*?

There is no universally agreed-upon definition of fluency. The most common and basic definitions emphasize spoken language and fluent speakers' ability to express themselves clearly, confidently, and easily. But the concept of fluency is not limited to speaking. People can be fluent readers, writers, and listeners, as well as fluent speakers.

It is also important to realize that fluency is a relative term, even for native speakers. Fluency is not something that people have or do not have. Fluency is a matter of degree. The term can be used to describe accomplishments as various as the ability to order a simple meal and the ability to participate in extended conversations on philosophical subjects. It is my belief that some degree of fluency can be achieved at all levels of language proficiency.

Fluency is sometimes contrasted with accuracy, which Richards, Platt, and Weber (1992) say is "the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences but may not include the ability to speak or write fluently" (p. 109). While this is obviously true, the converse is harder to accept, since a great deal of what we recognize as fluent language demonstrates a less than perfect command of grammar or vocabulary.

A full definition of fluency will include many other factors, far too many to explore in this brief article. For an expanded definition of fluency and a fuller discussion of the factors that contribute to it, see Brown (2004). For the purposes of this article, I have limited my discussion to oral fluency, which includes the abilities to

1. produce spoken language, without seeming to make an effort;
2. orally communicate ideas clearly and effectively;
3. use oral language appropriate to the context;
4. speak with an adequate but not necessarily perfect command of grammar, intonation, and vocabulary;
5. speak continuously without long, awkward pauses.

How can teachers promote fluency?

Teachers can promote fluency by setting up classroom situations that maximize student speaking and listening activity. To do this, teachers will necessarily have to give up some of the control in the classroom and allow students to do more of the work. Fluency will only develop when students have opportunities to use their language knowledge to really communicate with one another.

weblink: www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/articles/2005/06/stempleski

Brown (1996) provides the following principles for promoting the ease and efficiency associated with oral fluency:

1. Encourage students to go ahead and make constructive errors

Do what is necessary to help students recognize that it's OK for them to make errors. Use video and audio recordings to point out errors in the speech of native speakers. Limit error correction to those mistakes that hinder communication. Treat error making as a skill by helping students understand that errors are a natural component of language development and that they can only become fluent by making errors and learning how to deal with those errors.

2. Create numerous opportunities for students to practice

Maximize student speaking and listening activity. Set up student-centered speaking tasks for pairs and small groups so that many students are talking at the same time. Avoid so-called *conversation courses* where the teacher does much (usually most) of the talking and the students respond one at a time.

3. Introduce task-based activities that force students to get a message across

Use communicative activities in which students have a specific task to perform, a particular problem to solve, or a clearly defined goal to reach. Properly designed fluency activities will get students so involved in carrying out the task they will focus on getting their meaning across.

4. Assess students' fluency

Assess students as they carry out communicative activities such as roleplays, pairwork, and interviews. If students know they will be tested for such activities, they will practice and prepare for them. (For a set of observation/scoring criteria and guidelines on giving feedback on group activities, see Mendelsohn, 1992.)

5. Talk to students about fluency

Students unaccustomed to the types of communicative tasks suggested in this article may protest that they can't learn from working with other students in pairs and groups. When this happens, teachers will have to convince students of the usefulness and importance of such activities by explaining their reasons for (a) encouraging constructive errors, (b) creating more opportunities for real listening and speaking practice, (c) using task-based activities, and (d) assessing their fluency.

What are some examples of fluency-training activities?

There are numerous resource books teachers can use as sources of ideas for fluency-training activities (for examples, see Ladousse, 1988; Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 1983; Klippel, 1987; Ur, 1981; Folse, 1996; Folse & Ivone, 2002). This section presents some specific activities for integrating fluency training into classroom lessons. Although these activities are designed for classes at intermediate level and above, with some modification, they may be used with students at lower levels. In using these or other fluency-training activities, teachers should take care to focus the students' attention on getting their meaning across.

• *News reports*

Students choose a paragraph in their textbook and practice reading the paragraph to themselves until they can pronounce all the words and sentences clearly and confidently. Students then work in groups. They pretend they are reporters and their paragraphs are part of a TV news report. They take turns reading their paragraphs for the group.

• *Student-led discussions*

Day 1: Choose an article with discussion questions from a textbook. For homework students read the article carefully and write out a short answer for each question.
Day 2: Students work in small groups (3-5 people) and carry out a discussion of the article. The discussion of each question is led by a different student, appointed by the teacher. Present these guidelines to students:

1. Read the question aloud to the group.
2. Wait for someone to volunteer, or call on someone to answer.
3. As leader, you need to know if the answers are correct and complete. Use your notes to decide when the question has been answered correctly and completely.

• *Impromptu speeches: Open-ended questions*

Students practice giving extended responses to questions by giving short impromptu (1-minute) speeches in response to open-ended *Wh-* questions. They explain their opinions

by providing reasons and examples. Sample questions:

- *What's your favorite city/season/subject/holiday/sport?*
- *How do you feel about ...?*
- *Why do people get married?*
- *What kind of movies/music do you like?*

• Impromptu speeches: Closed-ended questions

Students do as above, but elaborate on their thoughts by anticipating what the listener might want to know. Sample questions:

- *Do you like to cook?*
- *Are you good at sports?*
- *Would you like to live abroad some day?*
- *Do you live around here?*

• Progressive stories

Students work in groups of three. Some preparation may be needed. (Allow 5 minutes or so, if necessary.) One person starts a story, then stops at a critical point and calls on another person to continue the story. That person continues the story, stops, and then calls on the last person to end the story.

> **Example**: *One Saturday morning my best friend called me and asked me to do two really nice things. First, make a visit to the local art museum to see the Manet Exhibition. Second, go for lunch at the café in the park. I said, "That sounds like a great idea." It was a beautiful day, sunny and warm. We walked to the museum. On the way we talked about how great it would be to see the exhibition. We were almost at the museum when something happened...*

In this brief article I have given an overview of the concept of fluency and provided some examples of ideas and activities that can be used to promote fluency in the classroom. I hope that those who read this article will be encouraged to experiment with some of these suggestions for working on fluency with their students.

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Susan Stempleski is Series Editor of *World Link: Developing English Fluency* (Thomson/Heinle),

and has written numerous articles and more than 30 other books. She is based in New York City, where she teaches at Columbia University Teachers College and the Hunter College International English Language Institute of the City University of New York. A former member of the Board of Directors of TESOL International, she has spoken at conferences and given workshops for teachers in more than 40 different countries.

...with Lorraine Sorrell <my-share@jalt-publications.org>

This month's My Share features three different integrated speaking activities following from both intensive and extensive reading activities from Alun Davies, Takayuki Nakanishi, and Steve Powell. Two of the activities offer a new perspective on the use of graded readers. Brett Collins adds a spontaneous speaking activity which can be used at any time.

Submissions should be up to 1,000 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used, which can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see any edition of *The Language Teacher*). Please send submissions to <my-share@jalt-publications.org>.

A book in question! Intertwining receptive and productive skills using graded readers

Takayuki Nakanishi, Ibaraki University
<nakanis@mx.ibaraki.ac.jp>

Quick guide

Keywords: Graded readers, reading, speaking, listening, pair and group work
Learner English Level: Can be adapted for all levels
Learner Maturity Level: Young adult and up
Activity Time: 30 minutes or more
Preparation Time: Varies
Materials: Blank papers and a handout

Introduction

Most school libraries here in Japan have English books nowadays and some of them have graded readers along with other full-length English paperbacks. However, it is very difficult for students to read paperbacks written for native English speakers. This is where graded readers have their place. In Japanese universities, we have a classroom situation where ability levels often vary widely within a single classroom and the number of students in one class can be relatively large. It is almost impossible to use one book that suits all students. In terms of giving choices to students, having 50 of the same book in class is not desirable. In my opinion, having 50 different books and sharing them is preferable.

When you tell students to read graded readers, you should clearly explain the concept of graded readers, the objectives, how to choose a book, and dos and don'ts while reading. Emphasize reading without using a dictionary and instruct students to try to guess meaning from context. In this activity, you will not choose books for students to read, but you will let students select books for themselves based on their needs and interests. This also promotes the development of autonomous learning.

Some high schools are also using graded readers. Whether you teach at high school or university, it is fairly common to distribute a written assignment about a book a student has read. I would like to go beyond the written assignment and share one activity to utilize graded readers after students have completed them. At the university level, a written assignment should be completed in English.

Procedure

Step 1: Students bring a book they have read into class. Distribute the *A Book in Question* sheet (see Appendix) and explain the listed questions. If you go over the questions together before they do this activity students will understand better what they are supposed to do. You could also show them how to answer the questions as you explain. For example,

A: What did you read?
B: Well, I read *Pocahontas*. It was really interesting.
A: Who is the author?
B: It's Tim Vicary.
A: What level is the book?
B: ...
A: ...

Step 2: Students work in pairs. Instruct student A to ask the listed questions from the worksheet to student B.

Step 3: Instruct the A students to create and add their own questions when they do not understand the B students' answer or explanation. The worksheet helps students to explain and talk about a book. There are various ways you could employ this paper. You could instruct students to write their own answer first and talk about it, or instruct them to ask the questions and write what the partner has read or just instruct them to ask the questions without writing anything. You should decide which way is more appropriate

in your class. It is important to remind students to use as many new words and expressions as possible from the books so that they can recycle what they have learned. This will enrich each other's vocabulary.

Step 4: Walk around and give help as needed.

Step 5: Instruct students to change parts. Student B asks questions this time.

Step 6: After the students finish talking about the books, ask one or two students about the books they have read. You can then show how to ask questions effectively for the next time. You should ask questions that are not in the worksheet, such as "How many characters are there?" or "What happened next?" If the listener can ask questions effectively, it will be easier for the speaker to explain a book and it will make the students engage more in this activity. This can be done at the beginning, however students sometimes feel overwhelmed when they have to explain a book without having any experience with this kind of activity.

Step 7: Instruct students to change partners and let students talk to another classmate. At this point, students already know how to explain stories.

Step 8: Encourage students to ask more questions that are not in the worksheet. They will then spend more time speaking and listening to one another.

Step 9: (Option 1) For another class period, once students are familiar with the concept of talking about a book, you could expand it to books they have already read. The books they talk about can be Japanese novels, comics, mysteries, and so on. You could give them a written assignment before talking about it or just use the worksheet to talk about it without the written assignment. This is also useful for students because they will have read a book in Japanese, but will have to create English words or expressions to explain or to ask questions.

Step 10: (Option 2) Extend this activity to a movie. Change some words in the worksheet to apply it for a movie. Thus, it becomes *A movie in question!* and the questions would then be something like this: What did you watch? or Who was in it?

Conclusion

Not only reading graded readers, but also using graded readers to write and talk is thoroughly practical because students choose a book within the range of their English ability. Students also say that this activity is enjoyable and helpful. It encourages students to read more and provides them with information about which books are interesting to read after hearing about it from a partner. Many students have never experienced reading an English book in their lives, and are not sure if they can finish one. However, after completing the book, they feel a sense of accomplishment and gain confidence in their English ability. Some choose genres such as comics, sports, and history, while others read Disney stories. Reading different kinds of books and talking about the books offers students diverse perspectives. This activity generates not only reading motivation, but also speaking motivation for students.

Appendix

A book in question!

1. What did you read?
2. Who is the author?
3. What level is the book?
4. What is the book about? What is the story of the book?
5. What did you think of the story? (Did you like it or not? What did you like/dislike about the story?)
6. Do you recommend this book?

Useful Expressions for talking about a book

- What does ... mean?
- Could you speak more slowly, please?
- Can you repeat that, please?
- How do you spell that?
- I am sorry, I don't understand.
- Pardon me?

Reading conversation: Using graded readers for oral fluency practice in *eikawa* classes

Steve Powell, Hijiyama High School, Hiroshima
<steve-p@hicat.ne.jp>

Quick Guide

Key Words: Graded readers; oral fluency; palm cards
Learner English Level: Pre-intermediate and above
Learner Maturity Level: High school and above
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Activity time: 20 minutes +
Materials: A class reader; palm cards (3 or 4 per student)

Introduction

Over the last few years, the benefits of extensive reading (ER) have been well documented (see, for example, the special issue of *The Language Teacher*, May 1997). Yet while ER can be an invaluable part of any language course, most experts emphasize that learners also need plenty of class-based reading for development of reading skills and strategies, vocabulary building, and discussion (Waring, 1997). But how can this be made compatible with high school *eikaiwa* classes, where instructors are expected to concentrate on speaking and listening activities?

The following activity is an example of what I call Reading Conversation, combining a class reader with eikaiwa-style oral fluency practice. It has been successfully used at all levels of senior high school in classes where graded readers are used for both ER and as class readers.

The original inspiration came from the classic BBC Radio comedy quiz *Just A Minute*, where celebrity contestants have to speak for one minute on an unprepared subject. In this Reading Conversation activity students also have to speak for a set time, on a range of topics related to their class reader.

Depending on the level of the class, these topics can be quite simple (describing a character or place in the book) or progressively more complex (describing specific events, relationships between characters, and so on). Specific vocabulary targets, such as weather related terms or types of animals, can also be used.

Preparation

Prepare 12-16 blank cards per group of four students. Palm cards, about half the size of a playing card, are ideal, although strips of paper can be used if no cards are available. A different topic should be written on each card. As suggested above, these can range from the names of the book's principal characters and places, to significant times or events in the story, or relationships between characters. In the case of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, one of the graded readers I have used in class, here are a few examples of topics that could be written on the cards:

- Sherlock Holmes
- Sir Hugo Baskerville
- Dartmoor
- Baskerville Hall
- The night Sir Charles was murdered
- The relationship between Jack Stapleton and Miss Stapleton

You can write the cards yourself; however, the activity is generally more productive if the students prepare the cards for homework, once you have given them some examples. That way, the activity becomes almost totally student-centred. Each student need only think of three or four topics.

Procedure

Step 1: Divide students into groups of three or four.
Step 2: Collect all their cards and redistribute them to a different group, so that nobody gets their own cards.
Step 3: Verify that each group has one bundle of cards, placed face down.
Step 4: As a demonstration, pick a card at random yourself and speak about the topic written on it for a minute or two (ask a student to time you). The idea is for students to say as much as they can about the topic on their card. Make clear to the class that the information they give should be meaningful and relevant, to show their understanding of the story, not just "Sherlock Holmes is a man" or "He is a cool guy." As in the

original radio programme, if a student repeats herself, says something irrelevant, or hesitates for more than 10 seconds, her turn is terminated.
Step 5: Students *janken* to go first then take it in turns to draw a card and speak about whatever is written on it.
Step 6: Points should be awarded after each speaker finishes. You can invent your own system, but I usually award 5 points for speaking for 2 minutes, 3 points for 1 minute, 1 point for 30 seconds.
Step 7: When one speaker has finished, the rest of the group should each ask her a question. This ensures they all listen to each other. Again, the teacher should demonstrate this with one or two sample questions to ensure that questions are reasonably pertinent, rather than "Do you love Sherlock Holmes?" If you use a class reader, your students may already be used to asking and answering a variety of comprehension questions. If not, give enough sample questions to encourage students to think in terms of using *Wh~* questions rather than simple questions requiring yes or no answers.
Step 8: The activity finishes either when all the cards have been used, or after a set time. The points should then be totalled.
Step 9: As homework, students write a report on the cards they have spoken about.

Conclusion

After several years of using graded readers in Japanese high school classes, I have found this activity to be a highly motivating and enjoyable one. It is ideal as a pre-test review (the fun aspect can help reduce pre-test nerves), or at a critical juncture in the book to gauge students' grasp of the story, or indeed at any time of year when you want to turn the class over to the students for some spirited speaking practice. It has the further advantage of integrating practice in all four skills.

This is just one of many oral fluency-type activities that can be used with class readers, confirming that teachers who wish to introduce graded readers into *eikaiwa* classes need not fear that they will be incompatible with the fun-and-games speaking and listening activities they are generally expected to provide. In fact, graded readers can provide a motivating basis for conversation long after learners have grown tired of hackneyed shopping-hobbies-health problems dialogues.

To capitalize on the growing popularity of graded readers, it is helpful to stop looking at them purely as readers and consider them instead as another ally in our constant search for interesting input and communicative activities.

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Resources

Extensive Reading Pages <www.extensivereading.net>. A vast resource maintained by Thomas Robb, with contributions by Rob Waring, Julian Bamford, Richard Day and many others.

A student-centred integrated skills discussion task

Alun Davies, Aichi Shukutoku University
<alun1917@yahoo.co.jp>

Quick Guide

Key Words: Discussion, speaking, reading, listening, chunks, vocabulary
Learner English Level: Low-intermediate and above
Learner Maturity Level: University
Preparation Time: Initial setup 20 minutes
Activity Time: 60-90 minutes
Materials: Reading text (students find and bring to class); worksheet

Introduction

Discussion classes with language students can be hard to set up and keep on task, and discussions often peter out long before their communicative potential has been fully exploited. Students are frequently reluctant to express and exchange opinions, and participation can be uneven, with more proficient students dominating and weaker students reluctant to contribute.

The task described below offers a way to overcome these problems, based on the idea that "a learner-centred and cognitive approach, which allows students to choose and organize their own topics, carry out peer and self-observation and evaluation . . . is likely to produce more positive results for both learner and teacher" (Green, 1997, p. 135). What results is a student-centred, integrated skills approach to discussion that is engaging, challenging, and motivating. Student talking time is high (most of a 90-minute class), while the teacher's main roles are facilitator, monitor, and occasional participant (by joining pairs and groups to share ideas and experiences). The focus is on a meaningful exchange of ideas and language via the information or opinion gap that is created when each student is working on a different text, and fluency is also emphasized through the recycling of ideas and language as the lesson progresses toward the final discussion task.

Preparation

Prepare a discussion worksheet (see Appendix 1), and give one copy to each student.

Before Class

Step 1: Students find and read a text in English that interests them personally and prepare to discuss issues raised in the text in pairs and small groups. Texts should be factual (e.g., newspaper, magazine, or internet articles) since in my experience fiction-based texts tend to be ineffective for student self-directed discussion work.

Step 2: Students complete a worksheet (Appendix 1) with a short written summary of the text, key lexical chunks and vocabulary, with a Japanese translation, and up to seven discussion questions.

Students all have different texts and topics, so it is essential that questions are general, derived from themes in the text, but not directly testing knowledge of the text itself.

For example, questions on a text entitled "University Life in the UK" could include: What three things would you like to change about *this* university? or How would *you* feel about being an exchange student in an overseas university? The focus should be on eliciting and sharing or exchanging opinions and experiences. Students must be able to respond fully to *their own* questions. This ensures that questions are created more thoughtfully and not simply for display. It also means that when a partner has difficulty responding to a question, the owner of the question can take the initiative and contribute ideas and language that may help his or her partner to enter the discussion more easily. Questions should also be designed to encourage a talkative response from partners, so students need to be made aware of the qualitative difference between open and closed question types and encouraged to emphasize the former. A useful way to make this distinction clear is to have students examine magazine interviews with well-known celebrities and note the pattern of *short question, talkative response* that typifies this genre.

In Class

Step 3: Divide students into pairs.
Step 4: Without referring to the worksheet or text, student A retells his or her story in as much detail as possible, while student B listens and makes notes on the reverse of the worksheet, asking clarification questions if needed. This step provides focused listening practice and, for the speaker, acts as a review of key ideas and

language. Since students are encouraged to ask one or two questions to learn more about their partner's topic, this also functions as a warm-up for the later discussion stage.
Step 5: Student B uses the notes to relate back to student A the main points of the story.
Step 6: Pairs switch roles and repeat.
Step 7: Create new pairs. Students exchange worksheets and fold them so that only the key lexical chunks and vocabulary section is showing.
Step 8: Students read each other's vocabulary list, predict the topic and content of the text based on their interpretation of the vocabulary, and attempt to reconstruct their partner's story. Students often have difficulty deciding what constitutes key vocabulary. This step helps raise awareness of the meaning-carrying potential of some words over others, and in particular the benefits of lexical chunks (Lewis, 1997) for expressing key ideas.
Step 9: Pairs take turns to summarize to each other their original texts.
Step 10: Students check the accuracy of their reconstructed version with their partner's summary.
Step 11: Create new pairs. Pairs exchange worksheets and test each other on their key lexical chunks and vocabulary section. Student A selects a phrase from student B's worksheet and says it in Japanese. Student B should give the English translation and also tell something about the text based on the lexical item given—in effect, a mini-summary based on the context of the item.
Step 12: Pairs switch roles and repeat.
Step 13: In this main discussion stage, student A now becomes the Discussion Leader, who is responsible for guiding and directing discussion of his or her topic by selecting from Part 3 of the worksheet suitable questions or sub-topics on which to focus.
Step 14: Students switch roles and move to discussion of student B's text.
Step 15: Create new groups of three students and repeat steps 13–14. This final step is important because it allows students to recycle ideas and language already used in previous steps, but with a switch of emphasis from generating ideas and language to expressing these with greater fluency.

Conclusion

This is a demanding and challenging task for students, who may initially balk at the idea of maintaining discussions for around 60–90 minutes. However, students quickly come to appreciate that the student-centred way in which the task is set up gives them a considerable measure of control over every stage, and thus they have the means to work to their own strengths and weaknesses and to always operate within their affective and cognitive limits. Feedback reveals that students find the class stimulating and fun and that they enjoy engaging in this kind of intensive oral communication practice. Even students with lower proficiency levels have commented that whilst the course stretched their abilities they found the integrated task useful and enjoyed the relaxed, talkative, and fun atmosphere that results from this approach to organizing discussions.

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Appendix 1—Example of discussion worksheet.

For homework, find and read a story in English (Newspaper, magazine, internet...)

a) Write a short summary in your OWN words. (Part 1)

b) Choose and learn/memorize some *key* phrases from the story. (Part 2)

c) Choose topics from the story to discuss (Part 3). You should discuss topics in your story, but you must also extend the discussion by linking topics to your own life and experiences.

Part 1: Summary (In your own words)		
Part 2: Key lexical chunks or vocabulary	English	Japanese
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	
	7	
	8	
	9	
	10	
	11	
	12	
	13	
	14	
	15	
Part 3: General questions to ask your partner about the topic(s) in your story. Good, challenging, open auestions only!	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	
	6.	
	7.	

Spontaneous speaking

Brett Collins, Ritsumeikan University, Shiga
<asupermolecule@yahoo.com>

Quick Guide

Key words: Nouns, random, spontaneous speaking
Learner English Level: Intermediate to advanced
Learner Maturity Level: High school to adult
Preparation time: None
Activity time: Up to 60 minutes
Materials: Blackboard or whiteboard, pens or chalk, stopwatch

Students need to be comfortable continuing to communicate, even in decontextualized situations. Even some of my most communicative students have problems once they have left class, when the lowered affective filter of the classroom has risen again. For this reason, periods of linguistic mayhem within the class are both nice breaks from controlled input and beneficial for giving students opportunities to practice under pressure. Ultimately, any practical class should include exercises that allow students to use their own experiences both in class, and experiences outside of class, and this is especially true when learning a language. I have found this exercise to be a nice speaking prod.

Procedure

Step 1: Elicit nouns from the students and write them on the board. These should not be proper nouns and should be as random as possible, with the idea in mind that they will be used as

speaking topics. I usually make a few suggestions to get things started (e.g., tennis, politics, coffee, summertime). I try to refrain from calling on anyone directly, as I want to establish an air of voluntary input. There should be at least one noun on the board for each student, plus about five extra nouns so that there is ample choice and the last student does not get stuck with something too limiting. For larger classes (more than 10 students), divide them into groups, and use the common list of nouns that you have elicited from the class as a whole (maximum of 20 words).

Step 2: Ask one of the students to choose one of the nouns.

Step 3: Then, ask another student to be a timekeeper.

Step 4: The teacher models the exercise by speaking for one minute about the chosen noun without pausing. Diverging (slightly) from the topic is acceptable and encouraged, as it is normal in this exercise not to know much about the target noun.

Step 5: After the teacher models the monologue, allow for questions about the content of the monologue and call attention to points or tactics that were used to complete the task. Try to show the students that connecting with the noun personally is a good way to complete the task, as this will help ease the difficulty and is a good way to teach conversation tactics. The teacher should try to point out turns in the conversation that were made in order to continue speaking. The teacher should try to avoid just rambling; making firm connections to one's own life makes the conversation clearer. For example, if I am to speak about the noun *tennis*, a subject that I have very little knowledge of, I can relate my memories of John McEnroe having a hot temper and yelling at judges all the time. These memories fall within the noun *tennis*. I would not want, however, to jump from McEnroe to tennis rackets to Japanese tennis then back to McEnroe. However, if a student does jump around when speaking, it would be okay because the most important point is for them to continue speaking. The teacher should model a more focused monologue, though. Students may also have questions about the content of the teacher's monologue. Using the example of John McEnroe from above, a student may want to know whether I liked John McEnroe or not. I encourage these types of questions, especially when the students are doing the exercise, as they relate to listening comprehension and communication skills.

Step 6: Keep time as students repeat the exercise in groups. As above, for larger classes (more than 10 students), divide students into smaller groups, but use the common list of nouns that you have elicited from the class as a whole. In smaller classes (less than 10), the entire class can work together with one person at a time delivering a monologue. Because the monologues are brief, students do not lose focus even when, say, nine students are watching one student struggle. Regarding timekeeping, the teacher should decide whether control should be granted to the individual groups (this will also depend upon how many time pieces are available), or should be maintained by the teacher. If there is central time, the teacher should make sure all the groups are ready at the same time. If each group has its own timekeeper, monitor the groups closely to ensure that no one student gets more than five minutes including Q & A time. I usually have students *janken* to see who gets to choose the noun and, in groups of more than two, the person to present. Observe the groups and encourage brief content-related Q & A after each person speaks.

Step 7: In smaller classes, after each person has had a chance to practice in pairs or small groups, the exercise is repeated as a class. I usually pick someone to start and choose a noun, and allow the person who has just delivered a monologue the next round's picking rights. Depending on the level of the class, I may also increase the required speaking time to 2 minutes. I have a rule that if students pause for too long (over 5 seconds), the timer starts over. This puts added pressure on them to connect in any way they can to the noun. In larger classes, if there is extra time and the vibe of the exercise is good, I will ask for volunteers who want to try in front of the whole class.

Conclusion

The exercise is always fun and lively, and the students always groan when it is their turn to speak, which usually means that they know they are being challenged. What I really like about this exercise is that everyone, pushed to their limits on a very limited subject, ends up saying interesting things. Students are able to connect the nouns to their own lives, thereby deepening their understanding of the language. They are able to give each other a deeper understanding of who they are as people, too, and this can be seen in the Q & A portion, as students rarely run out of questions to ask. Overall, there is a nice organic feel to this exercise because of the simple way that it is entirely based on the students' information and the students' thoughts.

FOCUS

The *Focus* column this month is a little light but no less worthy of a read, as Ken Hartmann details some of the incredible spirit to be found within JALT.

JALT Focus contributors are requested by the column editor to submit articles of up to 750 words written in paragraph format and not in abbreviated or outline form. Announcements for JALT Notices should not exceed 150 words. All submissions should be made by the 15th of the month, one and a half months prior to publication.

Joseph Sheehan <jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org>

JALT News

The July 2005 Ordinary General Meeting

2005年度7月通常総会

Date: July 3, 2005
Time: 2:00–3:00 p.m.
Place: Tokyo Medical and Dental University
Room: Graduate School Bldg. (Ishigaku Sougou Kenkyu-tou), 2nd floor, Faculty of Medicine, Lecture Room 2 (Igaku-ka Kogi-shitsu #2)
日程: 2005年7月3日
時間: 午後2:00–3:00
場所: **東京医科歯科大学(東京)**
部屋: 医歯学総合研究棟、医学科講義室#2

Agenda 議案

- Item 1. Business Report (2004/04/01–2005/03/31)
  第一号 平成16年度事業報告
- Item 2. Financial Report (2004/04/01–2005/03/31)
  第二号 平成16年度決算報告
- Item 3. Audit Report (2004/04/01–2005/03/31)
  第三号 平成16年度監査報告
- Item 4. Business Plan (2005/04/01–2006/03/31)
  第四号 平成17年度事業計画
- Item 5. Budget (2005/04/01–2006/03/31)
  第五号 平成17年度予算
- Item 6. Other important issues
  第六号 その他の重要事項

Steve Brown スティーブ・ブラウン
JALT National President 全国語学教育学会理事長

JALT Notices

Hokkaido Journal

The *JALT Hokkaido Journal* is a refereed online journal which appears once a year featuring theoretically grounded reports of research and discussion of central issues in foreign language teaching and learning with a focus on Japanese contexts. We especially encourage investigations which apply theory to practice and include original data collected and analyzed by the author. Those interested in submitting a paper should visit <jalthokkaido.net/>. The deadline for submissions is June 30, 2005.

Peer Support Group

The JALT Peer Support Group assists writers who wish to polish their papers so they may be published. We are now looking for JALT members interested in joining our group to help improve the quality of the papers of fellow professionals. A paper is read and commented on by two group members, and if you are not confident in your skills offering advice to fellow writers, we have a shadowing system to help you get your bearings. Please email the coordinator

at <peergroup@jalt-publications.org> for further information. We do not at present have Japanese members, but that is because none have applied so far. We are also interested in receiving papers from members. Please do not hesitate to send us your paper at the address above. We look forward to hearing from and helping you.

Universal Chapter and SIG Web Access

JALT chapters and SIGs have webpages available that contain upcoming meeting information and officer contact details. These pages are linked to the main JALT website and are viewable at <jalt.org/groups/your-chapter-name>, where *your-chapter-name* is the name of the chapter or SIG you wish to contact (i.e., <jalt.org/westtokyo>; <jalt.org/CUE>). In some cases, chapters or SIGs may not have provided up-to-date information; this will be reflected on the webpages. Queries can be directed to the JALT (English) web editor, Paul Collett, <editor-e@jalt.org>.

Staff Recruitment

TLT Associate Editor

The Language Teacher is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of associate editor, with future advancement to the position of co-editor. Applicants must be JALT members and must have the knowledge, skills, and leadership qualities to oversee the production of a monthly academic publication. Previous experience in publications, especially at an editorial level, is an asset. Knowledge of JALT publications is desirable. Applicants must also have a computer with email and access to a fax machine.

This post requires several hours of concentrated work every week editing feature articles, scheduling and overseeing production, and liaising with the publications board. Applicants should be prepared to make a minimum 2-year commitment with an extension possible. The assumption of duties is tentatively scheduled for October 2005.

Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae (including details of publication background and published works), a cover letter, and a statement of purpose indicating why they would like to become associate editor (and later advance to co-editor) of *The Language Teacher* to: Amanda O'Brien, JALT Publications Board Chair, <pubchair@jalt.org>. Deadline for receipt of applications is June 15, 2005.

Proofreaders

The Language Teacher... needs English language proofreaders immediately. Qualified applicants will be JALT members with language teaching experience, a fax, email, and a computer that can process MS Word files. The position will require several hours of concentrated work every month, mailing list subscription, and occasional online and face-to-face meetings. If more qualified candidates apply than we can accept, we will consider them in order as further vacancies appear. The supervised apprentice program of *The Language Teacher* trains proofreaders in *TLT* style, format, and operations. Apprentices begin by shadowing experienced proofreaders and then rotate from section to section of the magazine until they become familiar with *TLT*'s operations as a whole. They then assume proofreading tasks themselves. Consequently, when annual or occasional staff vacancies arise, the best qualified candidates tend to come from current staff, and the result is often a succession of vacancies filled and created in turn. As a rule, *TLT* recruits publicly for proofreaders and translators, giving senior proofreaders and translators first priority as other staff positions become vacant. Please submit your curriculum vitae and cover letter to the Publications Board Chair at <pubchair@jalt.org>.

October 7 – 10, 2005
Granship Convention Center
Shizuoka, Japan

Perspectives

...with Joyce Cunningham & Mariko Miyao <perspectives@jalt-publications.org>

Does anyone care about chapters having problems, especially the little guys? Many people in JALT do care. As proof, read about one man's efforts to make sure they have a chance. The co-editors warmly invite 750-word reports of chapter interest in English, Japanese, or both.

Helping Chapters in Need

When one changes jobs, it always provides an opportunity to gain new perspectives on things. Last year as president of the Hokkaido chapter, I attended national executive board meetings, and like other chapter reps, I usually listened and contributed primarily based upon the needs of my own chapter. The one issue that always generated a lively discussion was that of chapter grants. It was always about how much money to allocate to chapters from membership dues collected and what percent each chapter should receive. The goal of each rep was to get as much as possible for their chapter.

In November 2004, I was elected to fill the position of chapter representative liaison (CRL). The first order of business was to learn as much as possible about each chapter. Reading the annual reports filed by the presidents has provided me with insights into the problems a number of chapters are facing. I now have a better perspective with respect to the plight of small chapters in particular. I understand better the relationship between resource allocation and the effect it has on the development of strong chapters.

There are basically two types of problems that a chapter faces during its existence. One concerns human resources and the other is financial resources. A chapter needs strong leadership to function successfully, but without adequate funding, there will be little opportunity for real growth. It takes significant financial resources to put on programs that will foster membership growth.

A typical monthly presentation/meeting costs around ¥20,000 with a local speaker. Chapters average about eight meetings a year, and if a speaker should require travel expenses, an annual budget over ¥200,000 is not unreasonable. However, a chapter with 20 members will receive a maximum ¥100,000 annual grant. Such small chapters are in a Catch 22 situation, as it takes special events to attract new members, but they don't have the funds necessary to put on such events.

Meanwhile, a chapter like my own in Hokkaido with 120 members receives about ¥350,000 in grant money and it can also generate other income from special events, thereby accumulating healthy cash reserves. Shouldn't the financially healthy groups provide help to the less endowed, so that these chapters can put on programs which will help them grow to be fiscally responsible for their own future? I recall the outpouring of assistance from JALT members after the earthquake and the tsunami disasters. The spirit is certainly within the membership and it has demonstrated a desire to help others in the past. Some chapters are struggling to make ends meet. They truly are in need of a helping hand. Some require immediate cash, some could use sponsored presenters from outside their immediate area, and others are looking for officers to fill crucial positions.

In the Hokkaido chapter, we have a motto that reads *teachers helping teachers*. I asked my chapter's executive committee to make a cash donation to a small chapter whose bank balance was almost zero. This chapter holds about ten meetings a year on a shoestring budget. I presented our officers with the facts and I am extremely proud of their decision to donate ¥50,000 without any strings attached. This is a first for a JALT chapter to provide this type of support to another in their time of need, but I certainly hope it will not be the last. The said recipient of the donation needs more help, so I have asked all chapters and SIGs with healthy cash reserves to step forward and contribute support.

In addition to financial support, other chapters in the northern region have informed me they are willing to sponsor speakers to present at financially challenged chapters. It is this spirit that has to be cultivated throughout JALT. The chapters are the foundation upon which JALT has been built. These pillars must be strengthened so that JALT can reach out to more teachers in rural areas. The health of all groups within JALT is critical to meeting our goals. Hokkaido chapter has taken one small step in this direction, and I call upon other chapters and SIGs to follow their lead.

Ken Hartmann
Chapter Rep Liaison <chaprep@jalt.org>

Book Reviews

...with Robert Taferner <reviews@jalt-publications.org>

This month's Book Reviews column features *Within Your Reach: Keys to Conversation*, a textbook for lower level Japanese university students reviewed by D. A. Leaper, and *Tell it Again!*, a storytelling handbook for young learners reviewed by C. J. Creighton.

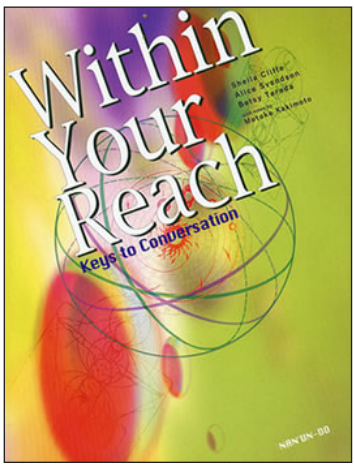
To access previous reviews please go to <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/reviews>. Don't forget your *TLT* password. If you are interested in writing a book review, please see the list of materials available for review in the Recently Received Column, or consider suggesting an alternative book that would be helpful to our membership.

Within Your Reach: Keys to Conversation

[Sheila Cliffe, Alice Svendson, Betsy Terada, & Mokoto Kakimoto. Tokyo: Nan'un-Do, 2004. pp. 94 + 2 fold-out game sheets. ¥2,000. ISBN: 4-523-17444-X.]

Reviewed by D. A. Leaper, Kanda University of International Studies

The aim of this textbook is to provide lower level Japanese university students with the opportunity to speak English. It is suitable for students who haven't approached English with a view to producing language before or who are not English majors. Apart from a list of vocabulary with brief Japanese translations at the end of each unit, the book is entirely in English. Each of the 12 units is designed to have enough material for two 90-minute classes, and has a corresponding quiz in the small teacher's booklet. There is a single tape for this course, but it is not an essential component of the course, as is made clear in the teacher's manual where they "urge the teacher to present the material 'live' as much as possible" (Teachers Manual, p. 3). The tape presents the material and instructions in easy-to-follow North American accents, and the dialogues are presented in "teacher voices" without features such as hesitation and repetition that are normally found in natural conversations. The difficulty of the tape stays at about the same level from beginning to end.



The units present topics which should be well known to all Japanese university students. They include such well-established themes as family, friends, vacations, childhood memories, and town vs. country life. There are also an interesting unit on storytelling and another on looking for work, which includes a lesson on preparing a resume. The units are sequenced in order to coincide with the university year: the first one covers introductions and classroom English; the middle unit is for the first lesson back from the summer vacation; and the last is about Christmas. For most of the units there is a pattern of warm up, vocabulary exercise, then grammar and communicative exercises. These activities lend themselves to pair and group work, although this is not stated specifically in the instructions. When planning, the teacher will have to be careful about where to split each lesson so that each unit does indeed last for two 90-minute lessons. There is no indication of where the split should be in the teacher's manual.

The strength of this book is that it is easy to use and that students should be able to complete all of the activities and tasks in the units; certainly my students could complete them relatively easily. The language starts off at a very low level, "What is X?" and throughout the book restricts conversations to the subject at hand, not allowing students to find themselves linguistically unprepared for the tasks. The exercises are familiar so there is little problem in explaining them, and students usually have a chance to personalize the information to make it relevant for themselves. There is a range of activities which require varying amounts of student input, but none so free as to find the student struggling to complete the task. At the end of each unit there is a game which relates to the topic of the unit. For example, unit 11 is about finding a job, and at the end of the unit there is a snakes and ladders type board game in which students have to complete a task on the square

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they land on such as "think of a job that involves helping people."

On the other hand, the strengths of this book are related to its weaknesses: it keeps things under such tight control that it doesn't allow much scope for students to express their creativity. For example, some of the warm up activities require students to give a dictation, or repeat a conversation, hardly giving them a chance to think for themselves. One of the practice conversations (p. 31) that students should use for talking about likes is:

A: Do you like to listen to music?

B: Yes, I listen to music every day.

A: Oh, I do, too.

Students are not given any alternative ways of expressing their likes, and their partner is not given any other follow-up than "Oh, I do, too" if they like what is being talked about. Nor is there any strategy for furthering the conversation. The result is a rather stilted way of talking.

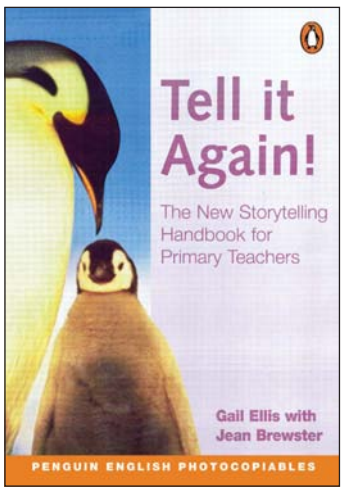
To summarize, this textbook is for students who, despite years of studying English, need to gain confidence using the vocabulary and grammar that they have learnt. The book gives them familiar topics to work through and familiar patterns of language to use with them. It is a safe choice of oral communication textbook which certainly teaches that conversation is within a student's reach. It is very good at what it does, and my students enjoyed the lessons I taught using this book. However, more ambitious students and teachers may find it a little stifling.

Tell it Again!

[Gail Ellis and Jean Brewster. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2002. pp. iv + 189. ¥5,600 ISBN: 0-582-44774-7.]

Reviewed by C. J. Creighton, Okayama City Elementary School

Tell it Again! is a storytelling handbook for teaching young learners of English as a foreign language. It is designed for teachers who wish to create a learner-centred, whole-child learning environment in their classrooms. *Tell it Again!* includes a resource package with methodology and class notes sections for 12 stories. Two of the stories are originals, ready to teach and included in the book, but the other stories must be obtained separately. This should be easy as the authors have selected classics like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1969). A cassette tape with songs, rhymes, and chants is also available (but not reviewed).



I found *Tell it Again!* comprehensive as the methodology section explains the criteria for selecting storybooks; how to use them; how to link content with teaching aims whether linguistic, cultural, or cross-curricular; and how to conduct classroom management. For teachers like myself who have experience with adults and teenagers but are new to teaching children this is useful. For those who do not have an EFL background some of the content may prove difficult if they just jump in. For example the authors cover English pronunciation in two pages. However, with some background reading (in *TLT*) even inexperienced teachers would gain valuable knowledge by doing the outlined exercises. For example in the story notes section for *Meg's Eggs* there is a well-conceived pronunciation exercise on English word stress called Stressosaurus Bingo.

In addition, the story notes section was useful. Each story note begins with an overview listing main outcomes, linguistic objectives, and cross-curricular links. The main outcomes are communicative ones such as giving a performance of the story. Then there are lesson outlines which detail the aims, state the materials needed, and cover the procedures. The outlines follow a Plan-Do-Review cycle with a good balance of group and individual work, a

lot of recycling, and imaginative tasks. There are ample opportunities for the children to develop their linguistic skills as well as develop as people. For example the lessons in *My Cat Likes to Hide in Boxes* present learning to learn through mind maps, cross-cultural awareness by thinking about stereotypes, a book-making project, and a hands on investigation of boxes.

While reviewing *Tell it Again!* I had a class of grade 3s and 4s to teach over five periods. There were around 40 children in each grade and almost all were absolute beginners. The homeroom teachers wanted to cover days of the week, food, feelings, counting, and colours. I was largely able to follow the lesson plans and use some of the material in *Tell it Again!* The storytelling style in *Tell it Again!* has the teacher seated reading from the text. This meant I could be relatively relaxed in front of my audience. While reading the story I held the book in one hand and pointed or gestured with the other. Because I could gauge the children's reactions, I could adjust my language. The context and enchanting pictures also scaffolded the children's understanding. I was, therefore, able to present the target material communicatively all in English with no translation. I was also able to introduce other key points using the lesson exercises provided in *Tell it Again*! For instance the *Butterflies of the World* worksheet gave the class a thematically related, purposeful colouring activity.

Unfortunately, I left out many of the reading and writing activities because of their difficulty. The *Caterpillar Game* has examples of the present simple, past simple, regular and irregular verbs, Wh- interrogatives, the imperative, and vocabulary like *hatch*. Furthermore, teaching reading and writing in English at elementary schools is discouraged under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) guidelines. However, for those teachers at conversation schools who can teach reading and writing there are simple labeling, ordering, and matching exercises that would add enjoyable, meaning-focused practice to their storytelling lessons. I also made a second departure from the teaching plan in *Tell it Again*! Ellis and Brewster have *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* told over several lessons to develop the children's predicting ability and it is not until the fourth class that the whole story is read. However, I felt that students expected to hear the whole story at one sitting. I told the story each class, grading the language to gradually increase its complexity. By the fourth class I was presenting the story as written. The children were not bored by this repetition. Rather they seemed to enjoy being able to follow the successive versions: gradually more and more students would call out the food names, the days of the week, and the caterpillar's feelings. Whether the lessons would have gone better if I had followed the suggested approach needs further investigation.

Overall during the 5 weeks the children's confidence and comprehension grew. For the last lesson the 4th-grade students presented their versions of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, with original costumes and props, to the 3rd graders. We all enjoyed the performances. Therefore, through storytelling and the approach in *Tell it Again!*, the children were able to use their creativity and imaginations as part of their introduction to English.

References

Carle, E. (1969). *The very hungry caterpillar*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology. (2002). *Practical handbook for elementary school English activities.* Tokyo: Kairyudo Publishing.

Recently Received

...compiled by Scott Gardner <pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

First notice = *; final notice = !. Final notice items will be removed June 30. Please adequately test materials in the classroom before writing a review. Materials requested by more than one reviewer will go to the most experienced reviewer. Please state your qualifications when requesting materials. We welcome resources and materials both for students and for teachers. Publishers should contact the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison before sending materials (email address above). Check out our list on the *TLT* website.

Books for Students (reviewed in TLT)

Contact: Scott Gardner <pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

**Colors* (series). Dahl, M. Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2005. [Incl. set of 10 early readers, each on a different color: black, blue, brown, green, orange, pink, purple, red, white, and yellow].

**Conversation Strategies* (2nd ed.). Kehe, D., & Kehe, P. D. Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates, 2004.

!*A Dynamic Approach to Everyday Idioms*. Malarcher, C. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 2005. [Incl. CDs].

!*English: Everything You Need for English from Preschool to University on One DVD* (multimedia DVD-R with additional *English Lower Primary* DVD-R). Coonarr, Australia: NelsonEducation.com, 2005.

English for Everyday Activities: A Picture Process Dictionary. Zwier, L. J. Selangor, Malaysia: Falcon Press, 1999. [Incl. teacher's guide, activity books, CD, cassette, transcripts].

The English You Need for Business. Cunningham, M., & Zwier, L. J. Hong Kong: Asia-Pacific Press Holdings, 2003. [Incl. teacher's guide, activity book].

The English You Need for the Office. Dean, S., & Zwier, L. J. Hong Kong: Asia-Pacific Press Holdings, 2003. [Incl. teacher's guide, activity book].

**How to Tell the Difference between Japanese Particles: Comparisons and Exercises*. Chino, N. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2005.

!*In English Starter*. Viney, P., & Viney, K. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. [Incl. workbooks, CD].

!*Into English*. Cronin, J. Kyoto: White Tiger Press, 2005. [Incl. teacher's manual, CD].

**Jolly Phonics DVD*. Lloyd, S., & Wernham, S. Williston, VT: Jolly Learning, 1995.

**Jolly Songs*. Fyke, L., & Sinclair, K. Williston, VT: Jolly Learning, 2005. [Incl. CD].

!*Talking about the Australian Mosaic*. Akazawa, J., & Bradford-Watts, K. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 2005. [Incl. teacher's resource manual, CD].

!*Thematic Reading: Wonders of the Real World*. Malarcher, C., & Janzen, A. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 2005. [Incl. CDs and transcripts].

**Writing Strategies 1: Intermediate*. Kehe, D., & Kehe, P. D. Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates, 2003.

**Writing Strategies 2: Advanced*. Kehe, D., & Kehe, P. D. Brattleboro, VT: Pro Lingua Associates, 2003.

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Special Interest Group News

...with Mary Hughes <sig-news@jalt-publications.org>

JALT currently has 16 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes announcements of SIG events, mini-conferences, publications, or calls for papers and presenters. SIGs wishing to print news or announcements should contact the editor by the 15th of the month, 6 weeks prior to publication.

This month, we focus on the Learner Development SIG, with information about their upcoming events.

SIG Focus

Learner Development—Do you have ideas about learner autonomy? Have you considered autonomy and learner development in a systematic way? You may be able to write up your ideas or experiences for our biannual/bilingual newsletter *Learning Learning*. If you are interested in documenting your experiences or the research you do in the classroom as part of your teaching, contact the editor, Peter Mizuki <pmizuki@cronos.ocn.ne.jp>. The next deadline for submissions is September 1. Other opportunities to get involved include joining or renewing your membership of LD. You could even take advantage of the JALT membership/join a SIG for free campaign continuing on until March 2006.

We are also keyed up to announce the LD/Osaka, 2nd Annual *Work-in-Progress Mini-Conference: A Day Celebrating Learner Development*. This event is being co-sponsored by Osaka Chapter and the Learner Development SIG on Sunday, July 17, at the Osaka City Municipal Lifelong Learning Center, on the 5th floor of Umeda's Dai-2 Building, just southeast and across the street from the Hilton Hotel <www.manabi.city.osaka.jp/>. The morning program will feature poster sessions by teacher-learners contributing to Learner Development's forthcoming anthology of papers entitled *AYA2, Autonomy You Ask Volume 2*, a collection of papers by Japan-based teacher-researchers exploring issues related to learner and teacher autonomy. Please see the *AYA1* site: <coyote.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/learnerdev/aya/index.html> (includes information about ordering the first publication). The anthology will continue to feature Japan-based authors with *AYA2* and will be published by the LD SIG in the fall of 2006 through email collaboration and a writers' retreat. The afternoon portion of the mini-conference will offer a chance to preview several presentations planned for the LD forum at JALT's national conference in October, entitled *Learning to Express Ourselves!* For additional information contact Marlen Harrison <scenteur7@yahoo.com> or Chris Carpenter <chris@dokkyo.ac.jp>, or visit <coyote.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/learnerdev/osaka_miniConf05.html>.

In addition, we welcome you to present or attend the mini-conference sponsored by LD SIG & Miyazaki Chapter, *Working Together: Make a Difference in Language Education!,* on Saturday, November 19, at Miyazaki Municipal University. The following day we will offer a chance to tour Miyazaki city. The conference committee is now seeking submissions related to themes such as collaboration, understanding of self and others, and international and intercultural awareness in language education, for example: How can individuals collaborate with each other in language education? What is the relationship between personal autonomy and respect for others' autonomy? What is the importance of teaching skills needed for understanding others? What is language education's role in the promotion of better understanding of others, international cooperation, and intercultural awareness? Please share your ideas with us! Submissions should be sent by email to <LDMIYAZAKI@yahoo.co.jp> by June 30. For further information, please contact Etsuko Shimo <shimo@miyazaki-mu.ac.jp> or Ellen Head <ellenkobe@yahoo.com>.

Another good way to find additional information about these events and other news is online just by clicking *Learner Development Gets Wired* <www3.kcn.ne.jp/~msheff/LD%20HP%20files/LDSigNews.htm>, a quarterly e-publication or our website <coyote.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/learnerdev/>. You can also contact Marlen Harrison <scenteur7@yahoo.com> or Stacey Vye <stacey.vye@gmail>.

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Learner Development Committee for 2005

- Andy Barfield — *LL Assistant Editor, LL Proofreader*
- Chris Carpenter — *Program co-chair (JALT Forum 2005), Member-at-large*
- Denise Boyd — *Treasurer, AYA 1 sales, LL Proofreader*
- Ellen Head — *Program Chair (retreats etc), LL Proofreader*
- Eric Skier — *AYA 2 co-coordinator, LL Proofreader*
- Etsuko Shimo — *E-newsletter translation, LD retreat 2005 co-coordinator, Member-at-large*
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- Heidi Evans Nachi — *Membership Chair, LL Proofreader, E-newsletter co-editor and layout*
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- Jodie Stephenson — *LL distribution, Member-at-large*
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- Stacey Vye — *Co-coordinator, Recording secretary, TLT SIG Column co-liaison, LL Assistant Editor and Proofreader*
- Steve Brown — *Member-at-large*
- Yoko Wakui — *Member-at-large*
- Yukari Saiki — *Member-at-large*

Bilingualism—*JJMM* volume 1 is now available free online. The Bilingualism SIG's academic journal, *The Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism* is celebrating Japan's only journal devoted to bilingual issues. Our earliest volume is now out of print, but we have just made these hard-to-find early articles available on the SIG's website in pdf form. If you are interested in such topics as Japanese-English codeswitching or teaching babies to read in multiple languages, check out the articles at <www.bsig.org/jjmm/1995.html>.

当研究会は複数言語で生活する家族および日本におけるバイリンガルリズム研究の支援を目的としています。どうぞホームページの<www.bsig.org>をご覧下さい。

CALL—This is it! We are in June at last, and we hope to see all of you at our annual conference on June 3–5 at Ritsumeikan University BKC Campus, in Shiga (just 20 minutes from Kyoto). With this year's number and quality of presentations from presenters of 18 different countries, it will be the definite opportunity to get *glocalized* through CALL, in the spirit of the conference theme *Glocalization through CALL: Bringing People Together*. Enjoy this opportunity to attend the presentations and to network with fellow CALLers from Japan and abroad, as well as attend the plenary addresses by our Keynote Speaker Uschi Felix, Director of the Research Centre for New Media in Language Learning at Monash University, and also by Hayo Reinders, Director of the English Language Self Access Centre of the University of Auckland, as well as Yukio Takefuta, Professor Emeritus at Chiba University. We look forward to seeing you at JALTCALL 2005! For more information on JALTCALL 2005 and other CALL SIG activities, please visit our website at <jaltcall.org>.

College and University Educators—Information about what is going on with CUE can be found at <allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/>. Please check for regular updates on the 15th of each month.

Gender Awareness in Language Education—The purpose of the GALE SIG is to research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training. We welcome submissions for our newsletter (published three times a year: spring, summer, and fall) on both

theoretical and practical topics related to the SIG's aims. Book reviews, lesson plans, think pieces, poetry—basically anything related to gender and language teaching—are welcomed. To see past newsletters, please visit our website at <www.tokyoprogressive.org.uk/gale>. You can submit a piece by sending it to one of our coordinators: Steve Cornwell <stevec@gol.com> or Andrea Simon-Maeda <andy@nagoya-ku.ac.jp>. To join GALE, please use the form in the back of this *TLT* or contact Diane Nagatomo <dianenagatomo@m2.pbc.ne.jp>.

Global Issues in Language Education— Are you interested in promoting global awareness and international understanding through your teaching? Then join the Global Issues in Language Education SIG. We produce an exciting quarterly newsletter packed with news, articles, and book reviews; organize presentations for local, national, and international conferences; and network with groups such as UNESCO, Amnesty International, and Educators for Social Responsibility. Join us in teaching for a better world! The GILE website is located at <www.jalt.org/global/sig/>. For further information, please contact Kip Cates <kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp>.

Junior and Senior High School—The JSH SIG is operating at a time of considerable change in secondary EFL education. Therefore, we are concerned with language learning theory, teaching materials, and methods. In addition, we are also intensely interested in curriculum innovation. The employment of native speaker instructors on a large scale is a recent innovation and one which has yet to be thoroughly studied or evaluated. JALT members who are involved with junior or senior high school EFL are cordially invited to join us for dialogue and professional development opportunities.

Materials Writers—The archives section of the Materials Writers website is back up and active again. If you'd like to read a bit about what we were doing in the last century, take a look at <uk.geocities.com/materialwritersig/archives.html>.

Other Language Educators—OLE has issued OLE Newsletter 35 containing information on OLE related submissions to JALT 2005, a hardly believable story, and a discussion paper by Ruth Reichert on the use of Internet pages for homework. Copies are available from Rudolf Reinelt <reinelt@ll.ehime-u.ac.jp>.

Professionalism, Administration, and Leadership in Education—The PALE SIG welcomes new members, officers, volunteers, and submissions of articles for our journal or newsletter. To read current and past issues of our journal, visit <www.debito.org/PALE>. Also, anyone may join our listserv at <groups.yahoo.com/group/PALE_Group/>. For information on events, visit <www.jalt.org/groups/PALE>.

Pronunciation—The Pronunciation SIG is seeking new members. This SIG is regrouping, with the intent to discuss, share, and promote ideas, processes, and up-to-date research regarding pronunciation teaching and learning. If you are interested in joining or would like further information, please contact Susan Gould <gould@lc.chubu.ac.jp> or <suzytalk@yahoo.com>.

Teaching Children—The Teaching Children SIG is for all teachers of children. We publish a bilingual newsletter four times a year, with columns by leading teachers in our field. There is a mailing list for teachers of children who want to share teaching ideas or questions at <tcsig@yahoogroups.com>. We are always looking for new people to keep the SIG dynamic. With our bilingual newsletter, we particularly hope to appeal to Japanese teachers. We hope you can join us for one of our upcoming events. For more information, visit <www.tcsigjalt.org>.

児童教育部会は子どもに英語(外国語)を教える全ての教師を対象にした部会です。当部会では、この分野で著名な教師が担当するコラムを含む会報を年4回発行しております。また、子どもに英語を指導するアイデアや疑問を交換する場としてメーリングリスト<tcsig@yahoogroups.com>を運営しています。活発な部会を維持していくためにも新会員を常に募集しております。会報を英語と日本語で提供しており日本人の先生方の参加も大歓迎です。今後開催される部会の催し物へぜひご参加ください。部会に関する詳細は<www.tcsigjalt.org>をご覧下さい。

Teacher Education—The Teacher Education SIG 2005 Retreat will be held from July 30 to August 1. It will take place at Aichi University of Education in Kariya, east of Nagoya, with economical accommodation at nearby Ai Plaza, Kariya. This year's focus is Teaching Cultures, as classes, including those now developing at elementary schools, have to balance language and culture/international understanding. Through presentations and workshops, we will look at developing materials (from elementary school to tertiary level), which combine: 1) more than a shallow look at countries' cultures, 2) successful interaction between language learning and cultural education, and 3) engaging activities for learners and teachers. It's a chance too for participants to take in the nearby 2005 Aichi International Expo and see how various cultures are portrayed at the international pavilions. Interested? For more details, contact Anthony Robins <anthonycrobins@yahoo.com>.

Teaching Older Learners—Tadashi Ishida, the founder of TOL SIG, has published a book with Shumpu Publishing. It is written in Japanese under the title of 「はじめよう!生きがいとしての英語」(Now or Never! English for Life). This book should be of special interest both to older learners of English and their teachers and university administrators, who face an enrollment crisis due to the decrease in the college-age population. For more information, please visit <www.eigosenmon.com>

石田正JALT監事が学術図書出版の春風社より『はじめよう!生きがいとしての英語』という本を出版しました。英語を勉強している中高年者と、中高年者に英語を教えている先生にとても参考になる本で、冬の経営を余儀なくされている少子高齢化時代の大学の役割も提言しています。

SIG Contacts

Bilingualism—Tim Greer; t: 078-803-7683; <tim@kobe-u.ac.jp>; <www.bsig.org>

College and University Educators—Philip McCasland (coordinator); t: 0463-58-1211 ext. 4587(w), 0463-69-5523(h); <mccaslandpl@rocketmail.com>; <allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/>

Computer-Assisted Language Learning—Timothy Gutierrez (coordinator) <sig-coordinator@jaltcall.org>; Newsletter Editorial Team <sig-newsletter@jaltcall.org>; Peter Ruthven-Stuart (Program Chair); t: 0138-34-6448; <sig-program@jaltcall.org>; <jaltcall.org>

Gender Awareness in Language Education—Steve Cornwell; <stevec@gol.com>; <www.tokyoprogressive.org.uk/gale/>

Global Issues in Language Education—Kip A. Cates; t/f: 0857-31-5650(w); <kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp>; <www.jalt.org/global/sig/>

Junior and Senior High School—William Matheny; t: 052-624-3493; <willheny@nifty.ne.jp>

Learner Development—Stacey Vye; <stacey.vye@gmail.com>; Marlen Harrison; <scenteur@yahoo.com>; <coyote.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/learnerdev/>

Materials Writers—John Daly; t/f: 0283-22-1346; <john-d@sano-c.ac.jp>; <uk.geocities.com/materialwritersig/>

Other Language Educators—Rudolf Reinelt; t/f: 089-927-6293(h); t/f: 089-927-9359(w); <reinelt@ll.ehime-u.ac.jp>

PALE—Robert Aspinall; <aspinall@biwako.shiga-u.ac.jp>; <www.debito.org/PALE/>

Pragmatics—Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska <mierze@tuj.ac.jp>; Seiji Fukazawa; <sfukaza@hiroshima-u.ac.jp>; Kenneth Fordyce; <fordyce@hiroshima-u.ac.jp>; <groups.yahoo.com/group/jaltpragsig>

Teacher Education—Anthony Robins; <robins@rio.odn.ne.jp>

Teaching Children—Alison Miyake; t/f: 0834-27-0078; <mbi@joy.ocn.ne.jp>; <www.tcsigjalt.org/>

Testing and Evaluation—Jeff Hubbell; <01jhubbell@jcom.home.ne.jp>; <www.jalt.org/test>

Affiliate SIGs

Teaching Older Learners—Emi Itoi; <futakuu@nifty.com>

Forming SIGs

Pronunciation—Susan Gould; <gould@lc.chubu.ac.jp>

Chapter Reports

...with Heather Sparrow <chap-reports@jalt-publications.org>

The Chapter Reports column is a forum for sharing synopses of presentations held at JALT Chapters around Japan with the *TLT* readership. For guidelines on contributions, see the Submissions page at the back of each issue.

Hokkaido: February—*Classroom Management* by **Chris Perry**. The roundtable discussion brought to light that it was impossible to come up with one "correct" solution regarding classroom discipline and the solutions proposed were as individual as the teachers involved in the discussions.

When discussing student absenteeism, the issues raised included how discreetly the situation should be handled. Perry has the student sign the attendance book to acknowledge that he or she has been told about the problem. He also allows students to make up absences due to school-related activities by writing a report of the event in English.

Teaching experience and knowing one's students are the best guides for what to do when discipline problems arise. And the classic advice still holds true today: If you're tough and enforce the rules at the beginning of the school year, you can ease up on them later.

Reported by Wilma Luth

Kitakyushu: March—*What CALL Can Do in EFL Environments* by **Hiroshi Otani**. Otani explained his teaching career as a series of moves that have taken him to schools with students of lower and lower levels of ability which has equipped him to deal with an ever-widening range of students. In an attempt to provide motivation for 5-year college of technology students, who don't need to pass a university entrance exam, he joined a team who developed an online vocabulary program. They began by compiling their own list of 3,300 words (partly through concordancing British science textbooks), then created learning and testing activities.

Otani showed us his website and other sites developed for Japanese students, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses. He believes two advantages to computer use are the endless repetition and instant feedback it provides. He has also found that developing online materials has made him a better classroom teacher because of the attention he now pays to ordering of activities and clearness of instructions. Referring to Vygotsky's theories, Otani said he believes CALL helps create the mechanical and meaningful repetition and practice that are necessary to push learning into acquisition in an EFL setting.

Reported by Margaret Orleans

Kobe: February—*Is Shadowing a Magic Wand?* by **Ken Tamai**. Since listening has been included on the *Center Test*, shadowing has become more widespread in Japanese classrooms. Tamai defines shadowing as "an act or a task of listening in which the learner tracks the heard speech and repeats it as exactly as possible while listening to the incoming information." The recordings, which are shadowed, include no pauses to allow for repetition—it must be done simultaneously with listening.

Demonstrating by having the audience shadow, Tamai also played recordings of high school students he has taught. Recommending the use of authentic material over textbook tapes, he suggested the use of movie scripts, which can be exciting, emotional, challenging, and even tragic. Self-made recordings are possible, but should include emotion. Initially, the shadowing should be done without a text, but then can be done with one.

Many students, especially boys, seem to be resistant at the initial stages. Students can become unmotivated by their inability to understand the texts, but need to realise that the challenge is not to search for meaning, but to capture and reproduce the sound. After many hours of practice, students can move on to shadowing faster texts and they lose their fear of English spoken at high speeds. In a language lab, students can exchange tapes and check each other's recordings. As well as relieving the teacher of the sole responsibility to give feedback, in this way they can be encouraged by hearing the mistakes of others and learning from them. After listening to their own tapes

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again, students write self-analyses of their own performances.

Tamai found that the analyses became longer over time, a sign of developing learner autonomy. The effects of shadowing were found to be most significant in lower-level students; it may be the case that higher-level students have already acquired the skills. Among the effects of shadowing are a development of understanding of English prosody; an ability to speak faster, more accurately, and with more natural pronunciation and acquisition of the skill of being able to hear details.

Reported by David Heywood

Omiya: December—*My Share Meeting:* **1) Karen McGee** demonstrated a classroom game that helps students distinguish between *katakana* and English and creates an atmosphere of peer support for sounding like a native speaker. **2) Aurora Dobashi** shared a task-based activity using sheets of colorful pictures designed to motivate students to use vocabulary. **3) Joe Falout** brought several volumes from the Uncle John's *Bathroom Readers* series, published by Bathroom Reader Press. This series represents a huge collection of short material in English such as history, trivia, bizarre but true stories, personality quizzes, and quotations. He then demonstrated a listening activity based on the material from one of these books titled *Which Crazy Story Is Not True?* **4) Cecilia Fujishima** demonstrated a Christmas craft project in which students followed English instructions to create Christmas trees and then composed Christmas wishes to write on their trees. She also shared a Happy Christmas question and answer board game and recommended the website <www.enchantedlearning.com>. **5) Robert Baines** discussed the use of a *Guided Reading Organizer* developed for high schools in the States and explained ways to tailor this type of tool to an EFL class. **6) Hugh Palmer** shared the activities, materials, and video clip from *The Simpsons* that he uses when teaching students to present a brief book review or movie review to the class. **7) Ted O'Neill** demonstrated the use of a wordmap form for student-created vocabulary books and suggested ways to use these forms for collaborative work in class. **8) Michael Stout** demonstrated an activity designed to reinforce vocabulary titled *Wedding Bell Blues*. Participants were divided into teams and assigned roles. They then read descriptions of one wife candidate, pooled information with their team members, and collaborated in selecting the best candidate. **9) Roberto Rabbini** introduced a way to make simple language drills more interesting and student-centered by providing a structure that allows pairs of students to take turns playing teacher and student. He also recommended <www.clipart.com> as a resource.

Reported by Karen McGee

Omiya: February—*Listening Tactics for Better High School Language Learning* by **Karl O'Callaghan**. O'Callaghan discussed the importance of listening to language learners and demonstrated several listening activities suitable for junior high and high school classes. Participants tried out and discussed some of these activities and shared their own techniques and methods for creating listening opportunities in the classroom. O'Callaghan also outlined the parts of a good listening lesson, including: pre-listening activities or *schema building*, to ensure students' understanding of the context of what they will be listening to and to activate the students' background knowledge; listening activities that provide several opportunities to hear the same text and which should lead students from general to detailed understanding; and post-listening activities such as discussion, debate, or creation of a written summary, which allows students to personalize and consolidate the target language. Participants received copies of *Tactics for Listening* published by Oxford University Press.

Reported by Karen McGee

Osaka: April—*Osaka JALT Hanami*. This year's *hanami* was held at Nishi No Maru Garden adjacent to Osaka Castle. Casual conversations ensued on topics such as teaching and the coming semester. The event was a wonderful prelude to our next event on outdoor language learning.

Reported by Brian Caspino

Shinshu: February—*Mini Colloquium: Local ELT Research by Local Researchers in Association with Shinshu ELT Research <www.ELTResearch.com>* by **Danny Majdanac, Gregory Birch, Hideki Sakai, Eddy Jones,** and **Theron Muller**. Majdanac's presentation detailed results obtained from an intrinsic case study examining an assistant language teacher's (ALT) question and feedback strategies. Employing IRF coding, video analysis, and teacher interview methods, findings indicated

Greg Birch, Eddy Jones, and Mark Brierley at Shinshu JALT's February mini-colloquium

questions addressed to individual students tended to be answered while questions addressed to the class tended to be unanswered.

Birch shared a research project focusing on student writing. He reported how students used a thesaurus to improve and expand vocabulary in their compositions. Revisions were evaluated to determine if the compositions improved. When the original passage contained errors they tended to improve, but when compositions were originally correct they didn't improve.

Moderator John Adamson introducing presenter Hideki Sakai

Sakai discussed the validity of free written recall tasks as listening tests. Participants wrote everything they remembered from a second language (L2) listening passage in their first language (L1). Performance was scored according to *idea unit analysis*. Sakai explained some of the cognitive processes thereby revealed, including analyzing chunks and inferences.

Jones addressed problems associated with the team-teaching relationship between Japanese Teachers of English (JTE) and ALTs, including the dichotomy of the ALT role as simultaneous expert and advisor. Questionnaires indicated problems weren't difficult to solve, but a lack of time strained relationships. Possible solutions included incorporating school curriculum projects emphasizing development of cross-cultural understanding.

Muller's open forum addressed content teaching in English. Participants discussed how the challenges of content and conversational English classes differed, and also addressed issues of balance and incorporation of content courses into curriculums. Aspects of content courses participants agreed were challenging included students lacking sufficient background knowledge of the subject, being unable to cover the same amount of material in English as opposed to L1, and balancing evaluation between content concepts and English.

Reported by Theron Muller

Yokohama: March—*English Blast: The English Enrichment Program for Bilingual Children in Japan* by **Holly Thompson**. This workshop introduced *English Blast*, a cooperative, parent-taught program of supplementary enrichment education designed to provide bilingual, intercultural children typically enrolled in Japanese schools with a stimulating year-round supplemental learning environment in English. It was started in 1998 by parents seeking a low-cost alternative program for their own bilingual children. It has three key components: it maintains a supportive peer group as the primary motivator; parents and children participate as both teachers and learners; and it demonstrates a commitment to inquiry-based learning toward developing critical thinking skills. International and

intercultural in its curriculum and attitude, no single country's educational approach is used, there is no religious angle, and respect for different cultures is fostered.

The program treats the family as a cooperative learning community. Classes meet once a week; one parent attends each class; and occasional days involve all family members. Thompson, a university English professor and mother, explained the guidelines and curriculum, and led participants, divided into target age groups of their choice (ages 3–6, 7–10, and 11–12), as they worked through a *Unit of Enquiry* of their invention (one 11–12 group decided on languages, another on Shikoku's 88 temples; others on chickens (3–6 years), *Anne Frank* (7–10), etc.). The Unit of Enquiry Lesson Plan was followed, including attention to basic goals and objectives, deciding recommended reference materials, class content and activities, and homework.

The workshop exercise showed the benefits and power of putting heads together, that parents need not be professional teachers, and suggested there are countless ways to introduce critical thinking. No matter what age level the participants in this excellent workshop may teach, they experienced firsthand how cooperation, excellent lesson plan organization, and clear goals enable one to teach critical thinking at any age level, as well as how they can exploit the principles of this program to enrich their own teaching.

Reported by Ronald Thornton

–WH Questions–

Rob Waring and Marc Helgesen are co-conference chairs of JALT2005.
Each month, they'll answer "WH" questions about the conference.
Send your questions to: <wh@jalt-publications.org>

Can We Talk?

Rob: There's another new feature at JALT2005: "Discussion." Rather than being a formal presentation, the discussion leaders will provide an opening statement and around five discussion questions. Then the participants will all join in.

Marc: And some of the topics look really interesting. They include teaching women, using Japanese university libraries, publishing papers, English immersion, IT planning, graduation theses, using weblogs, independent learning, and self assessment. There's a real balance of topics being considered!

Rob: JALT is a professional organization. I think it is useful to remember that everyone has something to say—not just the presenters, but the other attendees too. This should be a great way to facilitate sharing.

Marc: Yeah, sharing our ideas and experiences. In other words, sharing our stories!

Rob: Once the schedule is published in a future *TLT*, why not see which discussions are available, read the questions, and join us with some of your stories!

Chapter Events

...with Aleda Krause <chap-events@jalt-publications.org>

JALT members may attend any chapter meeting at JALT member rates—usually free. Chapters, don't forget to let everyone know what you're doing. Add your event to the JALT calendar at <jalt.org/calendar/> or send the details to the editor by email or t/f: 048-787-3342.

Chiba—*Magic in the EFL Classroom* by **Ed Rapoza**. You don't have to be a professional magician to bring magic or its principles into your teaching. Magic inherently motivates and is adaptable to many learning tasks. After a brief demonstration, participants will learn how to make props with everyday objects and brainstorm ways to adapt this art for their own teaching. *Sunday June 26, 14:00-16:30; SATY Bunka Hall, Room 2 (4F), 1 min. walk from Inage Station east exit on JR Sobu Line; one-day members ¥1000.*

East Shikoku—*Poster Presentation Session: Materials for Classroom Activities*. The second meeting of East Shikoku JALT will again be at the Fureai Centre in Otoyo. We hope that members from Tokushima, Kagawa, and Kochi know the way and will come again with friends. This is a practical session using posters to present original materials or teaching ideas. Presenters will discuss their posters with other participants who move freely from poster to poster. If you would like to bring a poster, please contact Roger Nunn at <nunn@cc.kochi-u.ac.jp>. Anyone is welcome, with or without a poster. *Saturday June 18, 14:00-16:30; The Fureai Centre in Otoyo, opposite Otaguchi.*

Gunma—*Interactional Activities for Understanding Global Issues* by **Kazuya Asakawa**. This presentation begins with an examination of the rational for teaching English compatible with the Education for Sustainable Development, a UNESCO program. Content-centered teaching and teaching methodology will be discussed, with an introduction to various activities designed to generate participants' opinions and raise awareness about global issues. *Sunday June 19, 14:00-16:30; Maebashi Kyoai Gakuen College; one-day members ¥1000.*

Hokkaido—*Canadian Studies In Japan* by **Dave McMurray**. McMurray has just helped open a Canadian Studies Centre that serves Kyushu from the International University of Kagoshima. Dave will share highlights from the Centre's research members investigating bilingualism, language learning in Canada including development of Japanese, immigration, identity, values, and what Japanese students are most interested in learning about Canada. *Sunday June 26, 13:30-15:30; Hokkaido International School, Sumikawa; one-day members ¥1000.*

Ibaraki—*The Psychology of Difficult Students* (Sat), ***Adult Education Theory*** (Sun) by **Curtis Kelly**, Osaka Gakuin University. This is our annual Ibaraki Chapter Retreat/Miniconference. Our featured presenter will give a presentation on both days. Shorter presentations by chapter members will also be offered. Three meals plus lodging and bath are included. *Saturday June 18, 13:30; Sunday June 19, 13:30; Ibaraki University Lodge in Daigo; both days ¥2500, one day ¥1250.*

Kagoshima—*Controversial Content in EFL: What is Justifiable and What is Not?* by **Trevor Sargent**, Tottori University. Discussing and debating controversial issues in EFL classes can be an effective way to help students improve their English communication skills. The speaker will propose some practical ways of ensuring that when controversial issues are raised in the classroom, they are dealt with in a way that respects student autonomy, avoids student abuse, and models an approach to inquiry that has academic integrity. *Sunday June 26, 13:00-15:00; Seminar Room 117, Ground Floor Kousha Biru, Shinyashiki, opposite the Shinyashiki Tram Stop; one-day members ¥800.*

Kitakyushu—*Engaging Learners in Their Own Learning with a Drama Approach* by **Steve Brown**. Drama in the language classroom is often thought of as just a series of techniques or fun activities. But at its most rewarding, it is an approach that seeks to actively engage learners

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in the learning process and encourages them to work together as a group, sharing responsibility for their own learning. Brown will suggest how drama might be used as a wider-ranging approach. He'll link his presentation to recent developments in the area of learner autonomy. *Saturday June 25, 18:30-20:30; Kitakyushu International Conference Center, Room 31; one-day members ¥1000.*

Kyoto—*JALTCALL 2005*. The theme of the conference is *Glocalization through CALL: Bringing People Together*, and focuses on the social dimension of CALL at local and global levels, as represented by the term *glocalization*. Plenary speakers include Hayo Reinders, Uschi Felix, and Yukio Takefuta. *Friday June 3, 13:00-17:00; Saturday June 4, 09:00-18:00; Sunday June 5, 9:00-15:00; Ritsumeikan University Biwako Kusatsu Campus; one-day members ¥9000 (additional charge for Friday workshops).*

Matsuyama—*Creating Learning Communities Through Reading and Portfolio Assessment* by **Barry Mateer**, Tamagawa University. A working definition of reading must include a problem-solving process. Such an approach can be initiated by each student writing one question that comes to mind while reading. By students sharing their problem with a partner to seek a solution and through teacher-fronted classroom interaction, language awareness and critical thinking can be focused on and a learning community can be created. *Sunday June 12, 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan 4F; one-day members ¥1000.*

Nagasaki—*Using Video/DVD in the Classroom* by **Raphael Bourgeois**, Thomson Learning. Discover practical strategies for teaching learners to become fluent in English as a world language. Bourgeois will present step-by-step demonstrations of classroom techniques and activities for developing oral fluency and provide an overview of Thomson ELT's exciting new course series. He will also include video-based activities to spice up conversation classes while making language learning a fun and meaningful experience. *Saturday June 25, 13:30-15:30; Dejima Koryu Kaikan, 4F, Meeting Room 2 (this is the large white building next to Dejima Wharf and Nagasaki Prefectural Art Museum; take #5 streetcar to Shiminbyoinmae stop or #1 streetcar to Dejima stop; free for all.*

Nagoya—*Information and Techniques to Assist People in Bridging Cultural Gaps and Making International Travel and Business Dealings Easier* by **Tanya Evanoff** and **J. P. Perkins**, Cultural Bridges-Global. Effective communication depends upon a common ground of knowledge, experience, and assumptions and most importantly, upon vested interest and appreciation for one another. Cultural Bridges-Global offers unique and very valuable key concepts and practical tools to companies, families, and individuals who are visiting, working, or living in other countries. *Sunday June 19, 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F Lecture Room 2; one-day members ¥1,000.*

Okinawa—*Learning Kanji Through Picture Images* by **Hoshin Nakamura**, Okinawa University. The speaker will present and workshop his latest textbook, *Learning Kanji Through Picture Images,* which is based on an intuitive visual mnemonic system. This presentation will be of interest to anyone learning Japanese characters, especially those at beginner and intermediate levels. *Sunday June 19, 14:00-17:00; Okinawa Christian College; one-day members ¥1000.*

Omiya—*Current Trends and the Future of Elementary School English Activities* by **Tom Merner**, Reitaku University. Elementary school English: What has happened since its implementation several years ago? What are the trends? What are schools doing? Who is teaching? Will English become a formal subject? Questions are welcome and it is hoped that we can discuss a direction schools can take. Merner will also introduce a new textbook for elementary school, based on a content-based curriculum and with a totally new approach. *Sunday June 19, 14:00-17:00; Sakuragi Kominkan 5F (near Omiya Station, west exit); one-day members ¥1000.*

Sendai—*English Through Drama* by **Miho Moody**, Miyagi Gakuin Women's University, Sendai Fukushi University. Drama is known to be a practical technique for EFL, as it gives

learners an actual reason and opportunity to speak English in a meaningful context. This facilitates language acquisition. Moody will demonstrate some activities and explain the rational behind them. This workshop has two main aims: to integrate drama into situations where the student-teacher ratio is very high and to encourage reluctant students to fully engage in English tasks through drama. *Sunday June 26, 14:00-17:00; venue TBA; one-day members ¥1000.*

Shinshu—*High School English Teaching Workshops* by **Shizuo Tabata** and **Danny Madjanac**. Two local presenters will give short workshops on teaching methodologies at High Schools. This is intended as a practical afternoon with the needs of team teachers and teachers of large classes in mind. Shizuo Tabata works as a school inspector in the Matsumoto area and has many years of team-teaching experience. Danny Madjanac is an ALT from Canada now working at Okaya Higashi High School. *Sunday June 26, 14:00-17:00; Matsumoto M-Wing; one-day members ¥1000.*

Toyohashi—*An Overview of Japanese English Education From the Meiji Period to the Present* by **Gregg McNabb**. English education in Japan is sometimes incorrectly stereotyped as in a static state of grammar-translation coupled with the memorization of grammatical minutiae in order to pass The Entrance Exam. However, from the Meiji Era, to Harold Palmer, to the JET Program, to the ministry's recent plan to cultivate "Japanese With English Abilities," Japan's English education has been *dynamic*. This presentation will provide an overview of important developments in Japanese English education. *Sunday June 12, 13:30-16:00; Aichi University Bldg 5, Room 521; one-day members ¥1000.*

Toyohashi—*Teaching Young Learners* and *Teaching Phonics* by **Peter Warner**. In the first half of this presentation, principles of successful EFL lessons will be explained and demonstrated. Although the context is young learners, these principles apply to adults as well. The second half will explain the importance of phonics and demonstrate methods of teaching it. There will be time for questions. *Sunday July 3, 13:30-16:00; Aichi University, Toyohashi Campus, Building 5, Room 53A; one-day members ¥1000.*

Yamagata—*Atlanta, Georgia in Terms of its History, Culture, Education, Language, etc.* by **Ben Chandler**. The presenter is to talk about the above-mentioned topic focusing on the English language as a means of global communication in the 21st century. Chandler is an ALT in Yamagata city. *Saturday June 4, 13:30-15:30; Yamagata Seibu Kominkan (t: 023-645-1223); one-day members ¥800.*

Yokohama—*Phonetic Features of British, American, and Indian TV Newscasters' Speech and Responses of Listeners* by **Nidumolu Syamala**, CIEFL (India). This study deals with phonetic features of TV newscasters' speech from the BBC, CNN, and Doordarshan (DD) and responses of Indian students regarding the intelligibility of these newscasts. Responses show that the RP (Received Pronunciation) versus US-style contrast is sharper than the Indian versus foreign variety contrast. The audience will be exposed to all three dialects for their input on intelligibility. *Sunday June 12, 14:00-16:30; Ginou Bunka Kaikan (Skills & Culture Center) near JR Kannai & Yokohama Subway Isezakichojamachi; one-day members ¥1000.*

Chapter Contacts

If you want to get in touch with a chapter for information or assistance, please use the following contacts. Chapters who want to change their contact should send it the editor: Aleda Krause; t/f: 048-787-3342; <chap-events@jalt-publications.org>.

Akita—Takeshi Suzuki; t: 018-422-1562; <takeshis@mail.edinet.ne.jp>; <www.edinet.ne.jp/~takeshis/jalt.htm>

Chiba—Melinda Hsu; <melemail@gol.com>

Fukui—Takako Watanabe; t/f: 0776-34-8334; <wtakako@vesta.ocn.ne.jp>

Fukuoka—Jack Brajcich; <jackb@jcom.home.ne.jp>; J. Lake; <jlake@jcom.home.ne.jp>; <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/fukuoka.html>

Gifu (Affiliate Chapter)—Margaret Yamanaka; <myama@gijodai.ac.jp>; <jalt.org/groups/Gifu>

Gunma—Renee Sawazaki; <renee@alum.calberkeley.org>; <www.harahara.net/JALT/>

Hamamatsu—Greg O'Dowd; <gvg75@hotmail.com>; Dan Frost; <danshonest@yahoo.com>; <hamamatsujalt.org>

Himeji—William Balsamo; t: 0792-54-5711; <balsamo@kenmei.ac.jp>; <www.geocities.com/yamataro670/Himeji-JALT.htm>

Hiroshima—Caroline Lloyd; <cajan3@yahoo.co.uk>

Hokkaido—Ken Hartmann; t/f: 011-584-7588; <office@jalthokkaido.net>; <www.jalthokkaido.net>

Ibaraki—Martin Pauly; t: 0298-58-9523; f: 0298-58-9529; <pauly@k.tsukuba-tech.ac.jp>; Wade Carlton; <wade@mx.ibaraki.ac.jp>; <www.kasei.ac.jp/JALT/>

Iwate—Mary Burkitt; t/f: 019-663-3132; <iwatejalt@hotmail.com>

Kagoshima—Cynthia Keith; t: 099-216-8800; f: 099-216-8801; <kagojalt@hotmail.com>; <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/kagoshima.html>

Kitakyushu—Malcolm Swanson; t: 093-962-8430(h), 0948-22-5726(w); <mswanson@pukeko.ws>; <www.jalt.org/chapters/kq/>

Kobe—Yukio Hirayanagi; t/f: 078-794-0401; <yemshirayanagi@yahoo.co.jp>;

Kumamoto—Joe Tomei; t: 096-360-3858 (h), 096-364-5161 ext. 410 (w); <jtomei@kumagaku.ac.jp>; <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/kumamoto.html>

Kyoto—Paul Hackshaw; t/f: 0774-72-7908; <publicity@kyotojalt.org>; <www.kyotojalt.org>

Matsuyama—Richard Blight; t/f: 089-927-8341; <rgblight@hotmail.com>; <MatsuyamaJALT.50megs.com/>

Miyazaki—Hugh Nicoll; t: 0985-20-4788; <hnicoll@miyazaki-mu.ac.jp>; Steve Davies; 0985-85-5931; <sdavies@miyazaki-mic.ac.jp>; <allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/MiyaJALT/>

Nagasaki—Michele Ruhl; <michele@net.nagasaki-u.ac.jp>; Tim Allan; <allan@kwassui.ac.jp> or <timothy_allan@hotmail.com>; <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/nagasaki.html>

Nagoya—Katsumi Ito; t: 070-5642-3339; f: 0569-34-2489; <itokatsumi@h5.dion.ne.jp>; <jaltnagoya.homestead.com>

Nara—Ann Mayeda; <amayeda@m4.kcn.ne.jp>; t/f: 0745-46-2503; <www.jalt.org/groups/nara/>

Niigata—Mark Frank; <niigatajalt@yahoo.co.jp>; t: 0254-26-3109

Okayama—Gavin Thomas; <gavin_chiaki_thomas@ybb.ne.jp>; t: 086-277-2995

Okinawa—Marcos Benevides; t: 090-5923-8047; <www.okinawateacher.com>

Omiya—Ted O'Neill; <ted.oneill@b5notebook.org>; <www.jalt.org/chapters/omiya/>

Osaka—Robert Sanderson; <sanderson808@gol.com>; <www.osakajalt.org>

Sendai—Thomas Warren-Price; <tomprice6@hotmail.com>; <www.geocities.com/jaltsendai>

Shinshu—Kaneko Tami; t: 0266-53-7707; f: 0266-73-3899; <tami@clio.ne.jp>

Shizuoka—Masahiko Goshi; <goshimms@ybb.ne.jp>

Tokyo—Stan Pederson; <spjalt@yahoo.com>; <www.jalt.org/groups/tokyo>

Toyohashi—Laura Kusaka; t: 0532-47-4111; <kusaka@vega.aichi-u.ac.jp>; <www.kokusai.aichi-edu.ac.jp/jalttoyohashi/entry.html>

West Tokyo—Chris Sullivan; <jaltwesttokyo@yahoo.com>; <www.geocities.com/jaltwesttokyo>

Yamagata—Fumio Sugawara; t/f: 0238-85-2468 <chricofu@sgic.jp>

Yamaguchi—Yukiko Shima; t: 0836-88-5421; <yuki@ed.yama.sut.ac.jp>

Yokohama—Scott Bronner; t/f: 045-982-0959; 03-3238-3768 (w); <bronner@iname.com>

Visited TLT's website recently? <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/>

Job Information Center

...with Ted O'Neill <job-info@jalt-publications.org>

To list a position in *The Language Teacher*, please email <job-info@jalt-publications.org> or f: 03-3446-7195, Ted O'Neill, Job Information Center. Email is preferred. Please type your ad in the body of the email. The notice should be received before the 15th of the month, 2 months before publication, and contain the following information: city and prefecture, name of institution, title of position, whether full- or part-time, qualifications, duties, salary and benefits, application materials, deadline, and contact information. Be sure to refer to *TLT*'s policy on discrimination. Any job advertisement that discriminates on the basis of sex, race, age, or nationality either must be modified or will not be included in the JIC column.

Hyogo-ken—School of Economics, Kwansei Gakuin University is hiring two full-time instructors of English as a foreign language for April 2006 on one-year contract (renewable up to four years). **Qualifications:** MA in TESOL or Applied Linguistics. **Duties:** Teaching in the School of Economics (10 classes of 90 minutes a week). **Salary & Benefits:** ¥5,200,000 per year and research allowance. **Deadline:** June 25, 2005. **Application Materials:** CV, two letters of recommendation, a written statement of the applicant's view on teaching and career, copies of diplomas and transcripts, a 5 to 10 minute videotaped segment of actual teaching. **Contact:** Prof. Takaaki Kanzaki, School of Economics, Kwansei Gakuin University, 1-1-155 Uegahara, Nishinomiya 662-8501 <tkanzaki@kwansei.ac.jp>; <www.kwansei.ac.jp/LanguageCenter/IEP>.

Niigata-ken—The International University of Japan in Niigata-ken is looking for temporary English Language Instructors to teach in its summer Intensive English Program for graduate level students from Japan and several other countries. The exact dates have yet to be confirmed, but the teachers' contracts will probably run from July 14 to September 13. The contract length will be 9 weeks: 1 week orientation and de-briefing and 8 weeks teaching. **Qualifications:** MA or equivalent in TESL/TEFL or a related field. Experience with intermediate students and intensive programs is highly desirable. Experience with programs in international relations, international management, or cross-cultural communication would be helpful. Familiarity with Windows computers is required. **Duties:** Teach intermediate-level students up to 16 hours per week, assist in testing and materials preparation, attend meetings, write short student reports, and participate in extracurricular activities. **Salary & Benefits:** ¥850,000 gross salary. Free accommodation provided on or near the campus. Transportation costs refunded soon after arrival. No health insurance provided. **Location:** Yamato-machi, Niigata-ken (a mountainous region about 90 minutes by train from Tokyo). **Application Materials:** Submit a current CV, a cover letter, and a passport-sized photo. **Deadlines:** Please send application materials as soon as possible. The deadline is ongoing. Selected applicants will be offered interviews. **Contact:** Mitsuko Nakajima, IEP Administrative Coordinator, International University of Japan, Yamato-machi, Minami Uonuma-gun, Niigata-ken 949-7277; f: 0257-79-1187; <iep@iuj.ac.jp>.

Niigata-ken—Rainbow Language House is seeking a committed professional ESL/EFL teacher who is able to teach both children and adults. A one-year contract beginning in July 2005 will be offered. Rainbow Language House offers an excellent teaching environment in a beautiful mountainous region. The school is a two-minute walk from Urasa Station, 90 minutes from Tokyo on the Joetsu Shinkansen Line. **Qualifications:** Applicants should reside in Japan, hold a university degree in TESL or a related field, and have more than 2 years experience in teaching English. **Duties:** Teach up to 20 hours a week mostly conversational English to adults of varying ability levels, some special purpose English (e.g., TOEIC, Travel English, Business English), possibly conversational English to children (K-12). Also, assist in curriculum development and participate in program social activities. **Salary & Benefits:** ¥250,000 per teaching month (reduced salary in August and December due to holidays); accommodation provided; no health insurance provided. **Application Materials:** A current CV, a cover letter and a photo. **Deadline:** Ongoing.

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Contact: Rainbow Language House, Urasa 912-2, Minami Uonuma-shi, Niigata 949-7302; f: 025-780-4421; <info@rlh.jp>.

Tokyo-to—The Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP) is looking for part-time editors, writers, and proofreaders. STEP is the largest provider of English proficiency exams in Japan, with over 2.5 million test takers annually. **Qualifications:** Applicants should be native speakers of English and hold a university degree. Successful applicants will have excellent writing and proofreading skills, with proven experience in writing and editing (experience in developing educational materials a plus). Spoken Japanese ability is required. Teaching experience at the junior high school, high school, or college level in Japan is preferred. **Duties:** Duties include editing and proofreading of educational materials developed by STEP. Working hours are flexible. **Salary & Benefits:** Payment will be based on qualifications and experience and will be discussed at the interview stage. **Application Materials:** Send a CV with a short cover letter by email or post (correspondence by email is preferred). **Deadline:** Ongoing. **Contact:** Jamie Dunlea, Editorial Section, STEP, 55 Yokodera-machi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 162-8055; <j-dunlea@eiken.or.jp>; <www.eiken.or.jp/>.

October 7 – 10, 2005
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Job Info Web Corner

You can view the job listings on JALT's homepage (address below). Here are a variety of sites with information relevant to teaching in Japan:

1. EFL, ESL, and Other Teaching Jobs in Japan at <www.jobsinjapan.com>
2. Information for those seeking university positions (not a job list) at <www.debito.org/univquestions.html>
3. ELT News at <www.eltnews.com/jobsinjapan.shtml>
4. JALT Jobs and Career Enhancement links at <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs/>
5. Teaching English in Japan: A Guide to Getting a Job at <www.wizweb.com/~susan/japan/>
6. ESL Cafe's Job Center at <www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/jobcenter.html>
7. Ohayo Sensei at <www.ohayosensei.com>
8. NACSIS (National Center for Science Information Systems' Japanese site) career information at <jrecin.jst.go.jp>
9. The Digital Education Information Network Job Centre at <www.edufind.com/index.cfm>
10. EFL in Asia at <www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Flats/7947/eflasia.htm>
11. Jobs in Japan at <www.englishresource.com/index.html>
12. Job information at <www.ESLworldwide.com>
13. World English Jobs <www.englishjobmaze.com>
14. Hokkaido Insider: A subscription service for news and jobs <www.ne.jp/asahi/hokkaido/kenhartmann/>

Conference Calendar

...with Hayo Reinders <conferences@jalt-publications.org>

New listings are welcome. Please submit information to Hayo Reinders by the 15th of the month at <conferences@jalt-publications.org>, at least three months ahead (four months for overseas conferences). Thus June 15 is the deadline for an September conference in Japan or an October conference overseas, especially for a conference early in the month.

Upcoming Conferences

June 3–5, 2005—*The JALTCALL 2005 Conference: Glocalization through CALL: Bringing People Together,* at Ritsumeikan University, Kusatsu, Shiga Prefecture. The conference focuses on the social dimension of CALL at local and global levels, as represented by the term *glocalization*. Plenary speakers include Ushi Felix of Monash University, Australia, Hayo Reinders of the University of Auckland, New Zealand, and Yukio Takefuta of Bunkyo Gakuin University, Japan. Contact: <submissions@jaltcall.org>; <www.jaltcall.org>

June 11, 2005—*The 2nd Linguapax Asia International Symposium: Language in Society and the Classroom. Preserving Heritage and Supporting Diversity*, at the Canadian Embassy, 7-3-38 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 9:00-18:00. This symposium will bring together speakers and scholars from around the world with members of the general public to exchange views and develop a vision of how to promote bilingual and multilingual education, intercultural understanding through language education, respect for linguistic diversity and linguistic heritage, and the preservation and revitalization of minority and endangered languages. The symposium aims to raise awareness of the links between language, identity, and human rights, and to encourage the quest for harmony and mutual understanding within and among communities and nations. Pre-registration advised. Contact: <info@linguapax-asia.org>; <www.linguapax-asia.org>

July 17, 2005—*LD/Osaka, 2nd Annual Work in Progress Mini-Conference: A Day Celebrating Learner Development,* at Osaka City Municipal Lifelong Learning Center, Umeda, Osaka, 10:00-17:00. Co-sponsored by JALT's Osaka Chapter and the Learner Development SIG, the morning program will feature poster sessions by teacher-learners contributing to Learner Development's forthcoming anthology of papers entitled *AYA2* (*Autonomy You Ask Volume 2*) and focusing on—you guessed it!—issues in learner and teacher autonomy. The afternoon will offer a chance to preview several presentations planned for the LD forum at JALT's national conference in October. These afternoon presentations will focus on the theme of *Expressing Ourselves*, a variety of activities for the classroom highlighting learner development. The one-day mini-conference will provide a variety of learning formats, and those attending will be encouraged to share, discuss, and explore their experiences as learners and participants. Contact: Marlen Harrison, <marlen@andrew.ac.jp>

July 24–29, 2005—*The 14th World Congress of Applied Linguistics,* Madison, Wisconsin, USA. Presentations at the World Congress will bring together applied linguists from diverse communities and from varied intellectual traditions to explore the future. The theme of the conference is *The Future is Now*—a future where language is a means to express ideas that were unthinkable, to cross boundaries that seemed to be unbridgeable, and to share our local realities with people who live continents away. Contact: Richard Young, <rfyoung@wisc.edu>; <aila2005.org>

August 24–27, 2005—*Eurocall Conference: CALL, WELL, and TELL, Fostering Autonomy,* at Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland. The theme aims to focus attention on the changing concepts and practices concerning autonomy in learning and teaching brought about by technological developments. It aims to actively promote the awareness, availability, and practical benefits of autonomous learning using CALL, WELL, and TELL at all levels of education, with a view to enhancing educational effectiveness, as measured by student success, both academically and personally. Contact: <info@eurocall-languages.org.pl>; <www.eurocall-languages.org.pl>

weblink: www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/confcal/

August 27–28, 2005—*The 17th JALT-Gunma Summer Workshop. Learning and Teaching Languages: Psycholinguistic Perspectives*, at Kusatsu Seminar House, Kusatsu-machi, Agatsuma-gun, Gunma-ken, 377-1711. Main lecturer: Thomas Scovel of San Francisco State University. He will give two lectures: (1) Learning by Listening and (2) Tricks for Teaching Grammar. Call for presentations: six slots (30 min each) are available for participants' presentations. Participation fee: ¥9,000 (Program fee ¥3,000, room and board ¥6,000). Contact Morijiro Shibayama for a registration form. Registration will be on a first come first served basis (max. 40), t: 027-263-8522, <mshibaya@jcom.home.ne.jp>

September 16–18, 2005—*2nd International Online Conference on Second and Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, held online. The basic aim of this conference is to provide a venue for educators, established scholars, and graduate students to present work on a wide variety of pedagogical, theoretical, and empirical issues as related to the multi-disciplinary field of second and foreign language teaching and research. This conference will also give you an opportunity to make global connections with people in your field. Contact: Meena Singhal <editors@readingmatrix.com>, Adrian Wurr <awurr@uncg.edu>, or John Liontas <jliontas@nd.edu>; <www.readingmatrix.com/onlineconference/index.html>

September 25–28, 2005—*Applied Linguistics Association of Australia (ALAA) 30th Annual Conference. Language Politics, Including Language Policy, Socio-Cultural Context and Multilingualism*, at the University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Linguistic understanding of our world has evolved through continuous applications in many of the spheres of our society, from legal representation to forensics, from speech recognition technology to genetics, from language teaching and learning to intercultural communication and interaction in professional practice. Plenary speakers include Bonny Norton, Guus Extra, Merrill Swain, and Michael Clyne. The following scholars will convene colloquia: Joseph Lo Bianco of the University of Melbourne on language policy and politics; Tim McNamara of the University of Melbourne, on language, identity and violence; Catherine Elder of Monash University, on languages other than English in the classroom and community; Lynda Yates of LaTrobe University, on pragmatics; Gillian Wigglesworth of the University of Melbourne, on bilingual education of indigenous children; and Sophie Arkoudis and Kristina Love of the University of Melbourne, on international students in mainstream schools. Contact: <m.decourcy@unimelb.edu.au>; <www.alaa2005.info>

September 30–October 1, 2005—*The 30th Annual Conference of the International Association Language and Business (IALB)*, at Russian State University for the Humanities and Moscow State Linguistic University, Moscow, Russia. The topic of this year's conference is *communication services in the context of global intercultural exchange*. IALB's objective is to contribute towards improving the general level of foreign language knowledge and its application in trade and industry through close cooperation between trade, industry, education, and research. Contact: <gudrun.jerschwo@rz.huberlin.de> or <manfred.schmitz@intertext.de>; <www.ialb.net>

October 7–9, 2005—*SLRF 2005. SLA Models and Second Language Instruction: Broadening the Scope of Enquiry*, at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. This conference is devoted specifically to exploring interfaces between SLA research and second language instruction. Colloquia, individual papers, and posters are therefore solicited which, from a variety of perspectives, investigate SLA as it relates to various aspects of second language instruction ranging from classroom practices to syllabus design, material development, curriculum development, policy making, and assessment. Contact: <slrf2005@tc.columbia.edu>; <www.tc.columbia.edu/academic/tesol/SLRF2005/index.htm>

Calls for Papers/Posters

Deadline: July 23, 2005 (for September 23, 2005)—*22nd J ALT Hokkaido Fall Conference,* Sapporo. Contact: <www.jalthokkaido.net>

WIRED

...with Malcolm Swanson & Paul Daniels
<tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org>

In this column, we explore the issue of teachers and technology—not just as it relates to CALL solutions, but also to Internet, software, and hardware concerns that all teachers face.

As well as our feature columns, we would also like to answer reader queries. If you have a question, problem, or idea you'd like discussed in this column, please write to us at <tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org> or visit our website at <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/wired/>.

Polishing Your JALT2005 Presentation

Malcolm Swanson

One of my favorite conference techno stories is the one where I was called to assist a remarkably calm presenter in Nara last year. As I walked into the room right on starting time, she handed me a CD-ROM and said, "How do I get this up there?" pointing towards the screen on the wall. She hadn't realized she would need a computer as well—the disk was all she had! With that in mind, and with JALT2005 just a few months away, the *TLT Wired* team has put together this brief techno-guide to help would-be presenters feel a little better prepared.

Pre-conference

Book your projector!

With your pre-registration (we recommend pre-registering early), make sure you select—and pay for—all the audio-visual equipment you will need. Check that what you've ordered is on your receipt, and bring the receipt and a copy of your pre-registration form to the conference.

Build your presentation to fit!

Most modern projectors will display at a resolution of 1,024 by 768, so set your presentation to that size. If you are worried, and your presentation consists of large text and bold graphics, a smaller resolution should display fine.

Font sizes and colors

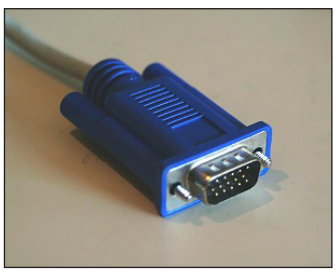
I don't know how many presentations I've struggled to view where I heard, "It looked fine before on my computer screen!" When making your presentation, use a dark background with light colored fonts or a light background with dark colored fonts. Check your presentation beforehand from different distances. Use a bold 28 to 32 point san serif font such as Arial, Verdana or Helvetica.

Make copies!

Even though your presentation is safely saved on your hard drive, we recommend burning a copy to a CD-ROM or copying it to a USB memory chip (I do both). That way, if your computer's copy becomes corrupted or your computer dies on you, you have another chance. An acquaintance takes that even one step further and converts his slides to JPEG images that he uploads to his digital camera. If all else fails, he can simply plug his camera into a monitor! You may also want to consider bringing OHP slides or handouts.

Check your connections!

Projectors require a *VGA* connection (as in this image) to your computer, and usually come with a cable for this purpose. Make sure your laptop has the appropriate connector. Sometimes this is built-in; other times an adaptor is needed (and usually supplied). If you can't locate a connector for your computer, you may need to check whether your computer can actually be connected to a projector!



RTFM!

Read your computer's manual or ask someone experienced to check how to activate the connection with the projector. On Macs, just

starting or reawakening your machine is usually enough. On Windows machines, you will probably need to press the *Fn-F5* keys (this varies—look for a monitor symbol on the *F* keys).

Assemble everything!

Well before you leave home (leaving enough time for a quick dash to the computer store if necessary) check that you have all the cables and connectors for your laptop. Charge the battery, and pack a three-metre extension lead with a compact plug. If you can, bring an extra VGA cable, as presenters have been known to wander off with these cables as they euphorically pack up at the end of their sessions. It is also worth changing your monitor resolution to match your presentation and disabling your screensaver and sleep settings. Nothing is worse than a slide show of your trip to Hawaii kicking in during a particularly long Q&A session.

Double check!

As you walk out the door, do a quick final check to make sure everything is still in place. Is your laptop in its protective sleeve or is it still sitting on the bedside cabinet where you left it after adding those two extra slides last night?

Helpful Hint:
User Switching

If you have a recent version of Mac OS X or Windows XP, a nice tip is to create a new user called *Presentations* in your *Accounts* system preferences, log in as that user, then make all your system settings and build your presentation as that user. This means you don't have to change your personal settings, and by keeping that account as simple as possible there is less likelihood of technical problems occurring.

On site

Quick reconnaissance

Check your schedule and find out where your room is. Go to the room and check the screen or white wall placement, power outlets, and projector availability (sometimes projectors will be moved from rooms according to needs). If the projector is there, check the connectors. If you have time, do a dry run with your machine.

Training

At JALT2005, there will be a number of training sessions for people to check their computers on a projector. Check beforehand when and where these sessions will be.

Pre-session

Get to your room well before your presentation. Locate the floor manager (usually someone with a "Volunteer" arm band). Covertly check that your equipment is in the room. If it isn't, check with the floor manager. You may only have ten minutes between sessions, so be prepared to go in and set up as soon as the previous session ends. If the previous presenter is running over time, politely let him or her know that you need to set up. Most presenters are very obliging. However, if you have a problem, contact the floor manager.

Getting connected

Connect all the leads and power cords and start up the projector. Start up (or awaken) your computer. Doing it in this order means the projector will probably recognize your computer. After a few seconds, an image should appear on the screen. If it doesn't, check your connections and press the *Mode*, *Source*, or *Input* button on the projector repeatedly until your image appears. Take a deep breath, smile radiantly, and begin!

If all else fails...

Even the best-prepared presenters have technical glitches and it is how you handle them that will decide their impact on your presentation. By being well prepared, the likelihood of a problem occurring diminishes significantly. However, if your computer freezes, the projector doesn't work, or the power goes out, don't panic! Continue talking while you work on a fix, and if it looks irrecoverable, just make sure you are well enough prepared with your material that you can talk your way through it. At the end, give your audience your email address so that anyone who wants a copy of your presentation can get one later.

Which is exactly what the woman with the disk at the beginning of this article did. She knew her material well and delivered it without her visuals, finishing with an offer to email her slideshow to anyone interested. Her audience was more than satisfied.

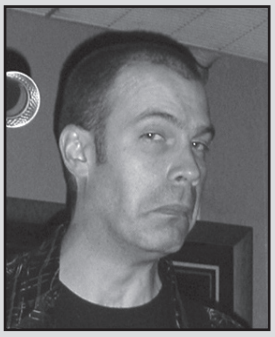
Best of luck at JALT2005 in October!

Malcolm Swanson

Advert: Thomson

Old Grammarians . . .

. . . by Scott Gardner <old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org>



Excessive Abbreviation (Hereafter, EA)

The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (which most people know as *Monkasho*, which itself is a trimming of . . . another much longer word) has a simple, lovable acronym in English called MEXT. But people never seem to know what I'm talking about when I use "MEXT" in a conversation. They think MEXT is some kind of hip, young, all male Japanese singing group with one mysteriously altered letter in its name, like SMAP, TOKIO, or EXILU. Or it could be the sleek moniker for a new line of Japanese automobiles (you know how the commercial taglines go: "The Suzuki Sillypop—It Fits in Your Wallet!"; "I Have Opposable Thumbs—I Drive a Toyota Murky!"; "Nissan Mext—Don't Change Lanes Without It!").

I admit that the X in MEXT gives it a kind of 21st-century pizzazz, but there's a catch: the X doesn't stand for anything. It's some kind of homophonous abbreviation for Culture, Sports, and Science. This is really unfortunate. People already have enough trouble keeping track of all the disparate Japanese social structures huddled under the colossal Monkasho umbrella (imagine the same ministry overseeing both the preservation of Noh drama and Tokyo Game Show 2005!). But then they decide to reduce three-fifths of these important categories of human endeavor to a simple X in the title. That's rather dismissive of their value if you ask me. People are liable to think that the X really stands for something, like maybe Xenophobia. I myself thought it was short for ex cetera until someone pointed out to me that I had a dialect problem (people speak Latin a little differently in my corner of the US).

Confusing abbreviations aren't restricted to Japanese government ministries. They also permeate the dialogue of English language teachers. I experienced this firsthand in Nara at JALT2004. I went to a presentation called *How to Effectively Use GR with Beginning Students*. To my embarrassment I discovered that GR meant Graded Readers rather than General Relativity. I had carted my Stephen Hawking book to Nara for no reason. And I heard that one conference participant, in search of some first aid after burning her finger with some Ghana curry, accidentally stepped in on an ER (Extensive Reading) presentation.

All this has led one frustrated *TLT* staff worker to insist that "some people should come with subtitles." Actually, this isn't a bad idea. For one thing, it would help me understand all the Australians who are currently running *The Language Teacher*. Over a year ago they pulled me aside and asked me to start writing a humor column for *TLT*, and for a whole year I thought they had asked me to put more commas in my writing. There I was, bending over backwards, trying, against my own better judgment, to give them tasteful, timely, commas. Turns out they didn't want commas at all.

In this era of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), GUIs (Graphical User Interfaces), and WIKIs (Wanton Inanity Killed the Internet), it's too bad that we're letting communication founder on these proliferating acronyms, some of which seem rather contrived and even downright runic to people who don't know them. Contrived, Runic Acronym Proliferation, as I call it, has no place in the information-age English of the new century. JALT, IATEFL, and TESOL ought to join forces with such stalwart language guardians as LAPSE (Linguistic Archaism Preservation Society—English) or PTHHPTHH (Grumpy Old People Against Gratuitous Abbreviation) to put the *see* back in Communication. After all, English doesn't belong just to us; it belongs equally to the necsst generation.

– Scott Gardner

Submissions

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. If accepted, the editors reserve the right to edit all copy for length, style, and clarity, without prior notification to authors. Materials in English should be sent in Rich Text Format by either email (preferred) or post. Postal submissions must include a clearly labeled floppy disk or CD-ROM and one printed copy. Manuscripts should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style as it appears in *The Language Teacher*. Please submit materials to the contact editor indicated for each column. Deadlines are indicated below.

日本国内での語学教育に関わる投稿をお待ちしています。できるだけ電子メールにリッチ・テキスト・フォーマットの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。郵送の場合には、フロッピーディスクかCD-ROMにラベルを張り、プリントアウトしたものと一緒にお送り下さい。書式はアメリカ心理学協会(APA)スタイルに基づき、スタッフリストページにある各コラムの編集者まで締め切りに留意して、提出してください。提出されたものにつきましては編集者に一任していただくことになります。

Feature Articles

English Features. Submissions should be well-written, well-documented, and researched articles. Analysis and data can be quantitative or qualitative (or both). Manuscripts are typically screened and evaluated anonymously by members of *The Language Teacher* Editorial Advisory Board. They are evaluated for degree of scholarly research, relevance, originality of conclusions, etc. Submissions should:

- be up to 3,000 words (not including appendices)
- have pages numbered, paragraphs separated by double carriage returns (not tabbed), and subheadings (boldfaced or italic) used throughout for the convenience of readers
- have the article's title, the author's name, affiliation, contact details, and word count at the top of the first page
- be accompanied by an English abstract of up to 150 words (translated into Japanese, if possible, and submitted as a separate file)
- be accompanied by a 100-word biographical background
- have tables, figures, appendices, etc. attached as separate files.

Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

日本語論文：実証性のある研究論文を求めます。質的か、計量的か（あるいは両方）で追究された分析やデータを求めます。原稿は、匿名のTLTの査読委員により、研究水準、関連性、結論などの独創性で評価されます。8,000語(資料は除く）以内で、ページ番号を入れ、段落ごとに2行あけ、副見出し(太文字かイタリック体)を付けて下さい。最初のページの一番上に題名、著者名、所属、連絡先および語彙数をお書き下さい。英文、和文で400語の要旨、300語の著者略歴もご提出下さい。表、図、付録も可能です。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Readers' Forum articles are thoughtful essays on topics related to language teaching and learning in Japan. Submissions should:

- be of relevance to language teachers in Japan
- contain up to 2,500 words
- include English and Japanese abstracts, as per Features above
- include a short bio and a Japanese title.

Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

読者フォーラム：日本での言語教育、及び言語学習に関する思慮的なエッセイを募集しています。日本での語学教師に関連していて、6,000字以内で、英文・和文の要旨、短い略歴および日本語のタイトルを添えて下さい。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Interviews. If you are interested in interviewing a well-known professional in the field of language teaching in and around Japan, please consult the editors first. Lengths range from 1,500-2,500 words. Send as an email attachment to the co-editor.

インタビュー：日本国内外で言語教育の分野での「有名な」専門家にインタビューしたい場合は、編集者に最初に意見をお尋ね下さい。3,600語から6,000語の長さです。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Readers' Views. Responses to articles or other items in *TLT* are invited. Submissions should be sent to the editor and time allowed for a response to appear in the same issue, if appropriate. *TLT* will not publish anonymous correspondence. Send as an email attachment to the co-editors.

読者の意見：*TLT*に掲載された記事へ意見をお寄せ下さい。編集者が適切だと判断した場合には、著者の考えと並べて掲載したいと思います。実名記載になります。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Conference Reports. If you have attended a conference on a topic of interest to language teachers in Asia, write a 1,500-word report summarizing the main events. Send as an email attachment to the co-editor.

学会報告：語学教師に関心のあるトピックの大会に出席された場合は、4000語程度に要約して、報告書を書いてください。共同編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Departments

My Share. Submissions should be original teaching techniques or a lesson plan you have used. Readers should be able to replicate your technique or lesson plan. Submissions should:

- be up to 1,000 words
- have the article title, the author name, affiliation, email address, and word count at the top of the first page
- include a *Quick Guide* to the lesson plan or teaching technique
- follow My Share formatting
- have tables, figures, appendices, etc. attached as separate files
- include copyright warnings, if appropriate.

Send as an email attachment to the My Share editor.

マイシェア：学習活動に関する実践的なアイデアについて、テクニックや教案を読者が再利用できるように紹介するものです。1,600字以内で最初のページにタイトル、著者名、所属、電子メールアドレスと文字数をお書き下さい。表、図、付録なども含めることができますが、著作権にはお気をつけ下さい。My Share 担当編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

JALT Focus. Submissions should be directly related to recent or upcoming developments within JALT, preferably on an organization-wide scale. Submissions should:

- be no more than 750 words
- be relevant to the JALT membership as whole
- encourage readers to participate more actively in JALT on both a micro and macro level
- Deadline: 15th of the month, $1^1/_2$ months prior to publication.

Send as an email attachment to the JALT Focus editor.

JALTフォーカス：JALT内の進展を会員の皆様にお伝えするものです。どのJALT会員にもふさわしい内容で、JALTに、より活動的に参加するようにお働きかけるものです。1,600字程度で、毎月15日までにお送り下さい。掲載は1月半後になります。JALTフォーカス編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

JALT Notices. Submissions should be of general relevance to language learners and teachers in Japan. JALT Notices can be accessed at <www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/focus/>. Calls for papers or research projects will be accepted; however, announcements of conferences, colloquia, or seminars should be submitted to the Conference Calendar. Submissions:

- should be no more than 150 words
- should be submitted in as far in advance as is possible
- will be removed from the website when the announcement becomes outdated.

Submissions can be sent through the JALT Notices online submissions form.

掲示板：日本での論文募集や研究計画は、オンライン<www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/focus/>で見ることができます。できるだけ前もって掲載いたしますが、終了次第、消去いたします。掲示板オンライン・サブミッション形式に従い、400字以内で投稿して下さい。なお、会議、セミナーは Conference Calendar で扱います。

Book Reviews. We invite reviews of books and other educational materials. Contact the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison <pub-review@jalt-publications.org> for material listed in the Recently Received column, and the Book Reviews editor if you wish to review unlisted material, including websites or other online resources. Review articles treating several related titles are particularly welcome. Submissions should:

- show a thorough understanding of the material reviewed
- reflect actual classroom usage in the case of classroom materials
- be thoroughly checked and proofread before submission.

Send as an email attachment to the Book Reviews editor.

書評：本や教材の書評です。書評編集者<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>に問い合わせ、最近出版されたリストからお選びいただくか、もしwebサイトなどのリストにない場合には書評編集者と連絡をとってください。複数の関連するタイトルを扱うものを特に歓迎します。書評は、本の内容紹介、教室活動や教材としての使用法に触れ、書評編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

SIG News. JALT's Special Interest Groups may use this column to report on news or events happening within their group. This might include mini-conferences, presentations, publications, calls for papers or presenters, or general SIG information. Deadline: 15th of month, 2 months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the SIG News editor.

SIGニュース：SIGはニュースやイベントの報告にこのカラムを使用できます。会議、プレゼンテーション、出版物、論文募集、連絡代表者などの情報を記入下さい。締め切りは出版の2か月前の15日までに、SIG委員長に電子メールの添付ファイルで送ってください。

Chapter Reports. The column is a forum for sharing presentation synopses held at JALT Chapters around Japan. Submissions must therefore reflect the nature of the column and be written clearly and concisely. Submissions should:

- be interesting and not contain extraneous information
- be in well-written, concise, informative prose
- be made by email only. Faxed and/or postal submissions are not acceptable
- be approximately 300 words in order to explore the content in sufficient detail
- be structured as follows: Chapter name; Event date; Event title; Name of presenter(s); Synopsis; Reporter's name.

Send as an email attachment to the Chapter Reports editor.

支部会報告：JALT地域支部会の研究会報告です。有益な情報をご提供下さい。600文字程度で簡潔にお書き下さい。支部名、日時、イベント名、発表者名、要旨、報告者名を、この順序でお書き下さい。支部会報告編集者まで電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。ファックスや郵便は受理いたしませんので、ご注意下さい。

Chapter Events. Chapters are invited to submit upcoming events. Submissions should follow the precise format used in every issue of *TLT* (topic, speaker, date, time, place, fee, and other information in order, followed by a 60-word description of the event).

Meetings scheduled for early in the month should be published in the previous month's issue. Maps of new locations can be printed upon consultation with the column editor. Deadline: 15th of the month, 2 months prior to publication. Send as an email attachment to the Chapter Events editor.

支部イベント：近づいている支部のイベントの案内情報です。トピック、発表者、日時、時間、場所、料金をこの順序で掲載いたします。締め切りは、毎月15日で、2ヵ月前までに、支部イベント編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Job Information Center. *TLT* encourages all prospective employers to use this free service to locate the most qualified language teachers in Japan. The notice should:

- contain the following information: City and prefecture, Name of institution, Title of position, Whether full- or part-time, Qualifications, Duties, Salary & benefits, Application materials, Deadline, Contact information
- not be positions wanted. (It is JALT policy that they will not be printed)
- Deadline: 15th of month, 2 months prior to publication.

Send as an email attachment to the JIC editor.

求人欄：語学教育の求人募集を無料でサービス提供します。県と都市名、機関名、職名、専任か非常勤かの区別、資格、仕事内容、給料、締め切りや連絡先を発行2ヶ月前の15日までにお知らせ下さい。特別の書式はありません。JIC担当編集者に電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。

Conference Calendar. Announcements of conferences and their calls for papers as well as for colloquia, symposiums, and seminars may be posted in this column. The announcement should:

- be up to 150 words.
- Deadline: 15th of month, at least 3 months prior to the conference date for conferences in Japan and 4 months prior for overseas conferences.

Send as an email attachment to the Conference Calendar editor.

催し：コロキウム、シンポジウム、セミナー、会議のお知らせと、論文募集の案内です。Conference Calendar編集者に400語程度で電子メールの添付ファイルでお送り下さい。締め切りは毎月15日で、日本、および海外の会議で3ヶ月前までの情報を掲載します。

The Language Teacher

JALT Publications Board Chair
Amanda O'Brien
pubchair@jalt-publications.org
t: 0774-65-8601

Editors
Kim Bradford-Watts
tlt-editor@jalt-publications.org
t: 075-752-4596

Jacqui Norris-Holt
tlt-editor@jalt-publications.org
t: 052-702-5536 (h) 052-872-5815 (w)

Japanese-Language Editor
高垣俊之 *(Toshiyuki Takagaki)*
tlt-editorj@jalt-publications.org

Japanese-Language Assoc. Editor
稲森美穂子 *(Mihoko Inamori)*
tlt-editorj2@jalt-publications.org
t/f: 042-774-7414

Assistant Editor
Paul Lewis
tlt-assist@jalt-publications.org
t/f: 052-709-1307 (h)

TLT Online Editor
Malcolm Swanson
webadmin@jalt-publications.org

Contributing Editors
Robert Long
Amanda O'Brien
Scott Gardner

JALT Focus Column

JALT Focus Editor
Joseph Sheehan
jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org

JALT News Liaison
Mary Christianson
jalt-news@jalt-publications.org

Perspectives
Joyce Cunningham
Mariko Miyao
perspectives@jalt-publications.org
Joyce Cunningham: Faculty of Humanities, Ibaraki University, 2-1-1 Bunkyo, Mito 310-8512
t: 029-228-8455 f: 029-228-8199

Off the Presses
Kevin Ryan
off-presses@jalt-publications.org

Other Columns

My Share
Lorraine Sorrell
my-share@jalt-publications.org

Book Reviews
Robert Taferner
reviews@jalt-publications.org

Publishers' Review Copies Liaison
Scott Gardner
pub-review@jalt-publications.org
Okayama University, Faculty of Education, 3-1-1 Tsushima-naka, Okayama 700-8530
t: 086-251-7686 (w)

Letters
See Editor

SIG News
Mary Hughes
sig-news@jalt-publications.org

Chapter Reports
Heather Sparrow
chap-reports@jalt-publications.org

Chapter Events
Aleda Krause
chap-events@jalt-publications.org

Conference Calendar
Hayo Reinders
conferences@jalt-publications.org

Job Information Center/Positions
Ted O'Neill
job-info@jalt-publications.org

Occasional Columns

Educational Innovations
Daniel J. McIntyre
tlt-innovations@jalt-publications.org

TLT Wired
Malcolm Swanson & Paul Daniels
tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org

Old Grammarians
Scott Gardner
old-grammarians@jalt-publications.org

Production

Proofreading Team Leader
Paul Lewis (see Assistant Editor)

Proofreaders
James Hobbs, Sean McAuley, Sandi Duverneuil, Ben Shearon, Junko Izawa, Theron Muller, Greg Rouault, David Hufford, Jerry Talandis, Ted O'Neill, Karen Yabuno, Derek Di Matteo, Joseph Sheehan

和文要旨作成協力者
(Japanese abstracts)
阿部恵美佳 *(Emika Abe)*
伊藤勝己 *(Katsumi Ito)*

Design & Layout
Pukeko Graphics
graphics@pukeko.ws; www.pukeko.ws

Printing
Koshinsha Co., Ltd., Osaka

Editorial Advisory Board
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Christopher Weaver
(Tokyo University of Agriculture & Technology)

Peer Support Group

Coordinator
Torkil Christensen
peergroup@jalt-publications.org

Members
Paul Beaufait, Torkil Christensen, Robert Croker, Mark Hamilton, Katsumi Ito, Wilma Luth, Steve McGuire, Theron Muller, Malcolm Swanson

The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

JALT Central Office
Urban Edge Bldg. 5F, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016
Tel: 03-3837-1630 – Fax: 03-3837-1631
jalt@gol.com

weblink: www.jalt-publications.org/contacts/

Membership Information

JALT is a professional organization dedicated to the improvement of language learning and teaching in Japan, a vehicle for the exchange of new ideas and techniques, and a means of keeping abreast of new developments in a rapidly changing field. JALT, formed in 1976, has an international membership of some 3,000. There are currently 39 JALT chapters and 1 affiliate chapter throughout Japan (listed below). It is the Japan affiliate of International TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and a branch of IATEFL (International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language).

Publications — JALT publishes *The Language Teacher*, a monthly magazine of articles and announcements on professional concerns; the semi-annual *JALT Journal*; *JALT Conference Proceedings* (annual); and *JALT Applied Materials* (a monograph series).

Meetings and Conferences — The JALT *International Conference on Language Teaching/Learning* attracts some 2,000 participants annually. The program consists of over 300 papers, workshops, colloquia, and poster sessions, a publishers' exhibition of some 1,000m^2, an employment center, and social events. Local chapter meetings are held on a monthly or bi-monthly basis in each JALT chapter, and Special Interest Groups, SIGs, disseminate information on areas of special interest. JALT also sponsors special events, such as conferences on testing and other themes.

Chapters — Akita, Chiba, Fukui, Fukuoka, Gifu, Gunma, Hamamatsu, Himeji, Hiroshima, Hokkaido, Ibaraki, Iwate, Kagawa, Kagoshima, Kanazawa, Kitakyushu, Kobe, Kumamoto, Kyoto, Matsuyama, Miyazaki, Nagasaki, Nagoya, Nara, Niigata, Okayama, Okinawa, Omiya, Osaka, Sendai, Shinshu, Shizuoka, Tochigi, Tokushima, Tokyo, Toyohashi, West Tokyo, Yamagata, Yamaguchi, Yokohama.

SIGs — Bilingualism; College and University Educators; Computer-Assisted Language Learning; Gender Awareness in Language Education; Global Issues in Language Education; Japanese as a Second Language; Jr./Sr. High School; Learner Development; Materials Writers; Pragmatics; Professionalism, Administration, and Leadership in Education; Teacher Education; Teaching Children; Testing and Evaluation; Other Language Educators (affiliate); Eikaiwa (forming); Pronunciation (forming); Teaching Older Learners (forming). JALT members can join as many SIGs as they wish for a fee of ¥1,500 per SIG.

Awards for Research Grants and Development — Awarded annually. Applications must be made to the JALT Research Grants Committee Chair. Awards are announced at the annual conference.

Membership — All membership includes subscriptions to *The Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal* and membership in a local chapter. *Regular membership* (¥10,000). *Student membership* (¥6,000) - available to students of undergraduate/graduate universities and colleges in Japan. *Joint membership* (¥17,000) - available to two individuals who can register with the same mailing address; only one copy of each JALT publication for two members. *Group membership* (¥6,500/person) — available to five or more people who can register with the same mailing address; one copy of each publication for every five members or fraction thereof. Applications may be made at any JALT meeting or by using the postal money transfer form (*yubin furikae*) found in every issue of *The Language Teacher*. Joint and Group members must apply, renew, and pay membership fees together with the other members of their group. From overseas, application may be made by sending an International Postal Order to the JALT Central Office or by transferring the fee through Citibank. For details please contact the Central Office.

Central Office: Urban Edge Building, 5th Floor, 1-37-9 Taito, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016
Tel: 03-3837-1630; fax: 03-3837-1631; jalt@gol.com

Join or renew

JALT（全国語学教育学会）について

JALTは最新の言語理論に基づくよりよい教授法を提供し、日本における語学学習の向上と発展を図ることを目的とする学術団体です。1976年に設立されたJALTは、海外も含めて3,000名以上の会員を擁しています。現在日本全国に40の支部（下記参照）を持ち、TESOL（英語教師協会）の加盟団体、およびIATEFL（国際英語教育学会）の日本支部でもあります。

出版物：JALTは、語学教育の専門分野に関する記事、お知らせを掲載した月刊誌 *The Language Teacher*、年２回発行の*JALT Journal*、*JALT Applied Materials*（モノグラフシリーズ）、およびJALT年次大会会報を発行しています。

例会と大会：JALTの語学教育・語学学習に関する国際年次大会には、毎年2,000人が集まります。年次大会のプログラムは300の論文、ワークショップ、コロキアム、ポスターセッション、出版社による展示、就職情報センター、そして懇親会で構成されています。支部例会は、各JALTの支部で毎月もしくは隔月に１回行われています。分野別研究部会、SIGは、分野別の情報の普及活動を行っています。JALTはまた、テスティングや他のテーマについての研究会などの特別な行事を支援しています。

支部：現在、全国に39の支部と1つの準支部があります。（秋田、千葉、福井、福岡、岐阜、群馬、浜松、姫路、広島、北海道、茨城、岩手、香川、鹿児島、金沢、北九州、神戸、熊本、京都、松山、宮崎、長崎、名古屋、奈良、新潟、岡山、沖縄、大宮、大阪、仙台、信州、静岡、栃木、徳島、東京、豊橋、西東京、山形、山口、横浜）

分野別研究部会：バイリンガリズム、大学外国語教育、コンピュータ利用語学学習、ジェンダーと語学教育、グローバル問題、日本語教育、中学・高校外国語教育、学習者ディベロプメント、教材開発、語用論、外国語教育政策とプロフェッショナリズム、教師教育、児童教育、試験と評価、他言語教育（準分野別研究部会）、英会話(forming)、発音(forming)、中高年学教育(forming)。JALTの会員は一つにつき1,500円の会費で、複数の分野別研究会に参加することができます。

研究助成金：研究助成金についての応募は、8月16日までに、JALT語学教育学習研究助成金委員長まで申し出てください。研究助成金については、年次大会で発表をします。

会員及び会費：会員及び年会費： 年会費にはJALT出版物の購読料及び支部の会費も含まれていま す。個人会員（10,000円）。学生会員（6,000円）- 日本にある大学・大学院・専 門学校の学生を対象。 ジョイント会員（17,000円）-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。 団体会員（6,500円／人）- 同じ住所で登録す る５名以上を対象とし、JALT出版物は５名毎に1部。 入会・更新申込みは、例会で行 うか、*The Language Teacher*に綴じこまれている郵便振替用紙を利用してください。 ジョイント及びグループ会員は、全員まとめて入会又は更新の申込みをして下さ い。 海外からは国際郵便為替をJALT事務局に送るか、又はCitibankより送金してく ださい。 詳しくはJALT事務局に問合わせてください。

JALT事務局：〒110-0016東京都台東区台東1-37-9アーバンエッジビル５F
Tel. 03-3837-1630; fax. 03-3837-1631; jalt@gol.com

weblink: www.jalt.org

Story Space

You are invited to share your short (maximum 10 minutes) stories in the **Story Space** at JALT2005. This will be a room, not for formal presentations, but for an exchange of ideas and revelations in a relaxed atmosphere (with tea and cookies available).

Stories are invited in the following broad categories:

- Storytelling performances (folk tales, etc.)
- Hands-on demonstrations of story-based classroom activities
- Stories from your teaching experience: wonderful (or not so wonderful) classroom moments, incidents that changed the way you look at teaching, and so on.

To reserve a time slot, please send the title and a brief description of your story or activity to Charles Kowalski ‹kowalski@tbd.t-com.ne.jp›.

Also welcome are storytelling materials (books, props, etc.) to put on display. If you have any materials you have used with success and would like to show others, send an email to Charles or just bring them along. (Don't worry, you'll get them back!

read talk listen Write watch

sharing our stories at jalt2005

ーストーリーの共有ー

Granship…

…a beautiful building!

All it needs is lots of people – – and their stories!

Join us October 7 – 10, 2005 in Shizuoka

For more info, look in this *TLT*, or ‹conferences.jalt.org/2005›