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The Japan Association for Language Teaching
全国語学教育学会

— JALT2005 Poster Sessions —

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For JALT2005, we will be running three extended poster sessions. On each conference day, you'll have a chance to wander through up to 30 posters in the spacious Tenji Hall. Sessions will start with a browsing time when the poster presentations are unattended. Then, for a two-hour period, the presenters will be available to share their ideas. Poster presentations allow both the presenter and the participant to learn in an interactive, face-to-face environment. An added bonus is that during a lull in traffic through the poster space, presenters also become participants, looking at and discussing other posters. See you in there!

A poster session programme preview

- 100 questions to ask before you publish a textbook
- A Framework for Implementing Effective Communication
- A Tale of Two Cultures: Ethnographic Adventures
- Adapting Web resources into student-led learning
- Alternative Assessment: The Museum Piece
- Bangladesh Seminar: A Meeting of Two Cultures
- Can Japanese college students speak English?
- Check Your Stereotypes of Japanese Learners
- College students' orientation towards group work
- Content-Focused Learning in Policy Studies
- Creating Comprehensible Readings Through Student Feedback
- Creating movies in the classroom
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- Developing Successful Presentation Skills
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- Enhancing Student Awareness of Global Issues
- Four Fables: Disappearing Into Clouds
- Getting over the fear of role-plays
- Global Stories: Expanding the Narrative
- Graded Reading for TOEIC Prep in Eikaiwa Contexts
- "Hey, listen to this! Extensive Listening is fun"
- How to "cook" authentic materials
- http://iteslj.org :What's New (2004-2005)
- http://www.manythings.org/j
- Ice-breaking Activities - theories and practice
- In-service Elementary English Teachers' Anxieties
- Japanese grants course in Germany between 1938-45
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- Leading up to Critical Thinking: Say What You Mean
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- Learning From Indigenous Language Revival Programs
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- Motivating Young Adult Learners to Communicate
- Motivation Through an Event-Driven Curriculum
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- Pathways to communication; collaborative learning in the ELP
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- Talking about Japan: A cultural conversation game
- Teaching English Using One-Act Plays
- The Asian American Experience
- The Effect of Music on False Beginners' Writing
- The Fairytale Project
- The Messenger Project: A classroom activity.
- Time for Cooperative Learning in the Language Lab!
- TOEIC Bridge: Step by Step Journey Towards TOEIC
- University students' autonomous learning attitudes
- Unlocking English through Reading
- Using Free Writing to Activate Creativity
- Utilizing Classroom Space
- Values in nursing: telling stories about health
- Vocabulary in an online environment: using Moodle
- What Learners Want! Tailor-Made Activities
- What type of word knowledge do they need?
- Why Do University Students Have to Take TOEIC?
- World Cuisine Fair in College Classrooms
- Writing Songs in a Foreign Language
- www.manythings.org: What's New (2004-2005)

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Foreword

I can't believe it is already October! October used to signal that the year was finally drawing to a close. Bowls of dried fruit would be soaking in brandy in the fridge in readiness for making Christmas cakes and puddings. My family would spend a day at *Octoberfest*, full of the aromas of sausage and beer, enjoying carnival rides in the late summer weather.

In Japan, there is no sense of the year winding down. On the contrary, the clear skies of October are accompanied by a burst of pre-winter activity. People flock to the mountains to take advantage of the lovely days. Classes are just getting back into the swing of things following the summer vacation, while in homes across the country, the trappings of warm weather are being exchanged for those suitable for ensuring comfort during the cooler months. With the conference being held in October this year, JALT members will be fitting one more event into a busy month.

In this issue of *The Language Teacher*, **Peter Burden** describes the results of a study undertaken to discover learner beliefs about activities in the classroom and the effects of these beliefs on motivation. **J.E. King** writes about the discourse of silence in Japanese classrooms, including the importance of *ma*, the pause, and **Daniel Krieger** tells the story of his experience of the dynamics of student-teacher interactions. *My Share* offers teaching ideas by **Mark Rebuck**, **Patrick Jackson**, **Sean McAuley**, and **Ian Willey** to help dispel any post-vacation silence from your classroom, and book reviews by **Paul Hullah** and **Lori Ann Desrosiers** will have you heading to the bookstore to grab some reading for the trip to the conference.

I am looking forward to seeing you at this year's conference, *Sharing Our Stories*, and enjoying JALT's own *Octoberfest*! You can meet the *TLT* staff, plus learn about how to get into print, at the "Getting Published in JALT" session (Saturday, 11:10, Wind Hall), or visit the Publications Board desk at the Educational Materials Expo in the Main Hall. See you there!

Kim Bradford-Watts
TLT Co-editor.

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早いものでもう十月です。師走まで残すところ二ヶ月しかないこの季節には、ブランデーにつけたドライフルーツを冷蔵庫で冷やしクリスマスケーキやプリンの下ごしらえを始める家庭もよくある光景でした。わが家では十月際を祝い、（南半球の）初夏のパレードを見て楽しんだものです。一方日本では、秋の催しが数々あり多忙な時期です。今月はJALTの全国大会があります。万障お繰り合わせの上、是非参加をして下さいますようお願い致します。

さて、今月号では、Peter Burden 氏が、教室内活動に関する学習者の考えとこれらの考えが動機に与える影響について検証をしています。また、J.E. King氏は教室の沈黙という話法について、Daniel Krieger氏は生徒と教師間の相互力学に関する自身の経験について、それぞれ考察をしています。

マイシェアでは、Mark Rebuck, Patrick Jackson, Sean McAuley, Ian Willeyの諸氏が生徒の夏休みボケを吹き飛ばすようなティーチングのアイディアを話してくれます。さらに、Paul Hullah と Lori Ann Desrosiersの両氏による書評を読めば全国大会への車中の読み物として入手したくなるでしょう。

では、大会にて皆さんと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

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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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The castor oil effect: Learner beliefs about the enjoyment and usefulness of classroom activities and the effects on student motivation

Peter Burden

Okayama Shoka University

Do learners share teachers' beliefs about the enjoyment and usefulness of classroom activities? For many teachers, this question may provoke a number of responses, including the belief that students do not always know what is useful. Many teachers have pedagogically sound reasons for doing a task that they feel learners should trust implicitly. Other teachers feel that the students manage to understand without explicit instruction regarding the task rationale. Assumptions of effective classroom practice are often based on anecdotal evidence and the intuitive sense of teachers (Green, 1993), but a learner-centered approach to lesson content, materials, and syllabus design necessitates the contribution of learners' views on their learning needs, learning styles, and future goals. Yet a classroom pedagogy that de-emphasizes teacher-fronted lessons creates the potential for misunderstandings of teacher and learner roles, so there is a need to examine factors leading to any observable gap in expectations. Learners are rarely asked in any overt systematic way about their learning experiences. Barkhuizen (1998) questions whether teachers know what learners think or feel, or if teachers are accurate in their assessments and intuition. Language pedagogy, to be relevant, has to be sensitive to the needs and goals of students "embedded within a particular sociocultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 538). Therefore, learners should not be regarded as passive receptors of lesson content who do not question the reasons for undertaking a task. Instead, there is a need to let the students "into the picture" (Nunan, 1989, p. 184) as learners come to class with their own sets of learning objectives and beliefs, which, being socio-historically constructed, may not match the objectives of either the curriculum or the individual class.

Learner beliefs

The construct of *beliefs* is broad and encompassing. Considerations of learners' educational beliefs *about* activity enjoyment and usefulness are helpful as beliefs "frequently

Feature Article

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involve moods, feelings, emotions, and subjective evaluations" (Nespor, 1987, p. 323) which influence perceptions, judgments of classroom behavior, and student persistence or motivation. Beliefs inform an intention to perform in a certain way that can cloud "receptivity" (Allwright & Bailey, 1994, p. 157) or openness to the learning experience, the teacher, fellow learners, the teacher's way of teaching, and to the course content or materials. As any learning task will be reinterpreted in students' own terms, if teachers and learners do not share perceptions of each others' expectations about the process of learning, it may cause demoralization, feelings of being threatened, or hostility towards the teaching approach (Kumaravadivelu, 1991; Tse, 2000).

Beliefs about English education in Japan among educators

If we wish to understand Japanese learners' beliefs, it is useful to look at the wider picture in Japan. We need, as Holliday (1994) notes, to look beyond the individual, as beliefs are influenced by factors within the wider educational institution, the educational environment, and the wider society. Japanese teachers in Japan identify two kinds of instruction—grammar teaching and communicative language teaching (CLT)—and while recognizing the importance of CLT, teachers "feel the need to primarily conduct teacher-fronted non-communicative activities" (Sakui, 2004, p. 158). Teachers describe preparing students for "grammar-skewed" (p. 159) entrance exams with targeted grammatical features. The content focus of the tests is on relatively narrow, easily testable aspects of English proficiency, leading to lessons composed essentially of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and translation questions. Shimizu (1995) investigated Japanese college student beliefs about instructors, finding that Japanese teachers are valued for scholarly skill, intelligence, and knowledge. Moreover, some students indicated an unwillingness to participate in classes which emphasize a communicative approach, feeling the content to be trivial. O'Donnell (2003) found that learning strategies used in university "continue to parallel many of the traditional practices of their secondary school experiences" (p. 63), while Matsuura, Chiba, and Hilderbrandt (2001) found that most students rely on translation, believing that translation into Japanese is necessary. The implication is that many students at university expect teachers to use the grammar translation pedagogy experienced in high schools.

Objectives of the present study: Examining the castor oil effect

This study aims to examine language learners' beliefs about the enjoyment and usefulness of classroom activities and to understand a little of student beliefs about whether enjoyable tasks are also useful. The study grew out of a desire to understand student beliefs, and whether their beliefs matched mine, as a way to inform my teaching practice. Are student beliefs molded by their previous experiences, and as such do students value certain classroom activities? I was intrigued by the premise of Green's (1993) study, which researched shared assumptions about the effectiveness and enjoyment of activities, and in particular the "castor oil effect" (p. 2). Castor oil has an unpleasant taste and used to be given to children as medicine. There is a similar belief expressed in Japanese as *ryouyakuwa kuchini nigashi*, whereby the worse (or more bitter) a medicine tastes the more effective it will be for recovery. In Green's (1993) study, the expectation was that if an activity is going to be beneficial or useful, chances are it will be disagreeable or not enjoyable. However, the results showed a tendency for reported enjoyment and perceived usefulness to be correlated, leading Green to believe that enjoyment enhances usefulness while the belief that an activity is effective tends to make it more enjoyable.

My classroom practice is based on certain beliefs about the enjoyment and usefulness of activities involving communication and the use of language. Do my students share these beliefs, and are they receptive to certain types of learning activities that may be new to them? The research questions are:

(a) What activities do learners believe are useful?

(b) What activities do they believe are enjoyable?

(c) Do student beliefs match mine as a communicative teacher of English?

The students were asked to state which classroom activities were enjoyable and/or useful through a quantitative survey. While *usefulness* can be interpreted in a number of ways, in this study it relates to the effectiveness of an activity for learning English and to how a particular activity benefits the learners in both present and future learning.

Data collection and analysis

The setting for the study was English conversation classes at a former national university and I

administered the questionnaire in six classes. The participants are not English majors, but are studying English conversation as a compulsory subject during their first year at university. They have a range of majors including law, engineering, and nursing. Although the study is a convenience sample, the students were informed of the purpose, were free to not participate, and anonymity was guaranteed. Twenty descriptions of classroom activities were given to students with the following format:

1. Learning by reading aloud is:		
very enjoyable	6 5 4 3 2 1	not enjoyable at all
very useful	6 5 4 3 2 1	not useful at all

The questionnaire was administered to 198 students (see Appendix) in English and Japanese. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Base 11.0. Cronbach's Alpha for the questionnaire was .931 suggesting the reliability of the instrument was satisfactory.

Results

The percentage of students choosing each option of the rating scale was calculated and the mean scores for enjoyment and usefulness were compared using a paired sample *t*-test to test for significance in difference between the means. The overall mean scores of enjoyment and usefulness are 4.27 and 4.81, respectively. The difference is statistically significant ($t = 25.959$; $p < .001$). The mean scores, standard deviations, and *t*-tests of significant differences in means are presented in Table 1. The major finding was a negative correlation between usefulness and enjoyment in that those activities seen as most useful had significantly lower mean scores for enjoyment. The Bonferroni test was used to divide the alpha and to reduce the chance of errors resulting from involuntarily declaring an effect to be true and not just chance (Field, 2000). Differences in mean scores in 15 of the 20 pairs were significant at the .05 level. The exceptions were question 8 *working in groups*, question 9 *listening to classmates in English*, question 11 *the teacher talking about British culture*, question 12 *doing pair work*, and question 18 *watching videos*. The mean scores of these questions did not vary significantly for enjoyment and usefulness.

Practising pronunciation is the most useful classroom activity, with a mean score of 5.23, while *the teacher talking about British culture* is the most enjoyable, with a mean of 5.32. All of the activities had mean scores of over 4 on the 6-item scale for usefulness, while 6 activities had mean scores of lower than 4 for enjoyment. Of the 20 activities, only 7 gained higher mean scores for enjoyment than for usefulness, and 4 of them involve spoken communication: *talking to my partner in English*, *working in groups*, *the teacher talking about British culture*, and *pair work*. *Playing language games*, *singing English songs*, and *watching English videos* are similarly more enjoyable than useful, while *memorizing vocabulary lists* has the largest difference in mean score.

If we look at the means in descending order in Table 2, what is most striking is the positioning of traditional activities such as *memorizing vocabulary lists*, which is ranked 3rd for usefulness, but 20th for enjoyment, and *looking up new words in a dictionary*, ranked 4th and 18th for usefulness and enjoyment, respectively. There are also noticeable ranking differences for *listening to English tapes* (4.99 usefulness/3.91 enjoyment) and *the teacher speaking only English* (4.97 usefulness/4.14 enjoyment). Thus students may see traditional classroom activities as the most useful, but these are not ranked as high for enjoyment. This may suggest that tasks that are useful are not always enjoyable, and that learners recognize this distinction.

Looking at the right-hand column of enjoyable activities, we find *language games* are highly enjoyable (5.05), but ranked lower for usefulness (4.35), as are *singing English songs* (4.79 and 4.40) and *working in groups* (4.62 and 4.50 respectively). *Practising grammar*, with a mean score of 4.70, is seen as useful, but ranked lower for enjoyment at 3.31. However, it is seen to be more useful than *working in groups*, *singing songs*, or *playing language games*. Activities that are seen as neither particularly useful nor enjoyable were few, with *translating into Japanese* receiving lower scores of 4.58 and 3.83 for enjoyment and usefulness, respectively.

Discussion

The results of this small-scale study have some implications for understanding learner beliefs. The students had clear ideas about activities that are useful and enjoyable, and the tasks that are seen as useful are not always enjoyable. A major finding of the study was an inverse correlation between enjoyment and usefulness, and so it can be seen that for some learners at least there is a castor oil effect in that the more useful a task, the less enjoyable it is seen to be. This is the opposite of the findings of Green's (1993) study, which did

Table 1. Comparison of mean scores for enjoyment and usefulness (n = 198)

	Enjoyment (mean score)	*sd*	Usefulness (mean score)	*sd*	*M*Diff.	*t*	*p*
1. Reading aloud	4.42	0.972	5.01	0.953	-0.59	-8.87	***
2. Repeating after teacher	4.17	1.112	4.87	0.994	-0.70	-10.65	***
3. Listening to English tapes	3.91	1.166	4.99	0.992	-1.08	-13.45	***
4. Practising pronunciation	4.19	1.152	5.23	0.886	-1.03	-12.85	***
5. Talking to my partner in English	4.98	1.078	4.73	1.129	0.25	3.32	**
6. Practising grammar	3.31	1.117	4.70	0.996	-1.38	-15.60	***
7. The teacher speaking only English	4.14	1.276	4.97	1.133	-0.84	-11.19	***
8. Working in groups	4.62	1.266	4.50	1.123	0.12	2.02	*
9. Listening to classmates in English	4.27	1.186	4.31	1.171	-0.40	-0.511	
10. Translating into Japanese	3.83	1.031	4.58	0.979	-0.75	-10.28	***
11. The teacher talking about British culture	5.32	0.962	5.19	1.013	0.13	2.29	*
12. Doing pair work	4.89	1.092	4.71	0.98	-0.18	2.86	**
13. Practising dialogues	4.14	0.917	4.43	0.947	-0.29	-4.70	***
14. Playing language games	5.05	1.061	4.35	1.006	0.70	9.56	***
15. Singing English songs	4.79	1.191	4.40	1.139	0.39	6.14	***
16. Looking up new words in a dictionary	3.42	1.201	5.13	0.845	-1.71	-19.5	***
17. Speaking only English in pair work	4.33	1.104	4.95	0.952	-0.62	-9.74	***
18. Watching English videos	5.01	1.045	4.87	1.079	0.14	1.94	
19. Writing compositions	3.51	1.336	4.83	1.003	-1.32	-14.91	***
20. Memorising vocabulary lists	3.07	1.205	5.15	0.908	-2.08	-22.22	***

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

not see any significant castor oil effect and instead found a positive correlation. The high rankings given to mechanical skills in the current study indicate that learners see the acquisition of such skills as effective means of learning English. The learners seem to be less receptive to activities that emphasize language content and find activities that stress formal correctness useful. As such, the students found pronunciation practice to be beneficial, echoing Willing's (1985) study in which sounds and pronunciation were found to be areas of major interest. The students identified grammar exercises and memorization as useful, indicating that learners favor *traditional* learning activities more highly than *communicative* activity types. The teacher needs to be aware of these beliefs to avoid teacher/learner mismatch (Kumaravadivelu, 2001), to reduce the "gap between teacher intention and learner interpretation" (Nunan, 1989, p. 184), and to lessen learner dissatisfaction with the purpose of, and the way of carrying out the activity.

The teacher has to explore and encourage learners to articulate their beliefs, as it is unreasonable to expect learners to be compliant from the start of a course with a teaching style they are unfamiliar with. Breen (1989) suggests involving learners in collecting and sharing their judgments of currently used or previously experienced activities and encourages learners to reflect upon what they have learned at earlier times in their learning career. They can deduce the kinds of activities they undertook which seemed to help them, and evaluate aspects of a task for suitability and features that are missing but which they see as desirable to help their learning. Through

Table 2. The descending mean scores for usefulness and enjoyment (n = 198)

	usefulness		enjoyment
4. Practising pronunciation	5.23	11. The teacher talking about British culture	5.32
11. The teacher talking about British culture	5.19	14. Playing language games	5.05
20. Memorizing vocabulary lists	5.15	18. Watching English videos	5.01
16. Looking up new words in a dictionary	5.13	5. Talking to my partner in English	4.98
1. Reading aloud	5.01	12. Doing pair work	4.89
3. Listening to English tapes	4.99	15. Singing English songs	4.79
7. The teacher speaking only English	4.97	8. Working in groups	4.62
17. Speaking only English in pair work	4.95	1. Reading aloud	4.42
18. Watching English videos	4.87	17. Speaking only English in pair work	4.33
2. Repeating after teacher	4.87	9. Listening to classmates in English	4.27
19. Writing compositions	4.83	4. Practising pronunciation	4.19
5. Talking to my partner in English	4.73	2. Repeating after teacher	4.17
12. Doing pair work	4.71	13. Practising dialogues	4.14
6. Practising grammar	4.70	7. The teacher speaking only English	4.14
10. Translating into Japanese	4.58	3. Listening to English tapes	3.91
8. Working in groups	4.50	10. Translating into Japanese	3.83
13. Practising dialogues	4.43	19. Writing compositions	3.51
15. Singing English songs	4.40	16. Looking up new words in a dictionary	3.42
14. Playing language games	4.35	6. Practising grammar	3.31
9. Listening to classmates in English	4.31	20. Memorizing vocabulary lists	3.07

discussion, teachers can uncover their learners' own learning purposes, learner definitions of appropriate content, and beliefs about preferred ways of working. Breen argues that a next step after deducing *good* activity criteria is to encourage learners to design and develop new activities for themselves and for each other with a view to meeting their individual identified and varied learning needs.

Using both traditional and more communicative classroom activities encourages students to make informed choices. It is useful when completing various activities to ask learners what they feel have been helpful exercises. Once learners articulate resistance to activities, viewpoints can become the object of collaborative reflection and dialogue, which can yield rich insight and content for both students and teachers. Through the sharing of experiences teachers invite learners to examine their feelings about learning methods and encourage a heightened awareness of what did and what did not work for them. In order for learners to accept real language activities as useful, the teacher can raise learners' awareness of the strategies that underpin an activity (Nunan, 1995), leading discussions on why activities are useful. Before an activity teachers could make explicit reasons for doing an activity, and Auerbach (2001) suggests eliciting dialogue by using photographs or video recordings of different learning contexts. Students can see different ways of learning and expand their view of what counts as useful education.

Usefulness has been seen to be negatively correlated with enjoyment, so teachers need to cultivate a learning environment which utilizes traditional activities while ensuring that students understand the purpose of communicative activities. Enjoyable activities may have value for creating a positive class atmosphere in the short term, but if learners are not "let into the

picture," to use Nunan's (1989) term, will they share teachers' long term enthusiasm for the pedagogical and psychological raison d'être for pair work? Or do they see it in such terms as the chance for the teacher to have a rest from talking, *allowing* students to have fun? Are the students in Japan, often carrying out pair work in monolingual dyads, equally convinced of its value? In traditional teacher-fronted classes, they have perhaps not been socialized to communicative activities as learning tools. The students need to be initially drawn to the activity and stimulated to persevere, meaning that activities need to be seen to be personally relevant. Therefore, motivation can be seen in this context, in terms of choices learners make as to whether they will approach or avoid an activity and the degree of effort they will make. If our learners still do not believe that performing an activity leads to beneficial learning or successful outcomes, they may lack the will to complete the task.

Conclusion

Learning is an active, constructive process that is influenced by understandings, preconceptions, and beliefs which can color learners assessment of the effectiveness of an activity. Activities should be seen as useful as well as enjoyable, heightening the learners' receptiveness and bridging the gap between teacher and learner expectations. Teachers should be explicit about course objectives, and be sufficiently flexible to take into account learner beliefs. This will encourage motivated learners through interesting and relevant activities and will arouse and sustain learner curiosity. Therefore, meaningful activities need to be more than just being enjoyable, involving variety and diversity likely to facilitate an interest in learning. This needs to be coupled with a mastery orientation to encourage active engagement, applying effective learning and problem-solving strategies. As stated, students are far more likely to approach and engage when they perceive meaningful reasons for doing so. Beliefs link an object to an attribute, and so if positive attributes can be encouraged, positive beliefs about the object, in this case language learning, will arise.

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Appendix

Please think about some of the activities you **did** in high school, or **do** in your university English class. Which activities were/are *enjoyable* or *not enjoyable*? Which activities were/are *useful* or *not useful*?

• Female____ Male____

1. Learning by reading aloud is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

2. Repeating after the teacher is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

3. Listening to English tapes is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

4. Practising pronunciation is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

5. Talking to my partner in English is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

6. Practising grammar is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

7. The teacher speaking only in English is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

8. Working in groups is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

9. Listening to classmates speak in English is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

10. Translating into Japanese is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

11. The teacher talking about British culture is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

12. Doing pair work is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

13. Practising dialogues is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

14. Playing language games in English is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

15. Singing English songs is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

16. Looking up new words in a dictionary is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

17. Speaking only English in pair work is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

18. Watching English videos in class is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

19. Writing compositions in English is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

20. Memorizing vocabulary lists is:
very enjoyable 6 5 4 3 2 1 not enjoyable at all
very useful 6 5 4 3 2 1 not useful at all

Advert

The discourse of silence in the Japanese EFL classroom

J. E. King

Kansai Gaidai University

本論では、比較的軽視されている日本人学習者の沈黙というディスコースについて考察する。文化相違のある西洋人教師と日本人学習者が沈黙の意味を自民族中心主義により解釈することは、結果的に互いの誤解を招く要因となっている。本論では、まずそういったジレンマについて考えた上で、沈黙と文脈高依存型コミュニケーションとの関係について論じる。更に、上記の内容に加えて、儒教に基づく集団主義の影響と学生の沈黙との関係を分析し、日本語ディスコースにおける「間」のとり方、そしてそれが学生の質問から返答までにかける「間」にどういった影響を与えるかにも焦点を当てる。異文化間における沈黙の性質や意味の違いへの意識を高めることが、学生と教師のそれぞれに求められている。

.....silence. Some educators suffer in it, and some think it to be golden. Within the world of English language teaching, there is a relative tendency to be preoccupied with verbal interactions at the expense of fully understanding the many non-vocal aspects of discourse. Saville-Troike (1985) notes that, "Within linguistics, silence has traditionally been ignored except for its boundary-marking function, delimiting the beginning and end of utterances. The tradition has been to define it negatively—merely the absence of speech" (p.3).

This disparity motivated me to focus on a number of issues pertinent to the examination of the discourse of silence within Japanese EFL classrooms. The term *discourse* in this paper reflects Gee's (2003) notion of discourse as a way not only of speaking, but also of behaving, believing, and thinking. The article begins by considering the dangers of relying upon an ethnocentric perception of silence in interactions with people from other cultures. It then reflects upon the usefulness of Hall's notion of a high context communication style in relation to silence in the Japanese EFL classroom, along with the influence of Confucian-based collectivism. Finally, the article examines the nature of *ma* in Japanese discourse and its influence on learners within an EFL context.

A Word of Warning

There is always the danger of overgeneralising when considering the national characteristics of students from other cultures. People are complex beings. Not all Japanese students are timidly reticent, as not all Western teachers are direct individualists. Guest (2002) makes the point that we do not look for cultural explanations in order to interpret the behaviour of people from our own culture. Instead, we ascribe personalities to them (Guest, 2002). Therefore, whilst this paper deals with cultural factors in relatively general terms, it is essential to try to build some type of a relationship with students in order to know them better as individuals. Most certainly, one will then be able to discover that not all of one's students follow the prescribed behavioural patterns of their national culture.

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Cross-cultural Misapprehensions about Silence

It was while reading about a study on the negative stereotypes attributed to the Native American Indian Athabaskan people (Apaches) by other Americans that a similarity struck me. The Athabaskans were branded as passive, sullen, withdrawn, unresponsive, and uncooperative because of their proclivity for silence and the longer pauses they employed in interactions with non-Native Americans (Scollon, 1985). This lack of understanding on the part of the majority of Americans about their interlocutor's discourse norms is often mirrored in many communicative English classes around Japan. The failure of Western English teachers to fully understand the underlying attributes of their students' primary discourse, especially in relation to non-verbal behaviour, can lead to the negative stereotyping of students and a deep frustration on the part of the educator.

Capper (2000) argues that it is essential for educators to include aspects of non-verbal communication on syllabi for second language learners. I wholeheartedly agree but would add that, conversely, it is essential for educators to be informed of the non-verbal discourse norms of their students, in particular the differing role and meaning of silence within Japanese culture. Perhaps then some of the frustrations felt by educators when faced with silence in the classroom could be averted. Such frustrations are likely to become increasingly prevalent around the world as Western educational institutions become more aggressive in their pursuit of Asian students in order to offset the negative financial results of declines in home student numbers

Problems in Interpretation of High Context Communicative Strategies

Hall's seminal study in 1976 into the cultural dimensions of communication highlighted that the Japanese style of discourse is determined by its implicit, high context nature. Understanding is dependent upon history, shared experience, and implied messages (Hall, cited in Irwin, 1996, p.41). This is in direct contrast to the explicit codes of communication of low context cultures that rely heavily on unambiguous, detailed verbal messages. Although a neat explanation for difficulties within the communicative classroom, it is unhelpful to consider the communication styles of Western teachers and their Japanese learners as being diametrically opposed. This belief fails to take into account that some Western cultures, such as the UK, display both high and low context characteristics (Gudykunst & Kim, cited in Anderson, 2003). The problem is not that Western educators are incapable of understanding high context communication. Rather, it is that they do not possess the shared history and experience that their Japanese students do. Consequently, it is more likely that the students' implied messages will be misunderstood by the teacher.

This is especially true with regards to interpreting silence. Western teachers may interpret their students' silence as a lack of initiative, attention, or even intelligence on the part of the learner (Anstey, 2003; Jandt, 2001). Indeed, they may even perceive student silence to be a direct challenge to their authority (Gilmore, 1985). This ethnocentric interpretation does not take into account the higher value placed on silence within the more teacher-centred classrooms of high context, collectivist cultures. Even so, it is not my intention to defend the pedagogic merits of such verbally passive learning environments. My point is that Western educators need to be aware that their Japanese students may not understand what Anstey (2003) terms the *rules of engagement* for effective discourse within communicative English classrooms. It is the teacher's responsibility to enlighten students as to what is an acceptable use of silence within the language classroom.

The Influence of Confucian-based Collectivism on Student Silence

One the most the most important influences on Japanese student classroom discourse is Confucian-based collectivism. McDaniel (2003, pp.253-254) notes that Japanese racial and cultural homogeneity creates a strong bond of identity that facilitates interpersonal and intragroup familiarity. This in turn promotes an inherent nonverbal comprehension amongst the Japanese. If one also considers the high value placed on group membership within collectivist societies and the manner in which out-group members can be treated as being almost inconsequential, one can better understand why there may be a lack of spontaneous verbal interactions between Western teachers (out-group members) and their students, especially in the initial stages of their relationship.

Instead of a facilitator, the traditional Confucian notion of the teacher is as a transmitter of knowledge to the silent, unquestioning student. This idea still exerts a significant influence on classroom interactions in Japan today. Brislin and Yoshida (1994) note that power relationships

between students and teachers within countries that rank high in Confucian dynamism (see: Hofstede & Bond, 1988) are inherently unequal. This inequality acts as a stimulus for student silence as a mark of deference for the teacher. Due to their more egalitarian backgrounds, Western teachers may misinterpret such silence as being a sign of unfriendliness rather than as respect. Again, it is the teacher's responsibility to be informed about how participants interact with each other in vertically structured societies. Conversely, the EFL teacher also needs to increase student awareness of what are acceptable student-teacher interactions in less hierarchical societies.

Greer (2000) illustrates how a student's acute sensitivity to the rest of the group can often lead to a lack of verbal spontaneity within the Japanese EFL classroom. This attitude is also reflected in Jin and Cortazzi's (1998) account of the collectivist reasons behind Chinese students' tendency towards silence in class. For high context, collectivist students to stand out by being verbally active is not in harmony with the group's collective beliefs. It is too individualistic, too focused on the self. Collectivist learners therefore tend to show more restraint or, within a Japanese context *enryo*, in learning situations (see: Wierzbicka, 1997). In addition to being perceived as taking too much of the teacher's time away from the group, the verbally active student runs the risk of losing face from asking a too clever or too foolish question (Jin & Cortazzi, 1998, pp. 107-108). Even so, one's perception of what is an active student is based on one's culturally hegemonic assumptions. It is interesting to note that students who remain silent in class may, in fact, perceive themselves as being active if they are mentally engaging with the subject (ibid, p.106). The point is that silence does not necessarily indicate inaction. It can be both a complex communicative tool and a non-interactive strategy for contemplation.

Ma and Student Response Time Silence

Another aspect of silence that teachers should be aware of is at the micro level. This is the silence of pauses and hesitations. Morbasch (1988) relates the story of a fully bilingual Western professor who misinterpreted his Japanese colleagues' true intentions at a faculty meeting because he failed to interpret the silences between their words correctly. Even though they were speaking in favour of a proposal, their silences in fact indicated the opposite. These frequent short breaks or pauses in Japanese conversation are referred to as *ma.* According to McDaniel (2003),

> Instances of *ma* in Japanese discourse can impart a variety of messages, with the context supplying the actual meaning. Silence is employed to tactfully signal disagreement, nonacceptance, or an uncomfortable dilemma. A period of silence can be used to consider an appropriate response or formulate an opinion (p. 257).

This last part of McDaniel's definition is of particular significance for Western language teachers in Japan. The period of silence employed by a Japanese learner to consider a response to a teacher's question may be significantly longer than the teacher is used to. As a result, there is always the danger of the teacher jumping in and cutting the student off before a reply is produced. Korst (1997) notes research has shown that by employing a longer wait-time, ESL teachers can increase the likelihood of a student response. Even so, allowing Japanese students more time to produce an answer acknowledges the use of *ma* in their primary discourse but fails to prepare them for the naturally more spontaneous responses expected within an L1 English environment. It is therefore of paramount importance that students are introduced to such paralinguistic devices as *ummm*..., *errr*... or *well*... These utterances may seem less than eloquent, but they do allow students time to think, while at the same time they fill the silence that their Western interlocutor may find uncomfortable.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the risk of misunderstanding in cross-cultural encounters as a result of ethnocentric perceptions of silence. Such misapprehensions usually occur in the Japanese EFL classroom not because Western educators are totally incapable of utilising high context communication strategies. Rather, they are a result of a lack of shared history and experience on the part of the educator with the students. The effect of Confucian-based collectivism has the impact of distancing the educator from the students whilst creating an atmosphere of acute sensitivity to the group, thus leading to a lack of verbal spontaneity. The negative effects of a deficit in shared experience and the influence of Confucian-based collectivism can be offset if the educator is prepared to: (a) show patience

in interactions with students by taking into account the longer hesitation time for Japanese, (b) create a supportive learning environment where students feel at ease communicating in English, (c) make students aware of other cultures' discourse norms in relation to silence and, (d) increase student awareness of the pedagogic rules of engagement in the classrooms of other cultures. It is clear that it is not only students who have to be educated about the neglected discourse of silence—educators too need to become more aware of its cross-cultural implications. Such an awareness would not only help reduce the frustrations felt by many Western teachers when faced with silence, but would also contribute to making Japanese EFL classrooms much more effective sites of learning.

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When East meets West in a Japanese classroom

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日本に英語を教えに来ている外国人教師にとって、学生と教師との相互力学に対処することはとてもやり甲斐のあることである。日本人学生と外国人教師が授業に期待するものは互いに一致せず、両者に大きな誤解や欲求不満を生むことがある。本論で、著者は日本人学生を教えた経験について分析する。まず、著者が遭遇したいくつかの困難について述べ、次に、学生と教師との新しい相互力学を導入する試みについて概説する。さらに、この新しい相互力学によって得られた結果を様々な文化理論を用いて説明する。

Looking back at the past year and a half in which I have been teaching at a Japanese university, I began to reflect on a stumbling block that I repeatedly encountered: the way that my students and I were interacting was not meeting my expectations. My basic assumptions about student-teacher interaction were being challenged by the behavior of my Japanese students. I found that, in many cases, students were not responding favorably to my attempts at what I considered to be *normal* interaction. For example, some students would avoid eye contact with me when I addressed them or simply not respond to my question at all, looking down silently. At other times they would try to answer but appeared to be uncomfortable being put on the spot. Or sometimes they would consult with a peer before answering. So, in an effort to spare the students discomfort, I tried asking open questions to the class, but in this case, no one would volunteer an answer. Also, when students did not understand a task, they would usually not ask me for help in spite of the fact that I pleaded with them to do this. From my background, all of the above behaviors would be considered inappropriate. In an effort to improve rapport with my students, I sought to introduce a student-teacher interaction dynamic that I felt was more conducive to language learning into my classroom.

A Strategy to Elicit Change

In order for the students to understand clearly what I expected, I had to explain how I wanted them to interact with me. Rather than simply giving them a list, I decided to incorporate the student-teacher interaction dynamic that I wanted into a lesson about cultural differences. In that lesson, we compared ways of doing things in different cultures, my objective being to get the students to realize that some of their basic assumptions about the way things are come from cultural constructs. One example that some students found surprising is the way in which one passes an item to a superior—in Japan, two hands are used, which shows deference, while in the United States one hand would surely suffice, and the use of two hands would have no significance.

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Many of the students had not considered this to be a feature of culture.

Once I felt that the students had gotten the hang of cultural differences, I asked if they knew how teachers and students interacted in a typical classroom in the United States. As their curiosity was piqued, I gave them the following list.

Examples of American student-teacher interaction:

- If a student has a question, the student raises his or her hand and asks the teacher. The student can do this when the teacher invites the class to ask questions or at almost any juncture even if the teacher is not inviting questions at that moment.
- When the teacher is encouraging a free-flowing discussion of ideas, it is okay for a student to disagree openly with the teacher or another student and explain why. In fact, sometimes teachers play *devil's advocate* at which time the whole conversation is driven by disagreement and explanation.
- When the teacher asks a specific student a question, the teacher expects the student to answer or, if the student cannot, to say, "I don't know."
- When the teacher asks a question to the class, they expect someone to volunteer an answer. If no one volunteers an answer, the teacher will interpret that to mean that no one knows the answer.
- When the teacher talks to a student, they expect the student to make eye contact with them and respond verbally.
- When a student needs help, they ask the teacher for it

Introducing a New Interaction Dynamic to Students

I then asked the class if some of these student-teacher interaction behaviors were different than those of Japan. Nodding heads indicated an affirmative answer. Of course, depending upon the context, some Japanese students occasionally would do some of the above behaviors. For example, many students are comfortable making eye contact with me when we talk. Also, in my experience, in a small group of five students or less the interaction dynamic sometimes meets all of my expectations. It seems there are many variables that affect this interaction, such as class size, age, how long the students have known me, and crucially, language. It is quite possible that some of the inhibitions exhibited by students in their interactions with me arose simply from their lack of confidence in using English. All of this can adequately explain why the above classroom behaviors are unfamiliar to the majority of Japanese university students that I have observed. I let students understand that these were the culturally appropriate, normal ways in which teachers and students interacted in my country. I emphasized that neither the Japanese nor the American model was right or wrong, and that value judgment had no place in this kind of analysis. They are simply different, that is all. At this point, I invited the students to try to share my own culture's dynamic of student-teacher interaction. The justification I offered was that, as a teacher of English, I felt that it was my responsibility to share my culture with them (and vice versa) and let them *try on* a different way of relating to the teacher.

The Results

I felt that by explicitly stating my expectations with regard to our interaction, I was setting up a positive environment in which students could experience a new way of interacting with the teacher because they had been given permission in advance. However, most students were not able to simply switch off their own interaction dynamic that they had learned since they had entered school long ago. Although a few students were able to occasionally interact with me in the way that I desired (in fact, a small percentage of extroverted students would have done it naturally without my encouragement), I realized that it is unrealistic for me to expect most students to make such major behavioral changes. At best, all I can hope is that a few students will occasionally go out on a limb and try this new way of interacting with me as a result of my encouragement.

An Explanation

My goal in doing this was to expose the students to a new cultural practice and to create an environment that I felt was more conducive to learning a foreign language. According to Brown (2001), "the most important key to creating an interactive language classroom is the initiation of interaction by the teacher...one of the best ways to develop your role as an initiator and sustainer of interaction is to develop a repertoire of questioning strategies" (p. 169). Brown goes on to describe the value of well-formed teacher questions. He says that teacher questions can:

- give students the opportunity to produce language without having to risk initiating language themselves
- serve to initiate a chain reaction of student interaction among themselves
- give the instructor immediate feedback about student comprehension
- provide students with opportunities to find out what they think by hearing what they say (p. 171).

Socratic versus Confucian Based Pedagogy

In hindsight, I can see that what I was trying to change was more than just a classroom dynamic. Scollon (1999) points out that the question-and-answer discourse mode of Western education goes all the way back to Socrates and the Socratic Method, education through Q & A dialogue. This is deeply imbedded in the student-teacher interaction dynamic of many Western countries. According to Scollon, most Asian countries are Confucian based. Socratic and Confucian based pedagogy are the sources of "distinct ways of teaching...based on cultural assumptions about teaching and learning" (p. 15). As a result of this, Scollon says that "Western teachers unaccustomed to a classroom full of Asian students all too frequently...do not get the feedback they are accustomed to not only in terms of comments and questions but in head movement and facial expression" (p. 27). Although it is desirable to be student-centered by regularly eliciting answers from the students, to expect them to suddenly adopt this unfamiliar dynamic is unrealistic in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) setting. Perhaps if it were ESL (English as a Second Language), it would be more reasonable to expect the students to adapt. But regardless of the setting, anytime a teacher and students are from different cultures, some of the challenges which arise can be attributed to their distinct *cultures of learning*. According to Cortazzi and Jin (1999), "the culture of learning that students and teachers bring to the classroom is a taken-for-granted framework of expectations, attitudes, values, and beliefs about what constitutes good learning" (p. 212). They explain that the culture of learning provides a "framework of cultural interpretation that is unconsciously employed...an invisible yardstick for judgments about how to teach or learn, about whether and how to ask questions" (p. 212).

An Alternative Approach

Taking all of this cultural theory into consideration, an alternative approach would be for me to adapt to the students. McKay (2003) argues that "it is important when selecting a methodology for a particular context for teachers to consider the local needs of the students rather than assume that a method that is effective in one context is effective in all contexts" (p. 4). Concerning my present teaching context, it is clear that some of the students are not prepared to be thrust into an interactive, communicative language classroom. Leather (2000) argues that communicative language teaching, "with its focus on communication rather than code" (p. 16) is a product of the West and that to expect Japanese learners to be comfortable with it is to deny their cultural reality. Ultimately, she says, what is required is "a cultural 'tuning in' to the Japanese need not to be 'put on the spot' or to 'lose face', before they feel fully 'safe' in the new classroom context" (p. 17). It is the teacher's job to facilitate learning, even if that might involve throwing out, or at least adapting, a methodology.

Conclusion

Although I have not entirely abandoned my endeavor to get my students to conform to my preferred student-teacher interaction dynamic, I have modified my expectations. But as a cultural experiment, I still continue trying to get my students to join me in a game of cultural follow the leader. It is possible that some students would appreciate doing this, as evidenced by a feedback questionnaire in which, in response to the question, "Is there anything that you wanted to do that we didn't do?," one of my students wrote, "I wanted to have a lively discussion with all of us." I feel that if I can establish good rapport, then it is possible to gradually guide some students into this dynamic. One strategy that I am considering to enhance rapport is to occasionally, and in a strictly principled way, use the students' L1 (Japanese), which according to the studies of Auerbach (1993), Schweers (1999), and Tang (2002), has a necessary and useful place in the EFL classroom. Another strategy that I have been trying is communicating with the students by email. At the beginning of the term, I collect email addresses from everyone and send weekly comments which invite written dialogue. I have noticed that some students can open up very comfortably in the electronic context. My hope is that the rapport established through a variety of strategies will relax the atmosphere and bridge

the cultural gap. It is my job to accept where each student is in relation to me and try to create the optimal learning space in which we can meet each other on mutual cultural terms.

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–WH Questions–

Rob Waring and Marc Helgesen are co-conference chairs of JALT2005. Each month, they've answered "WH" questions about the conference.

Rob and Marc... any final words before JALT2005 starts?

Rob: So Marc, JALT2005 is upon us.

Marc: Yeah, it's been a long road to get here, but I'm sure all the participants will be very happy with what we've planned for them.

Rob: I sure hope so. We have so many more things going on than usual, such as "Ask the Experts," the Discussion Sessions, and the Speakers' Corner.

Marc: Yeah, and don't forget the Stories, Jazz, Wine, and Cheese event where we can hear stories of all kinds.

Rob: I've had that on my calendar for a long time.

Marc: And all this is in addition to the regular events such as the plenaries, the presenters' sessions, posters, Think Tank Live, and so on. It's going to be great this year.

Rob: I can hardly wait.

Marc: Me neither. See you there.

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

For this issue we have some interesting communicative activities for large classes, guaranteed to get your students talking. Mark Rebuck introduces a structured activity to help students cope with tag questions, and Patrick Jackson invites us to create a whole new country of islands. Sean McAuley has a jigsaw task particularly suited for large classes, and finally, Ian Willey gives us instructions for a quiz-type game complete with bell!

We welcome submissions for this column. Submissions should be up to 1000 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used and which can be replicated by readers, and should conform to My Share format (see any edition of *The Language Teacher*). Please send submissions to <my-share@jalt-publication.org>.

Tag question interrogation

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Quick Guide

Key words: Tag question, declarative sentence, *maru* (circle), pair work
Learner English level: Beginner to intermediate
Learner Maturity level: High school to university
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Activity time: Around 30 minutes
Material: Whiteboard or blackboard, handouts (A and B)

Although tag questions are taught from the 1st year of junior high school, I still find students faltering when responding to a simple question such as "You weren't here last lesson, were you?" The pair work activity introduced here provides practice in asking and responding to tag questions. I often precede this activity with some remedial tag question practice such as basic drilling.

Preparation

Sample handouts, created on the Table function of a word processing program, are included in the Appendix. When creating your own handouts, follow the steps below.

Step 1: For each handout, A and B, create a different set of prompts to put in the "Do you think your partner. . ." column.

Step 2: Ensure that the prompts include items that will elicit confirmation or rhetorical type tags as well as tags that are *real* questions. Question 8 on Handout A, for example, is based on visible evidence and is more likely to elicit the former type ("You have dyed hair, don't you?" or "You don't have dyed hair, do you?"), while Question 9 should lead to the use of tag questions for really finding out something ("You can name the three previous Japanese prime ministers, can't you?" or "You can't name the three previous Japanese prime ministers, can you?").

Step 3: In the first cell of the Tag Question column, write an example of a completed tag question that corresponds to the *maru* in either the YES or NO column.

Procedure

Step 1: Distribute the handouts in the Appendix. Give half of the class Handout A, and the other half Handout B.

Step 2: Students with Handout A make one line, while those with Handout B face them. They make pairs with the person opposite.

Step 3: Tell students they have to use the prompts in the first column of the handout to form tag questions to ask their partner.

Step 4: Demonstrate the activity with a student. Reveal your thought process to the class by saying, for example, (while pointing to Question 1 on Handout A): "Do I think that Yoko has a lot of money in her bank account? Well, she has a nice Gucci bag and she's wearing an expensive-looking ring; I think she does, so I put a maru in the YES column. Now I have to make a tag question to check my guess: You have a lot of money in your bank account, don't you?" Respond appropriately to Yoko's answer; for example, if she replies negatively, exclaim, "My guess was wrong!" Show the class that you circle WRONG in the "Were you right or wrong?" column.

Step 5: Tell students to alternately ask each other tag questions. Before asking each question, they put a maru in either the YES or NO column. The choice of column indicates what they anticipate the answer will be and dictates the form of the tag question they will ask (a positive

declarative sentence and negative tag for a *maru* in the YES column, and vice versa for one in the NO column). Stress that column selection can be based on what they know about their partner, on what they see, or just on a hunch or intuition.

Step 6: Instruct students that, depending on whether or not their partner's reply was as they anticipated, they circle either RIGHT or WRONG in the "Were you right or wrong?" column.

Step 7: While students are practicing in pairs, help with any new vocabulary or problems that may come up, including those related to possessives ("You have a lot of money in *their* bank account, don't you?" is a common mistake).

Step 8: Students return to their seats. The teacher asks the whole class a few questions from both handouts.

At any time during the activity, if students seem confused when answering tag questions, suggest they mentally switch the declarative sentence to a yes/no question. If Miho, for instance, is confused by the question: "You're not interested in fashion, are you?" she could ask herself: "Am I interested in fashion?" and then just answer with the facts.

Variations

(a) At the end of class, students are assigned new partners. For homework, they write questions, in the Tag Question column, which they ask their partner in the following lesson.

(b) This lesson is a good opportunity to review the intonation used in tag questions (the voice usually rises on the tag if the speaker is unsure. Conversely, falling intonation on the tag indicates more certainty). If intonation is modeled at the start of the lesson, students can practice it during the activity.

(c) To increase conversation between students, encourage them to ask follow-up questions. For example, the questioner receiving an affirmative reply to "You can sleep almost anywhere, can't you?" could then ask, "Have you ever slept in this class?"

Appendix

Handout A

Person A Do you think your partner...	YES	NO	Tag Question	Were you right or wrong?
Example: *...is interested in fashion?*	○		You're interested in fashion, aren't you?	☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
1. *...has a lot of money in their bank account?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
2. *...can sleep almost anywhere?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
3. *...has a dark secret?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
4. *...must use an alarm clock to wake up?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
5. *...would marry someone for their money?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
6. *...would sacrifice their life for their country?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
7. *...had a good night's sleep last night?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
8. *...has dyed hair?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
9. *...can name the three previous Japanese prime ministers?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
10. *...was a shy child?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG

Handout B

Person B Do you think your partner...	YES	NO	Tag Question	Were you right or wrong?
Example: *...is interested in fashion?*	○		You're interested in fashion, aren't you?	☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
1. *...has a good singing voice?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
2. *...can keep up with the pace of this class?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
3. *...has a pet?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
4. *...must be home by a certain time at night?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
5. *...would leave Japan for good and live abroad?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
6. *...would help me if I were in trouble?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
7. *...gets on well with their parents?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
8. *...has had a haircut recently?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
9. *...could beat you in arm wrestling?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG
10. *...was happier when they were in high school compared to now?*				☐ RIGHT ☐ WRONG

Treasure islands of creativity and communication

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Quick Guide

Key words: Maps, creativity, role-play, environment
Learner English level: Pre-intermediate and above
Learner Maturity level: Mature high school classes and above
Preparation time: 10 minutes
Activity time: At least three 60-minute sessions on different days
Materials: One sheet of A3 paper for each pair of students

Introduction

Language has its roots in our need to describe and control our physical environment. This activity is based on maps of imaginary islands designed by pairs of students. The communication takes place while creating the islands and introducing them to other students. The basic activity can be developed in a variety of ways as suggested below.

Preparation

Make a list of natural features such as coastline, bay, inlet, cliffs, beach, peninsula, hill, mountain, plain, valley, canyon, gully, gorge, river, waterfall, lake, delta, forest, swamp, desert, grassland, sand dune, and so forth.

Make another list of man-made things such as port, village, town, city, farm, road, railway, factory, airport, school, university, museum, mall, stores, amusement park, hotel, restaurant, station, swimming pool, and stadium.

Procedure

Step 1: Session 1—Students brainstorm and write on the board as many natural features as they can think of in 5 minutes. They can use dictionaries. If they have difficulty, suggest words

from the list above.
Step 2: Draw the coastline of an interestingly shaped island, including these natural features. Ask students to add names (e.g., The Dismal Desert, Nasty Falls) and as much detail as possible, including the height of mountains and the length of rivers. The more realistic the island, the better.
Step 3: Divide students into pairs and give each pair a sheet of blank A3 paper. Ask them to design an island (covering most of the paper) and name its natural features. If you pre-teach expressions such as *Let's put the waterfall here, That's a great idea*, and *I think it would be better here* it will help the necessary discussion to take place in English. Encourage students to draw detailed and realistic maps. After 30 minutes, collect the maps.
Step 4: Session 2—Ask the students to brainstorm man-made features. Draw these on a new island on the board. Discuss the evolution of human settlement and society on the island. Mention agriculture, trade, communications, transportation, energy, and industry.
Step 5: Return the maps to the students and ask them to add these features to their maps. They should consider how the early communities on the island lived, fed themselves, traded, and related to their environment and each other. Collect the maps again.
Step 6: Session 3—Return the maps to the students and ask them to add various tourist and leisure sites to the map. They should discuss how a visitor could spend a week on their island, how to pass the time, where they might stay, the costs involved, and how to get around.
Step 7: Students do *rock, scissors, paper* to decide who is a tourist and who is a tourist information officer. As the manager of the tourist office you will train the staff to say *Welcome to our island, May I recommend..., This is a great place to...*, and so forth. Model some likely conversations between tourists and information officers.
Step 8: The tourists visit another island and plan a week's vacation: where to stay, how to get around, bus and train frequency, and prices. The teacher continues the training, going around the room monitoring the staff.
Step 9: After about 15 minutes, the tourists return home and tell their partner about their trip. They then swap roles and the previous staff members visit a different island. The process can be repeated as many times as there are islands.

Conclusion

Students grow in confidence as they repeat the question and answer patterns required to do the role-play in different environments. Creating historical events, famous people, climate, language, culture, and crafts are among the many ways this project can be developed over further sessions. By taping papers together, larger groups of islands can be made and the relationships between islands explored. This activity could also be used as the source material for presentations and written projects.

Clearing the fog: A communicative activity for large classes

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Quick Guide

Key words: Large classrooms, four skills, jigsaw task
Learner English level: Intermediate to advanced
Learner Maturity level: Teenagers to adult
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Activity time: At least 1 hour, possibly 2 hours
Materials: One short story

This task was designed specifically for large classes filled with scantly motivated students who are reluctant to speak. It requires every student to speak and listen for an extended period of time, and since students retell a story to only one student, the task eliminates the hesitation that plagues most Japanese students. As an icebreaker for a new class or a desperately needed change of pace for students who are tired of pair work, *Clearing the fog* will lift your classroom spirits.

Preparation

Step 1: Make one copy of a short story for every three students.
Step 2: Cut the story into four parts.
Step 3: Place parts 1, 2, and 3 together into a single envelope, but keep part 4. You will need a stuffed envelope for every three students. (30

students, 10 envelopes; 45 students, 15 envelopes, etc.)
Step 4: Arrange the classroom into rows of six [see Appendix 1] with space between desks three and four.
Step 5: Inform students that for the entire class, they will only interact with the three people in their group.

Procedure

Step 1: Give the first and fourth students in each row (Student A) an envelope.
Step 2: Student A removes one part of the story, but cannot read it yet, and passes the envelope to the next student, Student B.
Step 3: Student B takes one part and passes the envelope to Student C, who removes her part.
Step 4: Give students 5 minutes to read and remember their part of the story.
Step 5: Tell students that they must put the story away and they cannot read it again until later. They will try to cheat, so have them place the paper in their pockets.
Step 6: Tell students that A will retell what she read to B. They only have 3 minutes (less if the story is easy) to retell the story, so they need to cover the main points of the story.
Step 7: A walks to B's chair and tells B her part of the story.
Step 8: B stands up, and A sits in B's chair.
Step 9: Tell students that B will retell the story she just heard (yes, heard!) to C. Be ready for gasps, groans, and a collective Japanese *eeeeeeeehhhhhhh!*
Step 10: B walks to C's chair and retells A's story (the part she just heard) to C.
Step 11: B sits in C's seat, and C moves to A's chair and sits down. (Give the class a moment to collect their thoughts and think about the story).
Step 12: Give C (only C) 1 minute to read the story again.
Step 13: Repeat the steps again with C telling A the story she read. Then A tells C's story (the one she just heard) to B.
Step 14: Then B moves to the front, and everything is repeated again. B tells her story to C, and C tells B's story to A.

Classroom directions are the key to this activity, and it can get very confusing for lower level students if the instructions are not clear. The key is to move everyone at the same time (see Appendix 2).

This activity is loud (a good sign because everyone is talking) and takes a lot of effort and mental energy as they are reading, listening, retelling a story, and determining the order of the story, all at the same time. (Think about the first time you saw *Pulp Fiction* or *Legends of the Fall* and tried to determine the time line.) Students slowly begin to hear the story in its entirety (although they did not hear the story in order) and understand the entire story—like fog clearing from a field. After this, you have several options depending on time.
Option 1: (at least 15 minutes) The three students in the group discuss the story. They can look at their papers again, if you like. Then they have 10 minutes to decide how they think the story will end. If you are out of time, students must write an ending to the story as homework.
Option 2: (at least 30 minutes) Groups must act out the ending of the story in front of their classmates. After each performance, the class can discuss each group's ending. Give the ending to one person in each group who then reads it to the other two members. Discuss the story.
Option 3: (10 minutes) Give the original ending (Part 4) to each group. Let them discuss the original ending.

Variations

Secretly reveal the original ending to one group. Have them act out the real ending and see if the others think it is a good ending. This could be used in a writing class where students pass notes to each other (or send emails if you are working in a computer lab). Writing replaces speaking and reading replaces listening.

Appendix 1

Front of Class	A	B	C		A	B	C
	A	B	C		A	B	C
Students work in groups of three. Each person in a group receives one part of the story. Be careful that each group has parts 1, 2, and 3.							

Appendix 2

Step 6	A, B, C. A tells her story to B. B tells A's story to C. C moves to front.
Step 12	C, A, B. C tells her story to A. A tells C's story to B. B moves to the front.
Step 14	B, C, A. B tells her story to C. C tells B's story to A.

Advert

Prompting students to answer in sentences

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Quick Guide

Key words: *Wh* ~ questions, answering in sentences, game
Learner English level: Low-intermediate to advanced
Learner Maturity Level: High School and above
Preparation time: 5–45 minutes
Activity time: 40–45 minutes
Materials: Small sheets of paper, bell, tape

Introduction

Anyone who has taught in Japan for a while has been frustrated by students' one-word answers to questions. In my classes, the top three responses to the question *What did you do last weekend?* are *sleeping*, *shopping*, and *part-time job* (or more often, *baito).* Continually reminding students to answer in sentences doesn't seem to work, and recently I have turned to activities that require students to respond with sentences. Here is an activity that is guaranteed to brighten any class and get students into sentence mode. It can fill a 45-minute high school lesson or half of a 90-minute college period.

Preparation

Step 1: Collect a stack of small sheets of paper, one for each student in the class.
Step 2: Jot down in your planner a few *Wh* ~ questions for the warm-up (for example: *What did you eat for breakfast this morning?*)
Step 3: If possible, obtain a bell (or *yorobin*), the kind that can be found in restaurants or on hotel front desks. These can be purchased in some ¥100 shops, or in stationery stores.

If the instructor can come up with questions in class without writing them beforehand, the second step can be skipped. This activity may also work without a bell, if the instructor can find a suitable replacement (something to place on the podium for students to slap, such as a magnet). But I would recommend the bell. I have found it to be useful for other activities, such as role-plays involving ordering food in a restaurant.

Step 1: (Warm-up: 10 min.) Ask students a few *Wh* ~ questions. Write a few questions and answers from students on the board. Remind students that good answers are in sentence form, and that terse, one-word responses give a negative impression in real world communication.
Step 2: (Sentence writing: 10 min.) Pass out the sheets of paper. Instruct students to write one question on the paper. The questions should be *Wh* ~ questions rather than questions that elicit a yes/no response. For lower level learners it may be helpful to write more example questions on the board (e.g., *What is your hobby?, Where do you live?, How do you come to school every day?*) For higher level learners, encourage students to write more interesting questions, such as *What would you do if you found 10,000 yen?* Tell students to memorize their questions.
Step 3: (Pair practice: 5–10 min.) Have students stand up and find a partner. Instruct students to ask their questions to their partner, while trying not to look at their papers. When asked a question, students should respond in complete sentences. After the first student has asked his or her question and received an answer, the second student should ask his or her question. When finished, they should find different partners and repeat the exercise. Students should speak to at least three partners. When the activity is finished, have students return to their desks and collect and shuffle their papers.
Step 4: (Q and A game: 15–20 min.) Divide the class in two. Ask one student to take the role of scorekeeper. Scorekeepers can be changed so that all students can participate in the game. Clear

the podium and place the bell in the center. Have one student from each group come forward and stand on either side of the podium, hands behind their backs. Explain the rules: the teacher will read one of the questions from the stack, and the first student to ring the bell and answer the question in sentence form will score a point for his or her team. A student who fails to answer in sentence form does not receive a point, and his or her opponent is allowed to answer. Teammates are not allowed to help the players. Begin the game. Have the first pair of students sit down and the next two contestants step up. Have fun!

Depending on the level of the class, small errors can be overlooked provided that the meaning of the answer is clear. By asking students to write their names on their question sheets, the instructor can ensure that students do not answer their own questions.

Reflections

Students seem to enjoy these competitive quiz-show-type activities, and this game will generate some noise. It is best for students to come up with the questions rather than the instructor; first because it reduces preparation time, and second because their questions tend to be cleverer than the teacher's (for example: *Who do you want to marry in this class?*). When put on the spot, with a point at stake, their answers tend to be of better quality as well. You can mix a few of your own questions into the stack to review expressions and vocabulary you have covered. A variety of activities of this sort may help students to make a habit of giving more detailed answers to questions.

A more difficult variation of this game is a *Jeopardy* style competition, in which students are given an answer to a question (e.g., *He is the Prime Minister of Japan*) and then must provide the question (*Who is Junichiro Koizumi?*). This task takes some coaching, however, and may work best for higher level learners.

Caution: The instructor may wish to safeguard his or her investment by fastening the bell to the podium with a couple of strips of tape. Zealous students may knock it off the podium, and if the bell is broken the game just doesn't have the same ring!

FOCUS

With the JALT conference just a few days away, make sure you read Kunihiko Kobayashi's inspirational words on the role JALT has played in both his professional and personal life. Looking forward to seeing you all in Shizuoka!

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 Research Grant Recipients 2005

The JALT Research Grant Committee is very happy to announce that the following JALT members have been each awarded a ¥100,000 research grant.

- Andy Boon (West Tokyo Chapter): *Building Bridges: Facilitating Teacher Collaboration, Exploration, and Development Online*
- Naoki Fujimoto (Shinshu Chapter): *Localizing Team-Teaching Research: Comparison of Three Classroom Practices in Junior High Schools in Japan*
- Mami Ishikawa (Kyoto Chapter): *Model Construction of Materials Developing Academic Oral Presentation Skills*

Andy Boon writes: "In my professional life, I often find myself isolated from the means to develop myself as a teacher. Although my everyday classroom experiences provide me with the potential to learn more about my individual pedagogic practice, I need time to reflect on the numerous instinctive or routine decisions I make, to increase my awareness of what I actually do, to understand it, challenge it, revise it, and grow from it. Through my continued research into professional development and teacher collaboration, I hope to show that IMCD can provide teachers with an effective means to articulate, investigate, and learn from classroom experiences, to make connections between intellectual, theoretical, and experiential knowledge, and gain new insights into what it is we actually do in the classroom in order to discover new potential ways forward in our teaching for the benefit of the individual teacher, the profession, and, most importantly, the students of the class."

Naoki Fujimoto writes: "I would like to focus on the two kinds of teachers' power relationships and investigate three specific cases in three different schools in order to 'localize' the national policy from MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2002). In other words, I wish to interpret this policy for a specific, local context. To achieve this objective, I am planning to use a qualitative, interpretative approach in which the research methodology is based on a "collective case study" (Stake, 1995). This means examining a few limited cases rather than gathering a large amount of data from many schools. The advantages of a collective case study is that the researcher can investigate the classroom practice deeply, rather than looking at the surface of statistics."

Mami Ishikawa writes: "The goal of my project is to develop materials aiming at improving the academic English oral presentation skills of university students. Generally speaking, Japanese university students are inexperienced in making presentations in English. However, for many students, especially science major students, there is a strong possibility that they will have to give presentations in English at meetings or in seminars in the future. As a former high school teacher, I believe that students should learn to apply language skills gained at high school in a real life situation during the first two years at higher education. Practicing oral presentation skills fits such a purpose. I hope to boost students' confidence in giving oral presentations in English."

We congratulate all three research grant recipients and hope they will enjoy collaborating with members of the Teacher-Researcher Network in developing their research projects from now until the end of the 2006 academic year. For more details about JALT Research Grants, see <jalt.org/researchgrants/> or write to: <researchgrants@jalt.org>.

JALT Notices

Staff Recruitment

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>.

Perspectives

Perspectives

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

It is not always easy to approach and join an organization such as JALT. Read about how one Japanese sensei struggled with cultural, pedagogical, and social fears to overcome his hesitations and how this change has had a profound impact on his life. The co-editors invite 750-word reports of chapter interest in English, Japanese, or both.

The Influence of JALT in my Life

What an enthusiastic atmosphere! That was my impression when I attended a JALT chapter meeting 20 years ago for the first time. From that moment on, JALT became part of my life.

About 2 decades ago, I started my career as a junior high school English teacher and was also responsible for coaching a sports club. At that time, I sometimes actually felt annoyed by the *intrusion* of student-teachers into my classes because of my lack of competence in English peda-

gogy when giving instructions and so on. One day, my cousin, a high school English teacher, invited me to attend an Ibaraki chapter meeting where Yahagi sensei, the former president of my college ESS club, was giving a presentation about English education. I accepted my cousin's invitation, but I did not expect that the language of the meeting would be English. Because of language and cultural barriers, I was simply too nervous to get involved in the discussion with so many native speakers of English surrounding me. However, I continued to attend meetings and became impressed with the variety of presentations by chapter members and such well-known researchers as Munetsugu Uruno, my former high school English teacher, and John Condon, an expert in sociolinguistics. In the beginning, I thought opinions in each session would be given solely by English education specialists or those with experience studying overseas. Only curiosity about the monthly themes drove me to continue attending and observing the meetings. At the same time, I gradually began to realize that keeping silent could be interpreted as indifference or ignorance, contrary to Japanese cultural norms. Therefore, curiosity and a feeling of linguistic inferiority compelled me to carry out research in TEFL and sociolinguistics by enrolling in a graduate course. Then, James Alatis of Georgetown University attended one of my presentations at a JALT conference and gave me a wonderful opportunity to visit Georgetown as an invited scholar. These and many other stimuli consequently prompted me to change my career.

JALT has also influenced me in the area of friendship. In the beginning, in an unfamiliar environment, I used to feel somewhat lonely and uneasy at JALT functions, despite the intellectual satisfaction I gained from attending meetings and conferences. One of the first small steps towards gaining confidence came from the chapter icebreakers. When I had a chance to join the post-meeting gatherings, I began to enjoy the friendly atmosphere and communicate with individuals on a personal level. Chapter officers Dann Gossman and Mary Lee Field, in particular, were exceptionally friendly while dedicating themselves to managing and planning the meetings. Their devotion and volunteer spirit were admirable, since the management of chapter events and projects is based on each officer's contributions and willingness to volunteer. Later, Joyce Cunningham, Robert Betts, Neil Parry, Martin Pauley, Mariko Miyao, Cecilia Ikeguchi, Mayumi Watanabe, Andy Barfield, and others also encouraged me to collaborate. Martin Pauley, especially, was very patient in helping me to serve as program co-chair for a while. Whenever I attend a JALT meeting, even after a long absence due to professional duties, each member unfailingly smiles and welcomes me.

Special memories of chapter events include the retreats, the JALT98 conference proceedings co-editors' project (created by Ibaraki chapter members), social gatherings at the annual international conferences, Christmas parties, and so on. At one retreat, we enjoyed cultural instructions in the form of yoga and meditation, as well as a friendship party where, in addition to academic input from eminent presenters, we celebrated Mary Lee Field's birthday party with a cake and Robert Betts' delicious smoked meat. During the JALT98 conference proceedings project, members of our team stayed at a university all through the night for more than a week using all available computers to select, edit, and type final contributions to meet the printer's deadline. It was tough but stands out as one of my really good memories in which we experienced the pleasures of publishing. At each international conference, mutual cooperation in presentations and offsite gatherings further strengthen the bond of our chapter members' friendships.

It is no exaggeration to say that without JALT, I could not have pursued my professional dreams nor would I have had such precious experiences as publishing with the JALT98 conference proceedings team, presenting at our annual international conferences, or attending chapter meetings and retreats. More importantly, I would not have enjoyed the friendships I now have. I am blessed with a new professional family which supports and cares about me through thick and thin. I cannot talk about my life without referring to JALT!

Reported by Kunihiko Kobayashi
Communications Department, College of Humanities, Ibaraki University, Mito

Advert: Longman

Off the Presses: *Top Notch* from Longman ELT

Learning anything new in life can be a challenging endeavor. Whether you are learning to play a musical instrument, trying to master a Japanese art, or studying a foreign language, there are many internal and external factors that can hasten the learning experience. First of all, a good teacher is invaluable. Such a teacher knows what is natural and appropriate and can guide students in the right direction in order to attain the best results. A good teacher can monitor students' progress and can motivate those who are in need of extra help. Of course, the learning process for any student doesn't end in the classroom, so comprehensive and motivating materials that can be utilized in class under the guidance of a skilled teacher and used for practice outside of class are ideal tools for both teachers and students. In order to keep motivation high, a textbook needs to be easy to use, provide noticeable progress, and present useful models. Our aim with *Top Notch* is to provide you with materials to help make learning and teaching English easy and fun.

Communicative teaching methodologies, especially at the lower levels of language instruction, often stop short of enabling students to bridge the gap between controlled and free practice. Most students want to be able to go beyond info-gaps and pair work activities and use English in real discussions with real people. *Top Notch* takes a student-centered approach, with numerous opportunities for pair work and collaborative learning. These activities encourage students to use their own language resources and make each exercise personalized and meaningful. To insure success, all of the activities are carefully written with learner-supportive features such as simple directions, clear models, and concrete steps for preparation.

Students often begin classes highly motivated yet are anxious about their ability to succeed. As a result, students can lose the motivation to continue if they don't see progress. Moreover, students are often hesitant to reveal their lack of ability and are embarrassed about speaking incorrectly. Materials and lessons need to provide safe opportunities for controlled and freer practice with observable results so students can build their confidence and ultimately increase their own motivation. Students should leave each class session with clear knowledge of what they have accomplished and with a sense of achievement. Each lesson in *Top Notch* takes these factors into account and has clearly identified communicative goals presented, culminating in activities to confirm students' progress. *Top Notch* also provides a variety and balance of controlled activities for accuracy and free activities for fluency, which can show students that they have attained mastery of language skills. Frequent opportunities to experience successful communication can make students more confident, thus leading to stronger motivation.

Carefully exposing students to authentic, natural English, both receptively and productively, is also a necessary component of building confidence and understanding. In Japan this can be extremely challenging, since students have few opportunities outside of class to interact with English speakers or hear natural usage of the language. Additionally, it is important to note that more than two out of every three speakers of English in the world are non-native speakers. For these reasons, the language included in *Top Notch* is aimed at giving students a wide variety of English exposure that will help them to communicate effectively in any situation.

A problem with many teaching materials is that they can rely on *textbook English* written merely to exemplify a grammar point. Students, unfortunately, are sometimes unaware of what is important to remember and what is not. Informed by the Longman Corpus Network—Longman's unique computerized language database of over 328 million words—*Top Notch* provides concise and useful information about usage frequency, collocations, and typical patterns used by native-speakers. Corpus Notes can be found in the Teacher's Edition. In addition, teachers are alerted to frequent learner errors so they can focus attention on troublesome vocabulary and structures.

Last, but not least, the *Top Notch* series is designed for teachers. With busy class schedules it can be a challenge to find the right materials to use. With a full range of support materials, *Top Notch* gives you peace of mind knowing that you'll find everything you need, from detailed lesson plans to a range of reproducible games and worksheets. With all of this support, you can spend less time worrying about what to do in your next lesson.

If you have any questions or are interested in taking a closer look at *Top Notch*, please email Longman ELT at tlt@pearsoned.co.jp or call us at 03-5929-6090.

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

This month's Book Reviews column features *Breakthrough Japanese: 20 Mini Lessons for Better Conversation*, a supplementary textbook for JFL learners, reviewed by Paul Hullah. In addition, *Writing to Communicate*, an academic ESL process-writing textbook intended to prepare students to study in U.S. colleges and universities, is assessed by Lori Ann Desrosiers.
To access previous book 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.

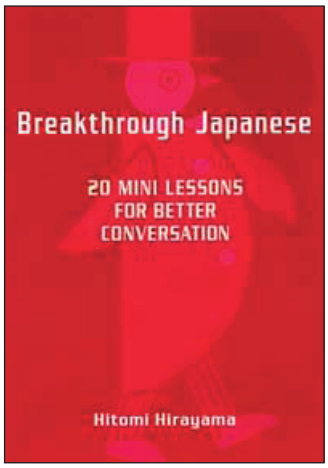
Breakthrough Japanese: 20 Mini Lessons for Better Conversation

[Hitomi Hirayama. Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 2004. pp. 168. ¥1,995/$18.00. ISBN: 4-7700-2873-3.]

Reviewed by Paul Hullah, Miyazaki University

Breakthrough Japanese collects 20 installments of Hitomi Hirayama's *Daily Yomiuri* column, *Pera-Pera Penguin's 5-minute Japanese Class*. Accordingly, each chapter-lesson is self-contained, offering neither back referencing nor progression in complexity, forgivable in weekly print-bites, but less suited to functional textbook format.

Promising an *easier* way to learn conversational Japanese via speaking strategies for self study *or* classroom use, and aimed ambitiously at beginning, intermediate, and advanced learners (age unspecified), *Breakthrough Japanese* is nevertheless, its blurb goes on to declare, designed to be *fun*. Each lesson showcases an isolated linguistic item (grammatical points, lexical selection, particles, figurative expressions, numerals, *kanji*, honorifics), as Pole-san, an incongruous cartoon penguin—*fitting symbol of a creature that lives beyond borders*, states Hirayama perplexingly (p. 8)—sets the stage via mock-authentic examples of incorrect or confusing Japanese usage. Employing instructional methods that vary from lesson to lesson (grammatical modeling, cloze activities, phrasebook-style vocabulary lists, and quizzes), Hirayama coaches learners breezily through each topic-based unit. Initially, the eclectic methodology is pleasing, but the lack of consistency or linear development, even within a single chapter, soon becomes demotivating, as conceptual non-sequiturs abound. Lesson 12 begins by teaching the *kanji* for days of the week but ends with us guessing arbitrary ideograms. Lesson 14, "Muzukashii desu ne...," demonstrates how intonation effects meaning, explains differences between *muzukashii* and *taihen*, presents relevant *kanji*, then jumps incomprehensibly into a facile Japanese-English *katakana* guessing game, when surely progression into authentic sample dialogues to exemplify and reinforce the scaffolding already offered would be more logical and instructionally rewarding.



Such ill-conceived methodology renders Hirayama's book not *unique*, as is claimed, but, rather, unusable as a *main* study-text and of questionable value even as a supplementary item: cursory grammatical explanations, badly arranged content, and the absence of any index for cross-referencing all irritate. In any case, in the field of semi-serious rattle-bag supplementary JFL materials, the *Communication Cues* series (1991–4), also based on newspaper columns, is very similar to Hirayama's book, offers better content for supplementary purposes, and beat her to the same ball by over a decade. Alternatively, for serious learners, *A Dictionary of Basic Japanese Grammar* and its *Intermediate* counterpart (1986,

1995, and now in their 49th and 27th printings respectively) remain benchmark study texts: though differently intended, both could serve more effectively than *Breakthrough Japanese* in Japanese conversation classes classrooms if judiciously utilized and would certainly make better self study tools.

Usability aside, *Breakthrough Japanese* is also irksome for its *nihonjinron* insistence upon cultural *difference* over similarity, a notion pervading Japanese thought, which remains a stumbling-block to non-Japanese JFL (*and* Japanese EFL) learners. Hirayama's introduction warns promisingly against allowing this "difference... [to] ...create a barrier between yourself and the language" (p. 8), but this book allows blatant advertisement of cultural otherness, from defining "traditional order of family name first as a matter of national identity and pride" (p. 13) to caricatured stereotypical illustrations of exclusively Caucasian, long-nosed gesticulating *gaijin* throughout. Most chapters are introduced by an explanation of how Japanese people do something a certain, singular way (and non-Japanese *don't*), and the first sentence of the dust jacket declares dogmatically that "Japanese is a notoriously difficult language to learn." Well, if taught with that separatist premise as *a priori*, it probably is. If taught in this textbook's way, it will be too. Actively to encourage students to appreciate fundamental ideological and linguistic *similarities* across cultures is surely a more fruitful starting point in L2 instruction than dogmatically restating prohibitive, reductive (and, frequently, outdated) points of difference.

It is hard to be constructively critical of a text that offers so little foundation to build upon. Unfocused, muddled *textbooks* such as this are worse than redundant in proper language study: Hirayama's scattershot approach would confuse a beginner and teach an intermediate-level student of Japanese nothing worth the cover price. Advanced learners would find it patronizing and trivial. Prompt revision, of this volume *and* of the general direction of L2 materials design, is needed. Companies and writers producing (and teachers selecting) course books for second language study need to be more consistently considerate of motivated learners' needs and goals and stop needlessly dumbing down teaching materials in the name of *fun*. Greater adherence to sensibly developed instructional techniques evaluated as effective by properly conducted research is urgently required. My greatest unease over Hirayama's book is that my own exasperation surely matches that which, my own research has demonstrated, Japanese university learners feel towards the infantile, ill-conceived tertiary EFL course books currently in vogue with certain publishers and instructors who should know better.

References

Makino, S., & Tsutsui, M. (1986). *A dictionary of basic Japanese grammar*. Tokyo: The Japan Times Press.

Makino, S., & Tsutsui, M. (1995). *A dictionary of intermediate Japanese grammar*. Tokyo: The Japan Times Press.

Mizutani, O., & Mizutani, N. (1991–4). *Communication cues 1-4*. Tokyo: The Japan Times Press.

Writing to Communicate

[Cynthia A. Boardman and Jia Frydenberg. White Plains, N.Y.: Pearson Education, 2002. pp. x + 194. ¥2,900. ISBN: 0-13-027254-X.]

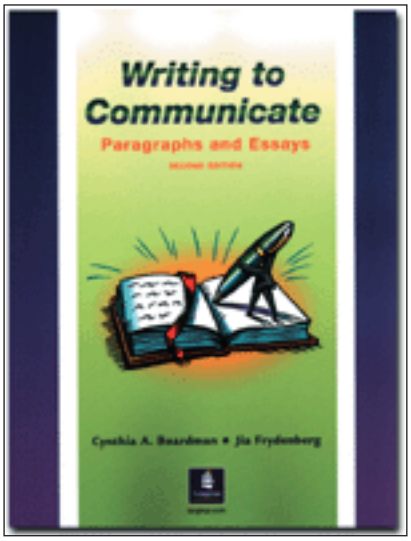
Reviewed by Lori Ann Desrosiers, Utsunomiya University

Writing to Communicate is an academic ESL writing textbook intended to prepare intermediate level students to study at U.S. colleges and universities. However, this should not deter teachers in the Japanese EFL setting from using this textbook because the concepts are essential to academic writing and are relevant to all students interested in developing their skills. There are 14 chapters separated into three parts: The Paragraph, The Essay, and Rhetorical Patterns. Each of the three parts is thematically based: Milestones, Ecology, and Relationships. *Writing to Communicate* is a straightforward, comprehensive, and accessible textbook.

I use this textbook for an elective writing class for 3rd year students in the Faculty of Internation-

al Studies whose average TOEIC scores are just above 600. These students may have had some prior experience writing English for class assignments such as responding to a newspaper article or preparing a short presentation. I chose *Writing to Communicate* because key writing concepts are clearly explained and are illustrated in model paragraphs that do not bog students down with difficult vocabulary requiring them to spend a lot of time simply trying to understand the content.

The textbook begins a "progression from the known to the unknown" (p. x) by addressing key writing concepts for paragraphs such as topic sentences and supporting sentences, coherence and cohesion, unity, and completeness. Once students have gained an understanding of paragraph writing, essay writing is introduced and students learn about the components of an essay including the thesis statement, the introductory paragraph, body paragraphs, and the concluding paragraph. Chapters 11 through 14 present the rhetorical patterns of process (explaining how to do something or how something happened), classification, cause and effect, and comparison and contrast. These chapters explain more specifically how to organize ideas according to particular rhetorical patterns.



Writing to Communicate employs the process approach to writing which involves six inter-related steps as follows: 1) generating ideas through free writing or brainstorming, 2) organizing ideas, 3) drafting, 4) sharing ideas with peers and teachers then considering this feedback, 5) revising, and 6) editing. It introduces the idea that writing is a cyclical and repetitive process (Furneaux, 1998). My students reported that this process is not a completely foreign concept to them because they naturally apply process writing to their academic papers in Japanese. Also, as part of process writing theory (Auerbach, 2005), learners are invited to think about the theme by relating it to their own experiences and previous knowledge through pair activities at the beginning of each chapter. The activities are relevant and interesting to my students, who genuinely enjoy the discussions of the various topics.

The biggest challenge I have using this textbook is time. This class meets for 13 90-minute sessions per semester. The authors advise teachers that when planning their course Part 3: Rhetorical Patterns, should take as much time as Part 1: The Paragraph, and Part 2: The Essay combined. I spend about 5 weeks each for Parts 1 and 2. I am able to cover one chapter per week by assigning the next chapter's model paragraphs as homework. Unfortunately, I had to cut at least two of the rhetorical patterns.

Although *Writing to Communicate* presents learners with a solid foundation for basic academic essay writing, I am concerned that a regimented three-body paragraph essay is stressed. This would seem to be counterproductive, if we intend to have our students write complete and well thought out essays. Perhaps the writers of this textbook thought that it would be easier for students to comprehend the relationship between the thesis and the supporting body paragraphs if there was less content for the students to process. However, students should be encouraged to develop any number of supporting paragraphs to completely explore and explain their theses.

Each chapter has a writing assignment, which I give as homework, and a peer help worksheet. Students exchange their writing and use the peer help worksheets to comment on their partner's work. The peer help worksheets always begin with a broad, general question such as "What did you find most interesting?" (p. 128) followed by items specific to the writing concepts that were covered in that chapter. Teachers can then assess their students' work by using the fairly standard *Paragraph and Essay Evaluation* sheet in Appendix 7.

Towards the end of the semester, students evaluated this class as part of an overall university evaluation system. Students wrote on the evaluation forms that, they "learned a lot, not only about writing in English but in Japanese as well." In addition, some students who had gone overseas after completing this course reported that they had the skills to write acceptable papers, while others

said that they were continuing writing classes and the material echoed what they studied here.

Writing to Communicate is an efficient and effective textbook because the progression of writing concepts presented within a framework of familiar and interesting themes is challenging but not overwhelming for students. There is little or no need for instructors to seek out additional materials or to provide a great deal of alternate explanations or interpretations of the concepts presented. This allows students to spend their time writing, while instructors focus energy on addressing students' individual needs.

References

Auerbach, E. (2005). *The power of writing, the writing of power: Approaches to adult ESOL writing instruction*. Retrieved April 20, 2005, from <www.ncsall.net/?id=341>

Furneaux, C. (1998). Process writing. In K. Johnson & H. Johnson (Eds.), *Encyclopedic dictionary of applied linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 257–260.

Recently Received

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

* = first notice; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed October 31. For queries please write to the email address above. You can also see this list on the *TLT* website.

Books for Students (reviewed in TLT)

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

!*Achieve IELTS: Intermediate-Upper Intermediate*. Harrison, L., & Cushen, C. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. student's book, workbook, teacher's book, CD].

!*English for Business Life: Elementary*. Badger, I., & Menzies, P. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. course book, self-study guide, trainer's manual, CD].

!*English for Business Life: Pre-Intermediate*. Badger, I., & Menzies, P. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. course book, self-study guide, trainer's manual, CD].

**Enjoy Writing for Everyday Use*. Shaffer, D. E., & Choe, P. Y. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 2005. [Incl. CD, transcript, answer key].

**Fact Finders Questions and Answers: Countries* (series). Bauer, B., et al. Mankato, MN: Capstone, 2005. [Incl. 28 hardcover juvenile readers, each on a different country].

Icon: International Communication through English (4 levels: Intro, 1, 2, 3). Freeman, D., Graves, K., & Lee, L. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. [Incl. teacher's manual, workbook, student CD, teacher CD].

Insights: Critical Thinking Through Cross-Cultural Essays from the Japan Times. Shaules, J., Miyazoe, T., & Anton, K. H. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2005. [Incl. bilingual teacher's manual, student CD, teacher CD].

Just Listening and Speaking: Upper Intermediate. Harmer, J., & Lethaby, C. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. CD].

Just Reading and Writing: Upper Intermediate. Harmer, J., & Lethaby, C. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005.

!*Just Right Upper Intermediate*. Harmer, J., & Lethaby, C. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. student's book, teacher's book, workbook, CDs].

**Pebble Plus Animal Offspring* (series). Hall, M., et al. Mankato, MN: Capstone, 2004. [Incl. 10 hardcover elementary readers, each on a different animal].

!*Real English Grammar: The New Intermediate Grammar*. Lott, H. London: Marshall Cavendish, 2005. [Incl. answer key, CD].

**Systematic Listening for the TOEIC Test 1*. Malarcher, C. Tokyo: Hokuseido, 2005. [Incl. CDs, answer key, transcript].

This Is Culture. Kajiura, A., & Goodmacher, G. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2005. [Incl. teacher's manual].

Books for Teachers (reviewed in JALT Journal)

Contact: Yuriko Kite <jj-reviews@jalt-publications.org>

子どもの英語学習—習得過程のプロトタイプ *[English Learning for Children: A Learning Process Prototype]*. Yamamoto, A. Tokyo: Kazama, 2005.

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.

SIG News & Contacts

Bilingualism—Our group has two broad aims: to support families who regularly communicate in more than one language and to further research on bilingualism in Japanese contexts. See our website at <www.bsig.org> for more information.

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—Last CALL for the CALL SIG Annual General Meeting at Granship Shizuoka! Please check the JALT2005 conference program for more details on the meeting, and join us at our AGM. This will be a nice opportunity to meet the CALL SIG officers, talk to fellow CALLers in Japan, and learn more about our SIG's activities. We welcome all JALT members to take part, and as we will hold our yearly officer elections, this is an excellent chance for you to volunteer in our SIG. For more information on why you will benefit from joining the CALL SIG, in addition to our publications, the new JALT CALL Journal, and other CALL events in Japan and worldwide, 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—A new gender issue book is coming out this fall! Several GALE members led by Jane Nakagawa, along with other writers interested in gender issues, have put together a book, *Gender Issues Today*. It is being published through a print on demand publisher, Tokyo Shuppan Service Center, and the price will be ¥1,200. It can be ordered directly through Munetoshi Kawamura: Tokyo Shuppan Service Center, 401 Saint Office Akihabara, 1-33-6 Taito, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0016; <kawamura@c-enter.co.jp>; t: 03-5688-5801, f: 03-5688-5803.

For readers new to *TLT*, GALE is the Gender Awareness in Language Education special interest group. Its purpose is to research gender and its implications for language learning, teaching, and training. To join GALE please use the form in the back of this *TLT* or contact the membership chair, 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.

Learner Development— Feel free to come to the LD Forum entitled *Learning to Express Ourselves!* at JALT2005 in Shizuoka this month. We are aiming to bring together presenters and participants to share our stories and experiences with autonomy.

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

Contacts Marlen Harrison <scenteur7@yahoo.com> and Chris Carpenter <chris@dokkyo.ac.jp> look forward to inquiries. And then immediately after the LD Forum, we will have the LD Annual General Meeting. It will be a good chance to become involved with our activities for anyone interested in learners and learning.

You are also invited to attend the mini-conference sponsored by the LD SIG & Miyazaki Chapter, *Working Together: Make a Difference in Language Education!,* on Saturday, November 19 at Miyazaki Municipal University. The conference themes include teacher collaboration, understanding of self and others, and international and intercultural awareness in language education. For further information, please contact Etsuko Shimo at <shimo@miyazaki-mu.ac.jp> or Ellen Head at <ellenkobe@yahoo.com>.

For any additional information about LD, please check the JALT homepage <jalt.org/groups/Learner_Development>, our quarterly e-newsletter <www3.kcn.ne.jp/~msheff/LD%20HP%20files/LDSigNews.htm>, or visit our LD website at <coyote.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/learnerdev/>. You could also contact the co-coordinators Marlen Harrison at <scenteur7@yahoo.com> or Stacey Vye at <stacey.vye@gmail>.

Materials Writers—We are presenting a forum of Japan-based and international textbook publishing company representatives at JALT2005. The discussion will address topics such as making textbook proposals, cultural issues in textbook development, and CALL and materials development. Teachers and materials writers who want to better understand the process of materials development from the publishers' standpoint are warmly invited to attend. There will be time, too, for personal contact with the representatives for those who may be thinking of submitting book proposals.

And: the MW SIG announces its first Materials Writing Contest! Create a unit or lesson based on a photo, and you may receive a prize, or at least receive feedback that will help you to develop your materials writing skills. The contest is open to all. For details look at <groups.yahoo.com/group/materialswritingcontest/> or contact the coordinator for more information.

Other Language Educators—OLE has issued OLE Newsletter 35 containing information on OLE related submissions to JALT2005, 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>.

Pragmatics—At JALT2005, the Pragmatics SIG will sponsor three events as follows: a) the SIG Forum, *Learners' Stories and Pragmatic Development Abroad*, to be held Saturday, October 8 from 16:20–17:55 in Room 907, b) a discussion session about *The Effects of Explicit Instruction Followed by Study Abroad on the Development of Pragmatic Competence* to be held on Sunday, October 9 from 14:15–15:15 in Room 907, and c) the Pragmatics SIG AGM to be held on Saturday, October 8 from 18:00–18:30 in Room 907. Please come to join us. For further information, contact Yuri Kite at <ykite@ipcku.kansai-u.ac.jp> or Megumi Kawate-Mierzejewska at <mierze@tuj.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 TEd SIG is looking forward to seeing members new and old at our events at JALT2005 in Shizuoka. Our AGM will be held on Saturday from 16:20–17:20. Our party will be after the JALT party on Saturday evening. Our forum entitled *Can Language and Culture Go Hand in Hand?* will be held on Sunday from 13:05–14:40. Find out more about us at our website <jalt.org/teach/>.

Teaching Older Learners—Why not join TOL? Until March 31, 2006, you are eligible to join one special interest group under the One Free SIG campaign. Please take this golden opportunity to join the TOL SIG. You can choose to receive (and contribute to) our online newsletters at no additional cost. For more information, please visit <www.eigosenmon.com>.

SIG Contacts

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

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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/>

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Affiliate SIGs

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Forming SIGs

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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.

Akita: July—*Student Attitudes in Japan, Cambodia, and Thailand: A Report on Three Studies* by **Jeffery Maggard**. Maggard began by giving background information on how he became interested in antiracist and multicultural education and briefly explained the models he and his fellow researchers used to design their research. They were interested in how English ability related to five variables: instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, students' perceived English ability, amount of contact with native speakers, and attitudes toward foreigners (social distance). Maggard explained in detail the concepts and the method and instruments used as well as the social, political, and affective variables that influence each of the three studies.

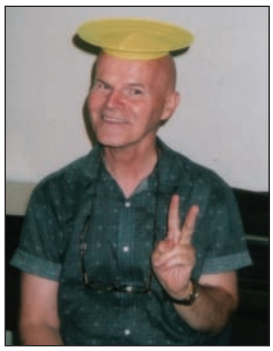
One study involved students at five Japanese universities in Miyazaki Prefecture and the other two studies involved a university in Thailand and another in Cambodia. In all countries the studies showed a strong relationship between the five variables and English ability. The Japan study found higher English proficiency predicated a more positive attitude toward non-Japanese and higher contact with non-Japanese. He concluded with a request for written feedback on the studies and how they might be improved or changed.

Reported by Jarrett D. Ragan Jr.

East Shikoku: June—1) ***Designing Holistic Units for Principled Instructed Learning*** by **Roger Nunn**. Nunn presented on the theme of designing interactive tasks in integrated units based on recent curriculum projects at Kochi University. His presentation emphasized the importance of classroom practice, task repetition, and interlocking competences based on the idea that the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts. **2)** ***Materials for Classroom Activities*** poster presentations: *Do it Another Way: Accelerating Strategic Language Use* by **Lawrie Hunter**; *Storytelling* by **Marcus Otlowski**; *Examples of Holistic Tasks: Soap Opera Scripts* by **Maiko Ogasawara**; *A Task-Based Approach to Learning: Choosing a Part-time Job* by **Tim Wolfe**; *From Your Hometown to the World: Excerpts from a Unit Describing Places* by **Gerard Marchesseau**; *Utilizing Computers in Phrase Reading* by **Yoko Nakano**; *Using Film in the Classroom* by **Dan Ribble**; *Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary through TPR Storytelling* by **Tohru Matsuo**; and *Teaching Students to Teach Themselves in a Listening Course* by **Stephen Campbell**.

Reported by Darren Lingley

Kitakyushu: July—1) ***All Together Now*** by **Chris Hunt**. Explaining that he made the switch from competitive (*Mutually Exclusive Goal Attainment*) to noncompetitive games and activities to avoid creating a loser among a group of friends, Hunt showed how letting learners set their own goals and rules can create an atmosphere that emphasizes learning and participating. He showed how activities can be structured so students are required to comprehend larger and larger chunks of language. Speaking only English with a group of 20 students he has never met before and who have little English ability, he engages them in over an hour of activities. Hunt's two main tools are a timer (to set the duration of an activity, to regulate turns, and to cause an effect within a game) and student feedback. The first four English words he teaches students are adjectives with which to evaluate the level of learning and fun. He recommended books by Alfie Kahn and



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

Spencer Kagan. **2)** ***Laugh and Learn*** by **Linda Wittig**. Five minutes into Wittig's presentation, everyone agreed that ¥100 shops and pet stores are the best sources of educational materials. Using her own interests in clowning and juggling, she showed how each teacher's skills in any area, along with lots of colorful objects, can be used to encourage students to produce meaningful English. In fact, Wittig sometimes finds herself stopped on the street by students demanding a chance to sing a song or tell a story they learned in class. There will probably be a lot of handkerchief mice and crashing lightbulb chew toys appearing in Kyushu classrooms come September.

Reported by Margaret Orleans

Sendai: May—*Zatokichi Zemi: Sensory English Experience Workshop* by **Ken Groger**. Groger led the 6-hour visual deprivation extravaganza with 40 pairs (yes, 80 people!), including 12 nationalities, taking part. The goals of the activities were to build trust, create empathy for visually challenged people, and sharpen sensory awareness. In terms of communicating in English, the guides had to adjust their language in such a way that it could be understood by a blind person. Conversely, the blindfolded person had to ask the right type of questions in order to cope with their blindness.

Each pair consisted of a blindfolded person and one guide throughout the different activities. First, the blindfolded participants were given the chance to choose their guides. Then after that initial pairing activity, everyone was led through voice recognition, smell, taste, drawing, trust, music appreciation, dance, and guided imagery activities. Thus the pairs were given many opportunities to communicate in challenging situations. After the blindfolds were removed, there was an open forum where participants aired their thoughts and feelings about the event. The activities were later replicated in classrooms on a mini-scale with great success.

Reported by Christopher E. Cuadra

Chapter Events

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

With the JALT National Conference in October this year, most chapters have chosen to take a break so people can go to Shizuoka. But there are still some events going on. Check for one near you. Most chapters will be back in full swing in November. JALT members may attend meetings at any chapter at JALT member rates—usually free. Chapters, don't forget to 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.

Kagoshima—生徒との絆づくりの迫へを磨く方法 by **Kyoko Sonomoto**. 英語教育に携わる教師の思いは児童・生徒に英語の面白さを知って欲しい、内容を理解してほしいということだろう。そんな教師の熱い思いが伝わらずに イライラすることはないでしょうか？わたしは24年の教師生活から教授の前に生徒との心の架け橋を築くことが 早道であることに気付き、アメリカの臨床心理学者ト・ス・ゴードン博士によって創案された親業（Parents' Effective Training) 教師学（Teachers' Effective Training) を学びはじめ、その効果を実感しています。教師の生徒理解のみでなく、生徒による教師理解熨蜷りであり、その具体的な方法（聞き方、 伝え方）を知り、楽しく授業を行っている毎日です。生徒との絆づくりの迫へを磨く方法をお伝えします。 *Sunday October 23, 15:00-17:00; Seminar Room 117, Kousha Biru 1F, Shinyashiki (opposite the Shinyashiki Tram Stop); one-day members ¥1000.*

weblink: www.jalt.org/calendar/

Kyoto—*Storytelling Festival and Symposium*. Osaka Gakuin University, in collaboration with Kyoto JALT, is presenting the 4th annual Storytelling Festival and Symposium. Categories include: adventure, comedy, and warm hearted. Submissions opened August 1. For more information, go to <www.kyotojalt.org>. *Saturday October 22, 09:00-18:00.*

Miyazaki—*Learning to Read the Easy Way* by **David Lisgo**. Lisgo—teacher, school owner, and materials writer—will give an overview of the different methods used to teach reading and show some basic steps in phonics, enabling students to begin reading almost immediately. *Saturday October 1, 15:00-17:00; Miyazaki Municipal University Room 310; free for all.*

Nagasaki—*Plans for 2006*. Join us for 2006! If you are interested in assisting us by helping the executive, becoming a member, renewing your membership, or proposing to do a presentation of some kind, please contact us anytime. As far as our regular meetings are concerned, we do not have our October plans confirmed at press time, but please feel free to check our chapter homepage for news and updates at <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/nagasaki.html>, or you can also keep in touch with us by signing up for our monthly email newsletter at <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/nagamail.php3>.

Sendai—*English Through Drama Workshop* by **The Covenant Players**. Details TBA. *Sunday October 30, 14:00-17:00; Sendai Beeb (on the north side of Hirose-dori, near the corner of Hisashi 2-bancho); one-day members ¥1000; students free the first time, ¥500 yen thereafter.*

Shinshu—*Asian Englishes: English Learning and Modern Japanese Girls* by **Kyoko Fujise**, Tokyo University of Science, Suwa. Fujise will talk about how young women in the Meiji Era studied English and how they were thought to be ideal wives for elite male university graduates. Knowledge of English was thought to enhance the status of women. Fujise will also introduce the works of Futabei Shimei, the first modern female writer of *Ukigumo*, and Natsume Soseki, who wrote about how such fashionable young women were regarded as charming. She will also contrast the teaching of English to women in other Asian countries. *Sunday October 23, 14:00-17:00; venue TBA; one-day members ¥1000.*

West Tokyo—*Micro-Conference #1: DIY CALL: eLearning on the Cheap* by **Andy Boon, Timothy Gutierrez**, and **Peter Ross**. West Tokyo Chapter announces the first in a new series of micro-conferences, each featuring several presenters exploring a particular topic for a whole day. October's theme is CALL. Presentations include: Why CALL? Integrating the Internet into Business English Classes; A Beginner's Guide to Online Collections of eLearning Materials; and Simple, User-Friendly Groupware for Facilitating Four Skills Interaction. *Saturday October 29, 10:00-17:00; Tokyo Keizai University (near Kokubunji Station on JR Chuo Line—map at <www.tku.ac.jp/ ~koho/english/campus/access.html>), Bldg. 3, LL2 (on 2F); one-day members ¥2000.*

Yamagata—*What Color Are Your Sunglasses While Viewing the World?* by **Jessica Oppenheim**. America from an American's point of view after living in Japan for 2 years. We will look at the history, culture, and some photos while discussing generalizations about the new world. Come and join as we study cultural similarities and differences. Jessica is a CIR for the Yamagata city government. *Saturday October 22, 10:00-12:00; Yamagata Kajo Kominkan Sogo Gakushu Center, Josaimachi 2-2-15, t: 0236-45-6163; one-day members ¥800.*

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

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>.

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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 fax (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.

JIC Area at JALT2005 Conference in Shizuoka

Time again for that premier chance for schools seeking serious, qualified teachers to meet and talk with prospects before hiring deadlines get too close. For schools wishing to conduct on site interviews, or simply to advertise teaching positions and/or receive CVs through our Resume Courier Service, please contact Kent Hill at: t/f: 81-73-462-1205 or <kenthill@mac.com>. Thank you!

Conference Volunteer Bonus! – Yes, you! Note that all conference attendees who take some time volunteering in the JIC qualify for a partial reduction in conference fees. To volunteer, please contact Kent Hill via phone or email, as noted above.

Kanagawa-ken—Obirin University Foreign Language Education Center invites applications for a full-time lecturer in the English Language Program (ELP) starting April 2006. The initial contract is for 3 years, renewable subject to performance evaluation and university needs. **Qualifications:** MA in TESOL or Applied Linguistics, minimum 3 years teaching experience in Japanese colleges or universities, good interpersonal skills and ability to work as part of a team, experience in ELT curriculum and materials development, computer literacy (Macintosh, Word, and Excel), proficiency in Japanese an advantage. **Duties:** Currently required to teach approximately 10 hours per week, with a 4-day workweek commitment to Obirin University including committee, curriculum, and administrative duties. **Salary & Benefits:** According to university scale plus research allowance on approval. **Application Materials:** Applications should be made in writing and should include a cover letter, a CV including a list of publications, with an attached passport size photo, and a recent letter of reference. Please also include an example of original teaching materials that would be suitable for use in a 90-minute class and a 200- to 400-word explanation of how the material would be used to teach Japanese university students. **Deadline:** November 18, 2005. **Contact:** Applications should be addressed to ELP Director, Obirin University ELP, Planet Fuchinobe Campus, 4-16-1 Fuchinobe, Sagamihara, Kanagawa 229-0006. Telephone, email, or fax inquiries and applications will not be accepted. Short-listed candidates will be contacted and invited for interview and should prepare copies of two publications prior to the interview.

Nara-ken—A full-time ESL instructor is needed by a small English conversation school to teach small groups of mostly adults. **Qualifications:** A minimum of a university degree in any subject is required. **Duties:** Curriculum development, lesson planning, progress testing, and teaching. **Salary & Benefits:** ¥260,000 a month plus insurance and travel allowance. **Application Materials:** Submit a CV. **Deadline:** October 2005. **Contact:** Send CV to <jobs@english-please.com>; <www.english-please.com>.

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

Niigata-ken—Keiwa College, a 4-year coeducational, liberal arts college with about 700 students is seeking one to three full-time Visiting Instructors to begin April 1, 2006, on a 1-year contract, renewable up to 3 years. This is an ideal position for people starting out in the field and who are eager to gain experience teaching English at the college level. The academic year is about 7 months. **Qualifications:** MA in TESL or related field or certificate in TESL/EFL is required; some teaching experience in Japan is very helpful. **Duties:** Teach 18 to 20 hours per week in a skills-based coordinated curriculum and attend regular meetings. Willingness to work as part of a team, as well as ongoing communication and cooperation with other teachers, is essential. As part of their teaching duties, Visiting Instructors may also develop a content course based on their own academic or personal interests. Opportunities to publish and present are also available. **Salary & Benefits:** ¥270,000 per month, 12 months per year; subsidized, furnished housing near campus; health insurance; transportation and shipping expenses to Niigata. **Application Materials:** Submit a cover letter, CV highlighting teaching experience, copy of degree or diploma, and two or three recent letters of reference. Email applications will not be accepted. Applications received will not be returned. Short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews. **Deadline:** October 25, 2005. **Contact:** Joy Williams, Coordinator, English Language Program, Keiwa College, 1270 Tomizuka Shibata-shi, Niigata-ken, Japan 957-8585.

Osaka-fu—ECC Kokusai College of Foreign Languages in Umeda seeks part-time English teachers who can teach the following subjects: Accounting 101, Introduction to Law 101 (American Law), Understanding Different Cultures, Geology 101, and Health Education. **Qualifications:** Applicants should have a MA Degree in any of the fields above. **Salary & Benefits:** Payment will be based on qualifications and experience. **Application Materials:** Send CV by email or fax. Successful applicants will be contacted. **Contact:** f: 06-6311-1442; <ikekazu@ecc.ac.jp>; <hello.ecc.ac.jp/kcfl>.

Shiga-ken—Ritsumeikan University in Kusatsu is currently accepting applications for one 5-year appointment as Professor or Assistant Professor (fixed term) in the College of Economics teaching English language classes beginning April 1, 2006. **Qualifications:** Applicants should have a masters degree or above in TESL/TEFL or Applied Linguistics (including Material Development and Curriculum Design), have more than 3 years experience teaching ESL or EFL at the university or college levels, have native fluency in English, be able to serve on various administrative and academic committees regarding English education, and also have an adequate command of Japanese to work with faculty and office staff. **Duties:** Teaching English language courses, coordinating English programs, and reforming the curriculum for a new International Economics division. **Salary & Benefits:** Individual contracts will be based on the relevant regulations of Ritsumeikan University. **Application Materials:** Documents required for applications may be written in either English or Japanese. Please submit a CV; list of research achievements; four copies each of three major publications including books, monographs, or articles; a copy of the applicant's most recent degree certificate; an approximately 500-word English essay on your goals in teaching; and letters of recommendation (optional). Please enclose two self-addressed envelopes. One will be used to inform you of receipt of your documents. If you do not receive this within 1 week of sending your documents, please contact the office below. The second envelope will be used to inform you of our decision. Required forms can be downloaded from the department webpage. **Application Deadline:** October 15, 2005. **Contact:** Kyouin Ninyou Jinji Gakari, College of Economics, Ritsumeikan University, 1-1-1, Nojihigashi, Kusatsu, Shiga 525-8577; <tamai@st.ritsumei.ac.jp>, <www.ritsumei.ac.jp/eng/news/2005/08/job.shtml>.

Tokyo-to—Tokyo Joshi Gakuin Junior and Senior High School is seeking a new teacher to join our staff on contract up to 3 years beginning April 2006. **Qualifications:** Native speaker fluency in English, MA in TESOL or a related field, secondary school experience

either overseas or in Japan preferable. Overseas teaching qualification is a strong advantage. **Duties:** Teach up to 20 hours per week. Full-time staff work Monday through Friday with paid holidays at Christmas and during spring and summer breaks. Teachers are occasionally asked to come to school on holidays for school events and other duties. Assess students in accordance with school guidelines. Participate in all school events and supervise students during events and club activities. Play an active role in departmental functions such as curriculum development, test writing, and consultation with students either during or after school hours. **Salary & Benefits:** Salary based on experience and qualifications. The school supports 50% of public health care and national pension. **Application Materials:** Cover letter, CV, transcripts from all post-secondary institutions attended, details of any publications and presentations, at least one letter of recommendation from a recent employer or a professor in TESOL. **Deadline:** November 30, 2005. **Contact:** Anne Wheeldon, Tokyo Joshi Gakuin Junior and Senior High School, Sekimachikita 4-16-11, Nerima-ku, Tokyo 177-0051; t: 03-3920-5151; <info@tjg.ac.jp>; <www.tjg.ac.jp>.

Tokyo-to—The English Department at Aoyama Gakuin University seeks adjunct teachers for part-time conversation and writing courses at their Sagamihara Campus, about 90 minutes from Shinjuku station on the Odakyu and Yokohama lines. Classes are on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. **Qualifications**: Resident in Japan, with an MA in TEFL/TESL, English Literature, Applied Linguistics, or Communications; minimum 3 years experience teaching English at a university; alternately, a PhD and 1 year university English teaching experience. **Duties:** Classroom activities include teaching small group discussion, journal writing, and book reports. We are interested in teachers who enjoy working with other teachers and students. Publications, experience in presentations, and familiarity with email are assets. **Salary & Benefits:** Comparable to part-time work at other universities in Tokyo. **Application Materials:** Write to us for an emailed application form. **Deadline:** Ongoing. **Contact:** *Adjunct Faculty*, English and American Literature Department, Aoyama Gakuin University, 4-4-25 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8366. Short-listed candidates will be contacted for interviews.

Tokyo-to—Tokyo Jogakkan Middle School is looking for a qualified and experienced teacher to teach English and assume homeroom teacher duties in its International Class program. This is a full-time position starting April 1, 2006. **Qualifications:** Applicants should have previous experience teaching in a Japanese middle school or high school, have a university degree, and hold a certificate in TEFL/TESL. A high level of spoken and a basic understanding of written Japanese is required. **Duties:** Teach 15 to 16 hours a week in the International Class English program and assume homeroom duties with a Japanese teacher. **Salary & Benefits:** Salary, including two annual bonuses and health insurance, is according to Tokyo Jogakkan policy based on experience and qualifications. **Application Materials:** Cover letter, CV, letters of reference, and an essay on *The Value of Teaching Leadership*. Before applying, please visit the program's website at <www.tjk.jp/mh/ic>. **Deadline:** October 21, 2005. **Contact:** Susumu Masai, Tokyo Jogakkan, 3-7-16 Hiroo, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0012; <s.masai@tjk.jp>.

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 October 15 is the deadline for a January conference in Japan or a February conference overseas, especially for a conference early in the month.

Upcoming Conferences

October 7-10, 2005—*JALT2005: Sharing Our Stories*, Granship Convention & Arts Centre, Shizuoka, Japan. Join us for one of Asia's premier language teaching conferences. Plenaries by Jennifer Bassett, David Nunan, and Kumiko Torikai. Workshops, papers, forums, and discussions. A huge Educational Materials Exposition. *JALT Junior*, for teachers of younger learners. An International Food Fair (remember the kebabs?). And, a chance to network and meet old friends. If you are planning to attend just one conference this year, JALT2005 should be the one! For more information: <conferences.jalt.org/2005>

October 7–9, 2005—*SLRF 2005. SLA Models and Second Language Instruction: Broadening the Scope of Enquiry*, 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 that, 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>

October 20–22, 2005—*Languages and People: Present and Future, 1st International Conference of Applied Linguistics*, Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania. Themes include sociolinguistics, language policy, discourse analysis, language teaching and learning, and others. Contact: <lit.stud@flf.vu.lt>; <www.lsk.flf.vu.lt/index.php/pageid/211>

October 26–28, 2005—*The 7th Language and Development Conference*, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This conference aims to provide a forum for the discussion of important issues related to language policy, learning, and teaching in the context of the developing world, from the perspective of policy makers, language and literacy educators, and donors. Contact: <nejat.nuru@et.britishcouncil.org>; <www.langdev.org>

November 4–6, 2005—*The 2005 Asia TEFL International Conference: TEFL for Asia, Unity Within Diversity*, China Resources Hotel, Beijing, China. The Asian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (Asia TEFL) serves as a forum that brings together ELT professionals in the Asian region to collect, disseminate, and discuss information on English language teaching and learning in the Asian context. One of the primary ways of accomplishing this is through our annual conference. There is no registration fee for this conference for those who pre-register. Contact: <asiatefl@hanmail.net>; <www.asiatefl.org>

December 12–14, 2005—*The 10th English in Southeast Asia Conference: A Decade of Growth (10 ESEA)*, University of Brunei Darussalam. This is the latest in a series of annual conferences held among the countries of the region. Previous ESEA conferences have been held in Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Australia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Indonesia. Contact: <esea@fass.ubd.edu.bn>; <www.ubd.edu.bn/news/conferences/ESEA_Conference/index.htm>

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

January 16–February 26, 2006—*The Electronic Village Online (part of the TESOL Convention)*. The CALL Interest Section of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) offers language teachers worldwide the opportunity to participate in the Electronic Village Online (EVO), a professional development project and virtual extension of the TESOL 2006 Convention in Tampa Bay, Florida, USA. The intended audience for this project includes both TESOL 2006 convention goers and those who can participate only virtually. Interest Sections, Caucuses, and other member groups of TESOL in particular are invited to sponsor sessions related to the Convention. Contact: <jaltsendai2003@yahoo.com>; <webpages.csus.edu/~hansonsm/CfP_2006.html>

Calls for Papers/Posters

Deadline: October 14, 2005 (for February 25-26, 2006)—*Second CamTESOL Conference on English Language Teaching*, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. This is a conference for professionals in the field of English Language Teaching and related issues. The conference is being organised and will be conducted on a voluntary basis. It is intended to become a self-sustaining conference series based on the professional interests of participants. This conference series will be conducted in English. The 2005 conference was a great success with over 700 participants. Contact: <info@camtesol.org>; <www.camtesol.org>

Deadline: October 14, 2005 (for June 17–20, 2006)—*Joint AAAL and ACLA/CAAL Conference,* Hotel Hyatt Montréal, Canada. Nationally and internationally, the annual AAAL conference has a reputation as one of the most comprehensive and exciting language conferences. At each conference new ideas are generated, disciplinary boundaries are crossed, and research is shared about the role of language in all aspects of cognition and social action, including language learning and teaching. The AAAL conference is known for its in-depth symposia and focused workshops on key issues in applied linguistics; sessions on a wide range of research studies, in progress or completed; its stimulating and often provocative plenaries; and access to the latest publications via the book exhibit. Last but not least, the AAAL conference is the place for networking, for established and new professionals, and for graduate students. Contact: <carolc@iastate.edu>; <www.aaal.org>

Deadline: January 15, 2005 (for June 2–4, 2006)—*The 2006 International Symposium of Computer Assisted Language Learning,* National Research Centre for Foreign Language Education, Beijing Foreign Studies University, China. The theme of the conference is digital and networked foreign language learning and teaching. Contact: <celea@fltrp.com>

Deadline: January 15, 2005 (for July 4–6, 2006)—*The 5th Pacific Second Language Research Forum (PacSLRF)*, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. The Pacific Second Language Research Forum is a venue for data-based and theoretical papers on areas of basic research in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Topics include, but are not limited to: SLA in instructed and naturalistic settings, the effects of second language (L2) instruction on the rate and route of L2 development, the role of learner differences (e.g., aptitude, age, personality, motivation) in SLA, competing models of SLA processes, SLA theory construction, the acquisition of L2 pragmatics, bilingualism, the influence of cognitive variables (e.g., memory and attention) on L2 learning and use, the assessment of L2 use and development, and methodological issues in L2 acquisition research. Contact: <m.haugh@gu.edu.au>; <www.emsah.uq.edu.au/pacslrf2006/>

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

Old Grammarians...

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

Adroit Underhandedness

A friend of mine recently insisted I was right-handed because of the way I fold my arms. He told me to try folding my arms left-over-right and right-over-left again and again then tell him which way felt more "natural." I tried telling him that standing in a train station repeating his silly directives didn't feel the slightest bit natural, but he kept saying "again... again...again" until I finally proved to him which hand I favor by punching him in the stomach.

Handedness is supposed to be closely linked with *brainedness* (which unlike *handedness* isn't actually a word), or the side of the brain that a person favors in processing information. This brain-favoring in turn is supposed to relate to one's personality. We've all heard the stock profiles: left-brain equals logical, analytical, and mathematical, while right-brain equals pinchy-faced and prone to shouting obscenities at ornate public clocks.

Another locally accepted personality weathervane is blood type. I'm one of probably two or three people in all of Japan who have trouble remembering their blood type. For some reason I get it confused with the vehicle allowance code on my driver's license. I tried to give blood once but when I wrote on the form what I thought my blood type was the nurse turned me away because I wasn't cleared to operate a forklift.

A few weeks ago I asked my wife for about the 500th time what my blood type was, and in a voice reminiscent of the closing credits for *Sesame Street* she answered, "Your blood is brought to you by the letter *A*." According to Japanese blood type analysts, that makes me "sensitive" and "patient." The problem with this typology is that my wife is also an A, and the analysts don't say anything about A types being "cruelly sarcastic to their spouses."

You can't blame me for forgetting my blood type. Where I come from it isn't used to peg people's personalities. We do, however, have other gauges for measuring character. For men, there's baldness type. I, as you can see in the photo, am a *W* (sometimes called *M* in Canada). W's are typically warmhearted, friendly chaps who secretly harbor shame about losing their hair. Another common group are *V*'s (in Canada they are the phonetic symbol Λ), which are seen as aggressive, competitive fellows who also happen to be ashamed of losing their hair. Other types include O (conveniently called O in Canada), *X*, and *O-positive*, which indicates no hair loss whatsoever. O-positives are not to be trusted under any circumstances.

Other practical personality guides can be used to predict behavior in women. For example, after many years of dating and marriage I've managed to learn that the question "Where did you put the remote control?" can elicit a limited variety of classifiable responses that predict the future of my relationship with a particular woman, at least for the next several chilling hours.

I think a useful personality indicator for both men and women would be the pen-case scale. In any classroom you will see, sitting placidly beside each student, a unique little carrying case for pens, pencils, and erasers. All you have to do is lump the case styles into four or five major categories and classify your students accordingly. Or for more accuracy you might try a multi-axis continuum like the figure at the bottom of this page.

Such a personality matrix would not only provide you with a multi-dimensional scale for the students in your class, it would also make an impressive PowerPoint presentation at the next language teaching conference you attend. You could make it spin around like a gyroscope on the projector screen, leaving your audience mildly nauseous and utterly convinced. I'd love to take a stab at this kind of project myself but, according to the analysts, right-brained people like me work better with crayons and rubber-tipped scissors.

– Scott Gardner

plastic ↔ cloth ↔ leather
Disney insignia ↔ Stüssy insignia ↔ Playboy insignia
resembling pen-case ↔ resembling Gucci handbag ↔ resembling small reptile, etc.

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

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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。

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weblink: www.jalt.org

Ask the Experts

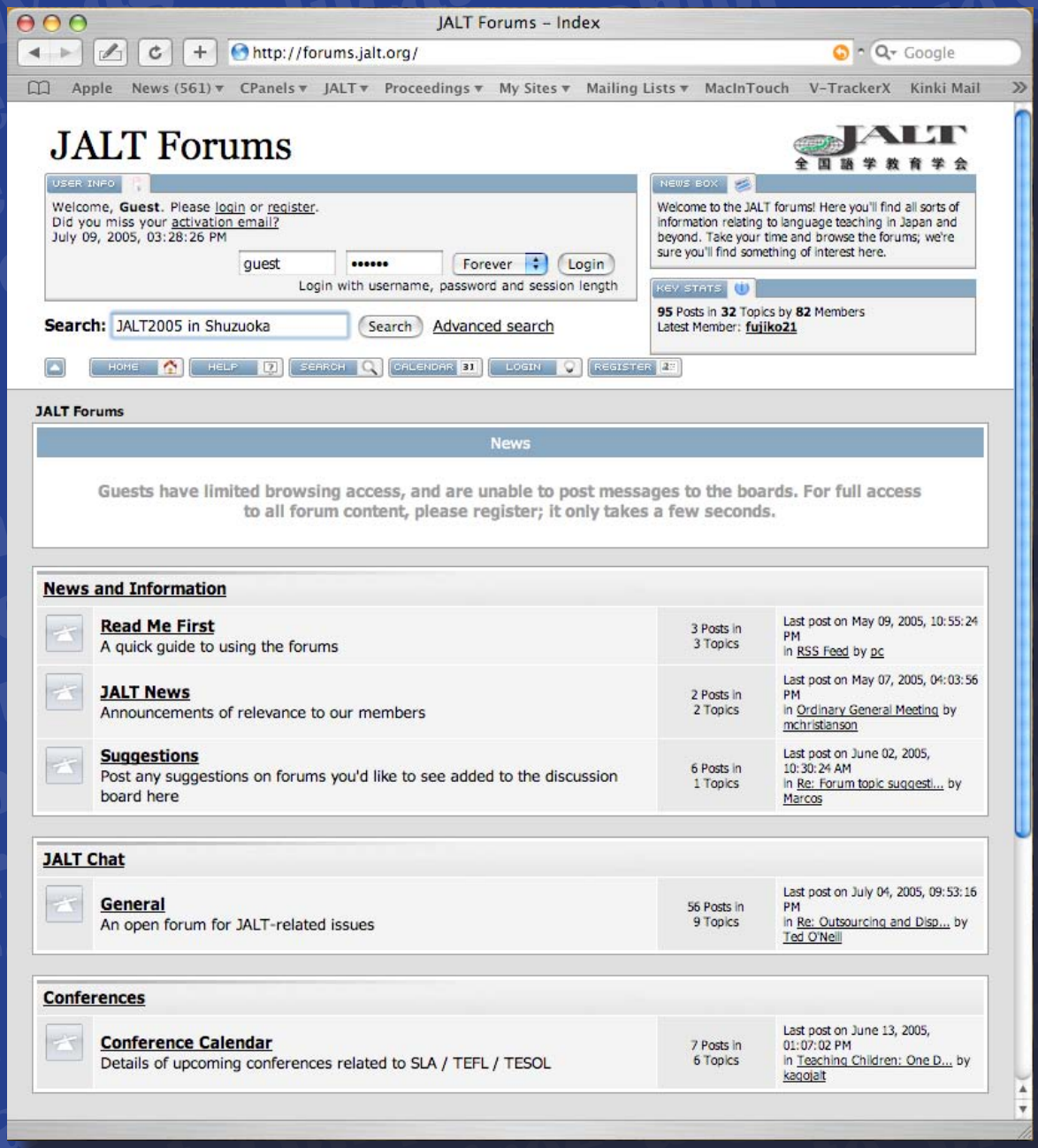
at JALT2005 "Sharing Our Stories"
5:00 – 6:30 on Sunday, October 9
Chu Hall Lobby

This year, we are offering conference attendees the rare opportunity to sit down and talk in an informal setting with many of our on-site "experts." Below is a list of some of the people who have offered their skills for this session. You'll find the "Ask the Experts" session in the lobby of Chu Hall on the Sunday afternoon from 5:00PM. Find a table that interests you, sit down, listen for a while, then join in!

- **David Nunan – Classroom research**
- **Kathleen Graves – Lesson design/course design**
- **Mike McCarthy – Spoken language**
- **Andy Barfield & Neil Cowie – Research (esp the JALT Grants)**
- **Steve Brown – JALT Issues**
- **Tim Murphey & Sara Cotterall – Autonomy, affective factors**
- **Susan Stempleski – Using Video in the Classroom**
- **Jennifer Bassett – Storytelling for English Language Learners**
- **Jann Huizenga – Designing materials for teaching reading**
- **Rob Waring – Vocabulary**

Got something to say?

JALT Forums



<forums.jalt.org/>