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## In this month's issue . . .

**W**ELL, THAT was quite a conference! Though writing these words in October, I'm sure they will hold up. Bringing the JALT 33rd International Conference to Tokyo this year was a massive undertaking—as is the conference every year. Many thanks to everyone who made the event possible.

As 2007 comes to end, we round out a year of special attention to Extensive Reading (ER) with two more articles to help teachers interested in this area. **Rory Rosszell** contributes a *Feature* article in which he reminds teachers to carefully consider goals when implementing ER. **Ronan Brown** picks up ER in a *Readers' Forum* and brings the spoken language into practice with Extensive Listening.

Also in *Readers' Forum*, **Andy Boon** is very concerned about helping bring professional development to isolated teachers. He received a JALT Research Grant in 2005 and reports some of the fruits of that work with a model for using online instant messaging to bring teachers together.

For first time readers who joined JALT at last month's conference, or for those who are returning after a lapse, the back half of *TLT* has much to recommend it to your attention as well: *JALT Focus* will fill you in on what is happening within JALT; *Conference Calendar* will turn your attention elsewhere; the *Job Information Center* is much more than a list of open positions; *TLT Wired* has advice for using blogs; and the *Old Grammarian* is his usual, if unpredictable, self.

Ted O'Neill

TLT Co-Editor

**い**やあ、素晴らしい大会でした！実はこの冒頭記事を書いているのは10月なのですが、この表現どおりになっていると確信しています。今年、第33回JALT全国大会を東京で開催することはとても大掛かりなことでした。もちろん、どの年の大会も同様ですが。大会にご協力いただいた皆さんにお礼を申し上げます。

2007年の終わりに、TLTでは多読に注目した年を締めくくるものとして論文をさらに2つ、この領域に興味を持つ教師の皆さんにお届けします。Rory RosszellはFeature articleで、教師が生徒に多読をさせる際には、入念に目標を設定するように呼びかけています。Ronan BrownはReaders' Forumで多読を取り上げ、多読の中で使われた話し言葉を多聴プログラムで実践させています。

同じくReaders' ForumでAndy Boonは、孤立無援の教師に専門分野の知識を届けるための支援方法について、大きな関心を示しています。彼は2005年のJALT研究助成を得て、オンライン・インスタント・メッセージャーを使って教師の意見交換を促進する研究の成果を、いくつか報告しています。



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先月の大会で初めてJALT会員になった読者の皆さん、また、久しぶりに会員再登録をされた皆さん、TLTの後半部分にも素晴らしい記事が載っています。JALT Focusでは、今JALTで何が起きているのかをお知らせします。Conference Calendarでは、また別の面の情報が得られます。Job Information Centerは、単なる求人リスト以上の価値があります。TLT Wiredは、ブログの使い方のヒントを提供しています。Old Grammarianは、まったく見当がつかないとしても、いつもどおりのOld Grammarianです。

Ted O'Neill  
TLT Co-Editor

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# Two key issues to consider in the design of an effective ER program: Self-selection and integration

## Keywords

extensive reading, class readers, graded readers, self-selection, integration, follow-up activities

The discovery of research indicating widespread support for the effectiveness of Extensive Reading (ER) was a turning point in the author's search for a means to raise Japanese university students' English proficiency. However, discussions of variation in ER course structure to accommodate differing learner needs were almost absent from the literature, and poorly supported claims and biases were common. To begin filling this void, a series of exploratory studies was set up by the author over the past decade to investigate how students would respond to, and learn from, the reading of self-selected, group, and class readers. Based on this research, the author encourages ER practitioners to carefully consider their goals in designing ER programs, and focuses on self-selection and integration as examples of often overlooked factors that should be considered by those who are similarly seeking input rich methods to meet their learners' needs. The paper concludes with suggestions on the directions that ER research could take.

多読の効果が広く支持されたことを示す研究に出会ったことが、著者にとって日本の大学生の英語力の向上に役立つ方法を探す上での転機となった。しかしながら、一人ひとりの学習者のニーズに合わせるように、多読の授業の種類を論じていくことは先行研究にはなく、根拠が微弱な意見や偏見が多く見られた。この空白を埋めるべく過去10年間、どのように学生がリーディング教材（自主選択したもの・グループやクラスで選択したもの）に反応するのか、そしてどのように学ぶのか について多岐にわたる調査を行ってきた。この研究を基にして、著者は、多読を実践する教師が、そのプログラムを構築するにあたり目標設定を注意深く行うよう促している。また、学習者のニーズに合うようにインプットの多い方法を模索している 教師が見過ごしやすい点の例として自主選択と統合された使用法に焦点を当てている。最後に、多読に関して今後どのような方向に研究が行われていくべきかという提案を行う。

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**A** SEARCH THROUGH the Extensive Reading (ER) literature reveals a focus almost exclusively on programs in which learners read self-selected titles—usually with few or no follow-up activities. Unlike Harold Palmer, the originator of the term *Extensive Reading*, who had advocated a “multiple line approach” (1921/1964, p. 111), many more recent proponents, seemingly in reaction to a predominance of heavily teacher-controlled reading classes, and much under the influence of Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (e.g., Krashen, 1989), have redefined ER as an isolated activity. As a consequence, and despite Palmer having emphasised that the benefits of doing large quantities of enjoyable, level-appropriate reading could most effectively be realized through integration with other more language-focused activities, any reading-related activities beyond *pleasure reading* (a term popularised by Krashen, among others) have come to be regarded as suspect, counter-productive, or even painful (Krashen, 2004).

Day and Bamford (1998), in their widely cited book, list self-selection as a defining characteristic of ER, and discourage the use of follow-up activities. However, despite the large amount of anecdotal evidence, there is little empirical evidence in the L1 or L2 literatures to support either of these biases, or the wide range of learning benefits which it has been claimed that learners derived from engaging in their version of ER (for reviews, see Horst, Cobb, & Meara, 1998; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006). To begin to fill this void, the author began investigating the strengths and weaknesses of self-selected and class readers, as well as a combination of both approaches (Rosszell, 2000), and later, also those of group readers—which offer a middle ground between self-selected and class readers (see Rosszell, 2002).

Bamford and Day appear to have more recently softened their stance against follow-up activities, and have recently published a volume of ER-related activities (Bamford & Day, 2004). These are very welcome developments, and ones that will help to rectify the bias evident in their earlier writings (2002). However, Day (2003) continues to insist on a version of ER that, by definition, excludes class readers. Prowse (2002) on the other hand, includes class readers in his discussion of ER and regards follow-up activities as a suitable complement, but he does not appear to support their use with self-selected titles.

This paper is based on the author's experiences with Japanese EFL students in university contexts, with levels ranging from elementary to advanced, and in elective as well as compulsory courses with between 15-35 students. Although the focus of this paper is on ER, the issues discussed are equally relevant to the use of graded reader tapes/CDs (i.e., Extensive Listening) or the simultaneous use of graded readers and tapes/CDs (see, for example, Brown, Waring, & Donkaewbua, in press).

Table 1 includes the three approaches that the author has used, as well as his evaluation of those features that instructors should consider in deciding which approach might be most suitable for their particular learners. Each feature will be discussed in turn, moving across the columns from left to right.

## Individual pace

Self-selection is often portrayed as being the only way to allow readers to read at their individual paces, but when the reading is done outside of class, all three approaches easily accommodate individual reading speeds and preferences. Learners are given ample time to complete their reading, and given that many instructors using a self-selected approach impose minimum reading targets (e.g., pages per week, or books per semester), the pressure on students to read is similar.

## Reading quantity

However, in terms of quantity, those reading self-selected titles may spend more time reading (i.e., rather than writing, or studying vocabulary—although some teachers also require students to write short reports on self-selected titles), and the self-selected approach offers the advantage of allowing individuals to read as much (or, possibly, as little) as they wish. Recommended quantities range from 300,000 words during the first year (Furukawa, 2006), to about one graded reader per week (Hill, 1992), to Hedge's (1985) finding that even 1 hour every week or two is enough to exert a positive effect (p.79). While reading in quantity is no doubt the central purpose in any ER program, the research has yet to establish if there is a threshold level below which learning benefits become negligible.

**Table 1. The relative advantages and disadvantages of self-selected, group, and class readers**

Approach	Individual Pace	Reading Quantity	Reading Quality	Preferred Titles	Support	Vocabulary Enrichment	Discussion Quality	Cost
Self-selected <sup>a</sup>	++	++	+	++	-	+	+	++
Group <sup>b</sup> Readers	+	+	++	+	+	++	++	+
Class <sup>c</sup> Readers	+	+	++	-	++	++	++	-

<sup>a</sup> – each student selects the titles (s)he reads

<sup>b</sup> – students select and read the same title in groups of about four

<sup>c</sup> – the teacher selects the titles and each is read by the entire class

'-' = not so good, '+' = better, '++' = best

## Reading quality

Hill (1992) argues that to maximise language development, reading quality is no less important than reading quantity, and that this is best achieved through the use of class readers. Through a cycle of reading, vocabulary study, writing, and discussion, learners increase the quality of their reading and gain a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for the characters and events in the story, as well as for the language and its uses. Although the author has used this integrated approach in combination with self-selected readers, because students often read titles which are unfamiliar to their group-mates, and possibly the teacher as well, they do not receive the same level of in-class support, and therefore tend to find the discussions more challenging. Consequently, while an option for higher-level students, an integrated, self-selected approach is less suitable for lower-level students.

## Preferred titles

Interestingly, in the research conducted by Rosszell (2002), it was found that the ratings that students gave to self-selected titles were often lower than those given to class readers. Even with clear guidelines for selecting interesting books, and teacher guidance, there was no guarantee that students would enjoy the books they self-selected, and although students were always encouraged to stop reading books they weren't enjoying, once started, many tended to finish reading them anyway. It also soon became clear that regardless of the quality of the plot, character development, and so forth, a major consideration in the ratings Japanese students assign to the readers, and one that is often not initially evident to them, is whether the story has a happy ending. Even a book like *Two Lives* (Cambridge University Press), a love story with a happy ending in which the main characters get married at the end, receives some negative reviews because the woman jilted her former fiancé. Any killing, or the inclusion of unpleasant or immoral characters, also generally results in lower ratings.

Another seldom discussed aspect of self-selection is that most learners like to tread on familiar ground and often do not read the variety of materials that Day and Bamford (2002, p. 8) recommend. Even though the selection of non-fiction titles is limited, few students read those which are available, and consequently, as Gardner's (2004) analysis of L1 children's narrative and expository reading materials clearly shows, many readers are only exposed to a limited range of vocabu-

lary and expressions in their reading. In contrast, class and group readers that are selected by the teacher can help to mitigate this problem, and can in addition introduce learners to enjoyable genres of writing to which they might otherwise remain unexposed.

## Support

Through reading books as a class or in groups, many of the difficulties inherent in supporting learners who are each reading self-selected books can be overcome. The less confident and/or less proficient learn from the more proficient (e.g., during the discussions), and the teacher can address commonly observed problems. If, for example, students are confused by events or language in the story, they come to class knowing that they can seek clarification. This opportunity provides not only psychological support, but helps to enhance comprehension and enjoyment. Similarly, by knowing the words to which learners will be exposed in the story, the instructor can anticipate potential vocabulary problems, and select words on which to elaborate. In addition, given that vocabulary development is commonly a priority among students, the support learners provide to each other in class enables them to read books at a slightly more challenging level than they could handle on their own, thereby increasing the potential for vocabulary and language development.

## Vocabulary enrichment

Through being able to repeatedly hear and use (new) words, the interaction afforded by an integrated approach provides many opportunities for vocabulary enrichment. It provides opportunities for context-based vocabulary study, and as mentioned previously, it enables the instructor to focus on, or assign for study, words to which the learners are being regularly exposed in meaningful contexts.

As a follow-up to word study (self-selected or assigned), discussions of word meanings and usage (in pairs or small groups) enable learners to gain insight from each other, and as a result to become better able to comprehend, retain, and use the words (Stahl, 1999). In addition, through using words orally or in writing, learners develop their vocabulary skills (Joe, 1998; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986). (For empirical evidence to support the role that complementary intensive vocabulary study can play in the development of knowledge of word meanings and usage, see Rosszell (2006).)



## Discussion quality

In the author's experience, not only does the study, use, and discussion of new words enhance vocabulary development, it also increases both the quantity and the quality of the discussions of the readers. Learners become more confident and successful in expressing their opinions, have opportunities to use the words they have learned, and because they have all read the same passage, they can more easily help to correct each other's misunderstandings—in English!

In contrast with self-selected readers, which even intermediate level learners can find difficult to clearly describe without much support from their groupmates (see *Reading quality* in this article), and which often result in long silences and/or one person doing most of the talking, the support that group members offer each other in the discussion of group and class readers often results in lively discussions. An infectious enthusiasm spreads within groups, and students regularly write on end-of-course questionnaires that this is the most enjoyable part of the class. In addition to the language learning they derive from the discussions, they enjoy hearing their groupmates' opinions and as a result frequently develop lasting friendships.

## Cost

The cost of purchasing graded readers can be substantial—especially when buying class sets. Lower level books are cheaper but one can expect to spend an average of about ¥600-700 per book. The author set up a library of 400 titles spread over the upper seven EPER levels and purchased a total of 11 class sets (30 copies of each) spread over the top four levels. On a limited budget, and especially when there exists a wide range of levels within individual classes, buying individual titles is no doubt the better choice. However, as one comes to identify generally popular titles, get more funds, and more precisely identify learners' needs, for the reasons mentioned previously, ER practitioners are encouraged to begin experimenting with a more integrated approach using group or class readers. With a little experience or preliminary research the selection of group and class sets can be roughly matched to the level of the learners—although class readers are no doubt better suited to streamed or more homogeneous classes.

## Future research

A review of the research makes it clear that we have a long way to go in developing a reliable

research base that identifies and quantifies the language learning benefits that learners derive from engaging in ER. To gain further insight into the benefits of a more integrated approach (as advocated in this paper), the literature on Literature Circles is no doubt a promising direction in which to look. It is unfortunate that despite the research in L1 contexts over the past decade (e.g., Daniels, 2002), very little has been published about their use in ESL and EFL contexts (but see McQuillan & Tse, 1997; and Furr, n.d.-a, n.d.-b).

Much of the ER research that has attempted to quantify learning outcomes has investigated vocabulary acquisition and has unhelpfully focused on a crude distinction between incidental and conscious learning. A way forward would be to shift the focus of ER research to identifying those aspects of language learning which develop incidentally, those which benefit from conscious attention, and if and at what level of proficiency the focus should shift from one to the other. With more empirical research of this kind we could begin to understand the effect of different combinations of activities on particular aspects of language acquisition.

The author's research has, for example, shown very clearly that supplementing a cycle of reading and discussion with vocabulary study, results in superior and sustained knowledge of word meanings as well as their use (Rosszell, 2006). Although the demonstration of such knowledge on written tests is a step in the right direction, further research will be necessary to determine the extent to which learners actually use the words in their discussions, and the kinds and sequences of activities that will maximise the transfer of such knowledge. In this vein, it is encouraging to see a growing number of carefully controlled studies which examine the development of specific aspects of vocabulary knowledge (Brown et al., in press; Horst, 2005; Pigada & Schmitt, 2006; Rosszell, 2006; Waring & Takaki, 2003). To build on these studies, we need further studies in which potentially confounding variables are controlled for, and which seek to identify those aspects of language that can more efficiently be acquired with some form of supplementary conscious learning.

## Conclusion

In this paper ER practitioners have been urged to be sceptical of the bias towards self-selection and against integration which exists in much of the ER literature, and to (re)consider the pros and cons of the use of self-selected, group, and class

readers with an open mind—especially considering that much of the recent research on L2 vocabulary acquisition within a reading context points towards the greater effectiveness of an integrated approach (Nassaji, 2003; Paribakht & Wesche, 1999; for a counter-example, see Mason, 2004). Before any decisions are made, the goals of the program as well as those of the learners need to be carefully considered. Only then can an ER program that incorporates those elements that are likely to lead to the achievement of those goals be designed.

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# Building bridges: Instant Messenger Cooperative Development

## Keywords

cooperative development, instant messenger, isolation, reflective practice, teacher development

Instant Messenger Cooperative Development (IMCD) is an online adaptation of Edge's (2002) Cooperative Development framework in which two teachers can work together to listen to, understand, and support each other's explorations of chosen pedagogic puzzles. This article explores the power of articulation in reflective practice, the sometimes isolated world of the teacher and provides an analysis of an example online session in which one teacher was enabled to discover new approaches to her writing class. It concludes by arguing that IMCD can help us to build bridges between ourselves and our isolated peers.

Instant Messenger Cooperative Development (IMCD) は、Edge (2002) の Cooperative Development という枠組みをオンライン化したものである。これを使って2人の教師が、自分たちが選んだ教育上の問題について、聞き役になったり、理解する側に立ったり、お互いの見解をサポートすることができる。本論は、時には孤立した世界にいる教師が内省し、それを表明することによる影響を探った。オンライン・セッションにおける例を提示し、オンラインによって、1人の教師が自分のライティングの授業に新しいアプローチを発見したことを報告する。最後に、IMCDは孤立した教師たちの間の橋渡しをすることが出来ると論じる。

**Andrew Boon**

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**T**EACHER DEVELOPMENT can be described as an on-going commitment to try to uncover what is actually happening in classes, to understand more about the reasons for and effects of the many decisions teachers make, and to create and experiment with possible solutions for the dilemmas they face. Teachers need to keep consciously exploring classroom experiences in order to justify or challenge intuitions, ideas and beliefs, to keep expanding their teaching repertoire and to increase the ability to respond to the diverse needs of students by being in a better position to select the most suitable way to proceed at any given moment in a class. Through reflecting critically on the act of teaching, heightening self-awareness, increasing understanding and making discoveries teaching, educators can "evolve in the use, adaptation, and application of our art and craft" (Lange, 1990, p. 250) and become better practitioners. And yet, the "silent barrier that so often separates teachers" (Oprandy, Golden, & Shiomi, 1999, p. 149) can reduce opportunities to gain new insights into pedagogic practice and stifles growth unless we try to build bridges—both between our conscious self and aspects of our self which may be hidden or unknown, and between our isolated self and that of a colleague willing to listen, understand and support us in our development. Instant Messenger Cooperative Development (Boon, 2005), an online, virtual, interactional environment, can facilitate professional development and build bridges between our sometimes isolated worlds.

## Talking is an important part of development

When articulating thoughts to a colleague who is willing to listen and trying to understand, teaching professionals are not only

encouraged to return to, and “re-cognize” (Curran, 1978, p. 7) their experiences in the classroom, but also to work to make these thoughts as clear, logical and coherent as possible so that they can be communicated to and understood by another person (Edge, 2002). As internal emotions, values and meanings are externalized through words, ideas begin to form. However, different to the ordinary conversational two-way exchange of opinions between teachers, when a colleague works to reflect back evolving thoughts, “catching all the ... wanderings, ramifications, and overlappings” (Curran, 1978, p. 4) of what a person is trying to communicate, our utterances are restated in a version which becomes more explicit, coherent and focused; helping us to re-consider our thoughts and increase the possibility of discovering something new in them. Understood by another person, we become reassured about our perceptions of our world and feel encouraged to progress and decide what it is we need to do to grow and act.

### What is Cooperative Development?

In Edge’s (2002, p.18) Cooperative Development (CD) framework, two teachers agree to work together in the modified interactional roles of Speaker and Understander in order to create a supportive environment in which the individual ideas of the Speaker can take shape and grow. During a CD session, the Speaker is given the freedom to articulate thoughts on any area of teaching he or she would like to work on whilst the Understander deliberately withholds advice, opinions, experiences, judgments, and evaluations in order to maximize space for and reflect back what the Speaker is trying to say. Hearing developing ideas, opinions and attitudes reflected and restated by the Understander, may make them clearer to the Speaker. The Understander is free to listen wholly to and fully focus on understanding the Speaker by release from the ordinary interactional responsibility of constructing and then contributing responses from one’s own perspective to keep the conversation going; thus only ever half-listening to the other person. When the Understander carefully conveys the understanding back to the Speaker, the Speaker feels truly understood and is encouraged to formulate new responses or actions regarding the professional puzzle investigated during the session.

### Sometimes, there is just nobody to talk to

Isolation is often a substantial part of teachers’ everyday institutional lives. Working behind

closed classroom doors, with little time to meet, talk about and explore teaching with colleagues can “limit teaching to a subjective, individual experience shared with no one and restrict the ability to develop” (Edge, 2002, p. 16). I created a questionnaire (Appendix A) and distributed it at several JALT conferences and through online teaching mailing lists to investigate teacher isolation in various institutions. The 29 completed questionnaires received indicated that the perceived opportunity to talk to colleagues or peers is a determining factor of whether an individual teacher feels isolated or not. Of 16 respondents who indicated a feeling of isolation, 11 stated the lack of contact with others as a major factor:

*Classes I teach are not in the main building. Therefore I have very little contact with colleagues.*

*Most of my day is spent in a classroom facing a group of students. Most time with colleagues is casual chatting which is important but does not have much to do directly with professional development*

*I’m a part-time teacher, so it’s difficult to have a meeting with full-time and other part-time teachers.*

*I wish I had more opportunities to meet and discuss my ideas with other teacher-researchers but I live in the “Inaka”.*

In comparison, 9 of the 11 respondents indicating that they had never felt isolated stated that they had regular contact with colleagues at work and with peers through professional events or online discussion groups:

*I am lucky to have wonderful colleagues and make good friends at academic conferences and workshops.*

*It is always possible to make contact with other teachers or find discussion groups online.*

*I have always been fortunate enough to have supportive and knowledgeable colleagues around me.*

### Building bridges with Instant Messenger Cooperative Development

For isolated teachers wishing to become involved in CD sessions, Instant Messenger Cooperative Development (IMCD) (Boon, 2005) provides the option of working with CD partners online by using Internet-based instant text messaging. By



removing the need for the actual physical presence of interlocutors, IMCD can help isolated teachers interact with a potential global community of online participants from the comfort of their own workspace with the keyboard acting as an effective replacement for the voice.

### Instant Messenger Cooperative Development in action

The author and Yuri (a pseudonym) conducted IMCD sessions for several months for one hour each week to explore individual pedagogic issues. The author is an English language instructor, and Yuri teaches Japanese to European exchange students. Both teach at universities in Japan.

#### Session and analysis

*Author:*

01 Hi

*Yuri:*

02 Hi how have you been?

*Author:*

03 good thanks

04 and you?

05 Hope you are feeling better!

*Yuri:*

06 Yes, I feel much better now. I really felt sick last week. Sorry about that.

*Author:*

07 no worries

IMCD sessions begin with greetings and small talk as in ordinary instant messenger (IM) discourse maintaining a positive social and working relationship between the interlocutors.

*Author:*

19 OK - today would you like to be Speaker?

*Yuri:*

20 OK. Do you have nothing you would like to think about your plan?

*Author:*

21 no - no worries

*Yuri:*

25 Ok. I'll try to talk about a lesson which start on April.

*Author:*

26 great

27 let's begin

28 over to you. OK.

*Yuri:*

29 I'll continue to do a class which the students write their life story.

In line 19, the author offers Yuri the Speaker role as she had been the Understander previously. In line 25, Yuri identifies the topic for investigation. The author then signals the beginning of the session where participants assume their designated interactional CD roles (line 27) and offers Yuri the floor (line 28) whilst introducing the pre-agreed handover cue "OK" (line 28). This cue facilitates turn-taking and minimizes overlapping text.

*Yuri:*

30 I reflected on the last class which I did last spring.

31 I had three purposes in that class. Now I feel three purposes were too much. OK.

*Author:*

32 OK - so after thinking back on the writing class you have decided that your original 3 intentions is too much (for the students? for yourself?). OK.

*Yuri:*

33 I think three are too much for the students.

In line 31, Yuri relinquishes the floor and wishes the Understander to reflect what she has stated so far. The reflection move (line 32) gives Yuri the opportunity to think more on her evolving thoughts and to evaluate the accuracy of the Understander's reflection and allows the Understander to clarify information that is apparent to the Speaker but which may not have been made explicit. Using parentheses in line 32, the Understander separates the reflection from the clarification and learns that Yuri's three aims for the writing task were too much for her students.

*Yuri:*

34 And that is one of the cause of doing some disorganized class.

35 I have three purposes. One is I tried the students to think about their past well in order to think about their present and

future.

- 36 Second is I wanted the students to improve their writing ability.  
 37 Third is I tried the students to think about other cultures and own cultures. To do this, I tried the students to tell their experiences in the class.  
 38 OK.

*Author:*

- 39 so you feel that the 3 aims of the writing class contributed to the confusion. Have you any thoughts on how you will approach the class differently next time?  
 40 OK.

*Yuri:*

- 41 Yeah, that is exactly what I've been thinking. But I don't have the concrete idea.

In the next reflection move (line 39), the Understander rephrases the word "disorganized" to "confusion" to try to capture the Speaker's feelings regarding the task and the class. Resisting temptation to offer his own solutions from his teaching experiences, the Understander invites Yuri to reflect on further ideas for approaching the class to help move her forward. In line 41, Yuri acknowledges the accuracy of the reflection but is unsure of possible next steps.

*Yuri:*

- 43 If I want them to reflect well on their past, I should keep their privacy.  
 44 But to do third aim, they need to be open about their experiences.  
 45 I think that is one problem about three aims. OK.

*Author:*

- 46 so on one hand you want the students to learn from each other by listening to their past experiences as students are all from different backgrounds. However, you are worried that the students may write and then reveal personal events.  
 47 This may be uncomfortable in class (for the student?) (the students who are listening?) (everybody?)  
 48 OK.

*Yuri:*

- 49 This may be uncomfortable for everybody, I think.

As Yuri moves forward with her exploration, she acknowledges problems when students read out their experiences in class: Protecting privacy and the discomfort that may be felt by all when hearing about certain personal events.

*Yuri:*

- 50 Actually I don't understand very well why the students write their past so frankly.  
 51 It's not a complain at all. I'm rather glad because this kind of frankness may be sign of trust to me.  
 52 As I feel like that, I may hesitate to show their writing to the class.  
 53 I don't know if it might be OK for them to speak about their experiences.  
 54 OK.

*Author:*

- 55 so when students are very open about their past experiences this is a little unexpected for you  
 56 however it shows trust amongst classmates  
 57 if students are willing to be so open  
 58 however after reading their written work you are somewhat worried about asking them to read the article out in class - is that right? OK.

*Yuri:*

- 59 Yes, that's right.  
 60 They wrote about the divorce of parents, the abuse that they got at school, etc.

Yuri continues, revealing how the very open topics that have been written about by her students have surprised her and raised the problem of asking them to share these very personal experiences with the class as a language learning exercise.

*Author:*

- 67 OK - so students have had hard experiences of life which you didn't expect. Earlier you mentioned that revealing such experiences was a sign of trust and you also said that you wanted to protect student privacy - how would you reconcile these 2 statements? OK.

*Yuri:*

- 68 Yes, that is a problem. One problem is that

I don't know the trust which they show in their writing is to me or to others.

- 69 Maybe they write frankly because they think I'm a only reader.
- 70 If they think so, reading in the class is the act of betray.
- 71 To reconcile two statements, the way I should take is to ask this to the students, I think.
- 73 Maybe I can ask them that they let me know the part which they can read out in the class and the part which they don't want to read. OK

In line 67, the Understander initiates a challenging move bringing two conflicting statements to the attention of the Speaker so that she can reconsider and work through the contradiction. This move helps Yuri approach a self-realization and plan to ask students to approve excerpts from their writings for class readings and to have the choice of confidentiality regarding sections that they consider too personal.

## Conclusion

Stepping out of their designated roles of Speaker and Understander towards the end, interlocutors comment on what has happened during the IMCD session:

Yuri:

- 79 Thank you for being understander. I think it's time.

Author:

- 80 Yes – thanks.
- 81 I'm interested in whether your discoveries were as a result of this session
- 82 did they happen during or before the session?

Yuri:

- 83 This discoveries were as a result of this session. I had no idea about that. I was in confusion. So now I'm feeling
- 84 that IMCD is a great way to discover something.

In this session, Yuri moved from the identification of a problem in her writing class, through confusion, to discovery of a way forward and developed a plan of action for future writing assignments. Thus, by working together regularly online as Speaker and Understander and alternating roles each session, it is not only possible for two teachers to reflect on, articulate, and learn from our many pedagogic experiences building bridges between what is known explicitly and implicitly and what may be potentially discovered through the course of an online session but also to build valuable relationships between our peers in which both can be positively affected by the IMCD experience.

## Appendix

The appendix can be viewed at <[jalt-publications.org/tlt/resources/2007/0712a.pdf](http://jalt-publications.org/tlt/resources/2007/0712a.pdf)

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# Extensive listening in English as a foreign language

## Keywords

extensive listening, top-down, automaticity, self-selected, teacher-selected

This article looks at the benefits for students of listening to extended stretches of simple narrative with the aim of attaining a global understanding of the text. It begins by explaining two approaches to instruction: Student-selected texts and teacher-selected texts. It then establishes the necessity of choosing high-quality fiction and nonfiction texts for extensive listening programs. The paper also demonstrates how materials are typically divided into levels of difficulty. The challenges voiced in two small studies by subjects who were new to extensive listening are then considered. The subjects' responses have in turn informed the author's current approach to extensive listening. Finally, five implications for teachers considering introducing extensive listening to their students are set out.

本論は、包括的なテキスト理解を目標とする簡単な物語を多聴 (Extensive Listening) する学生の利点を論じる。はじめに、学生がテキストを選ぶ場合と、教師がテキストを選ぶ場合の2つの指導法を説明する。次に多聴プログラムの為に、質の良いフィクションやノンフィクションのテキストを選ぶ必要性を論じる。テキストの難易度の分け方についても論じる。また、2つの小規模の研究の中で、初めて多聴を体験した学生たちから聞き取った困難点について考える。学生たちの反応から得たもので、著者は現在実践している多聴の指導法にたどり着いた。最後に、学生に多聴を導入しようと考えている教師のために、5つの考慮すべき点を明示する。

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**R**ESearch CONDUCTED to determine the benefits of extensive listening (i.e., listening to long, simple texts to attain a global rather than detailed understanding) has largely been concerned with native-speaker populations, particularly early readers in elementary school. Reading stories to children is universally acknowledged as good pedagogy and when done as a form of recreational reading, produces considerable gains in listening skills (Elley, 1989; Senechal & Cornell, 1993).

While a review of the literature on extensive listening (EL) in a foreign language has revealed a distinct lack of statistical data, there are numerous papers on the benefits, conditions, and procedures of reading stories to students, or having students listen to audio recordings of stories (Nation, 2001; Prowse, 2001; Sheerin, 1989). Although primarily a top-down approach, it is also assumed that extensive listening improves automaticity of recognition of words in their spoken form, in turn leading to improved aural fluency and thus improvement in overall comprehension. This view is encapsulated by Ridgway (2000) when he says: "Practice is the most important thing. The more listening the better, and the sub-skills will take care of themselves as they become automatized" (p.183).

## Text selection and preparation in extensive listening programs

In general, two approaches to the extensive listening of fiction and nonfiction (recorded on audiocassettes/CDs/MP3s) are currently deployed in Japan: self-selected texts, and teacher-

selected texts. Careful consideration of the level of difficulty of the materials is also important.

### *Materials and levels*

In many institutions, the extensive listening program forms a wing of the main extensive reading (ER) collection, and consists of a set of recordings of high-quality graded reader titles and acclaimed unadapted fiction. Generally, the book versions of these recordings will be available on the shelves of the ER collection. Colleges and universities such as the author's institution typically have between 50-250 titles in their EL program.

Depending on the institution, these titles may be spread across eight levels of challenge. Titles at Level 1, equivalent to Edinburgh Project on Extensive Reading (EPER) Level F (e.g., Penguin Readers' *David Beckham*) will have 300 headwords and approximately 3,000 running words. Titles at Level 7, EPER Level X (e.g., Cambridge English Readers' *A Love for Life*) will have 2,000 headwords and approximately 30,000 running words. Lower level titles are typically narrated at approximately 90 words per minute. Upper level titles may be drawn from acclaimed adolescent, young-adult, and adult fiction written for native speakers such as Scott O' Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca*, and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Complete and unabridged recordings of such titles are commercially available in CD/MP3 form, or can be downloaded for a fee from websites such as audible.com.

### *Self-selected texts*

With guidance from the teacher on starting levels and suitable titles, students self-select recordings according to their preferred genres or inclinations. Depending on the institution, students can decide whether to listen to the recording in a library audio-visual station, or borrow it and listen to it at home. On listening and speaking courses, teachers typically ask students to write a short report of the text that may include a summary, a personal response, or a recommendation. These notes may form the basis of post-listening student presentations, or discussion activities such as the Literature Circles procedure described by Furr (2007).

Because of the element of autonomy, self-selection may not suit all students, particularly when starting out on extensive listening. Listening to extended stretches of narrative is a new experience for most students and some preparation for listening to the recordings is necessary. Therefore,

before embarking on self-selection, it is often useful to listen to one or two stories as a class and teach students how to listen extensively, in much the same way as class readers are used to teach extensive reading. Alternatively, if students are not used to listening to long stretches of text, a bridge may be achieved through reading-while-listening to some stories. This may be accomplished by the teacher reading the text aloud as the students read along, or by the students listening to a recording as they read along.

### *Student preparation*

Preparation for listening is important to help the students' comprehension and appreciation of the recordings. For each new story, students may be given copies of the aids to understanding in the book, which may include: the front cover, key illustrations and maps, the blurb on the back cover, the introduction, the chapter titles, notes on cultural points, and glossaries (which may be combined with before-reading type questions to check and review key vocabulary, found at the back of some graded readers). Additional downloadable resources are available from all the major publishers. There are recordings which accompany graded readers even at the easiest levels, so students of all abilities should be able to find something to listen to and understand. Finally, some useful warm-up activities that teachers might include are: Listen and guess the title quiz, listen and guess the genre quiz, and listen and guess the setting quiz. Two effective classroom routines include the listening of story snippets to arouse interest and encourage individual use, and the listening to a chapter a week of a student-selected title as a type of classroom radio serial.

### *Teacher-selected texts*

In this mode, all the students possess a personal copy of the recording, so they can listen whenever and wherever they wish. Many teachers do a portion of a story per week. At home, students are encouraged to listen as many times as they feel is necessary to at least be able to understand the main events in the story. Most students will listen to each section three or four times. They can then write a short summary and reaction and may be given time in class each week to discuss both the story as well as their own impressions. On one-year listening and speaking courses, students listen to several teacher-selected titles, which expose them to a variety of genres. Some titles that have been used successfully with



upper-intermediate EFL students are: Penguin Readers' *Fly Away Home* (600 headwords), Oxford Bookworms' *Chemical Secret* (1000 headwords), Cambridge English Readers' *Eye of the Storm* (1300 headwords), and Macmillan Readers' *A Kiss Before Dying* (1600 headwords).

## Students' perceptions of extensive listening

The author conducted two small-scale studies at a university in western Japan to investigate the benefits of a newly established extensive listening program. In the first study, which elicited subjects' affective responses to listening to graded reader recordings, it was found that the majority (56%) felt the listening they did was either helpful or enjoyable. Conversely, a large minority (38%) reported that they found it difficult. In the second study, which asked which means of accessing a story they preferred, the majority of subjects (58%) reported that they liked the reading-while-listening mode the best. Significantly, only one subject (2%) expressed a preference for the listening-only mode.

In Study 1, which was conducted over one semester, 58 first- and second-year English literature students in two reading skills classes were given as homework the task of listening to one graded reader title of their choice in the Language Laboratory. They were later to comment on this experience in their reading notebooks. A question on the end-of-term reading skills class evaluation form asked them if they found this EL assignment helpful, enjoyable, difficult, or boring. Subjects were asked to select one of these four descriptors and indicate why they chose it. The questions and answers were both written in English.

Being their first experience of listening to a narrative in English, they did a form of *sheltered* extensive listening; in other words, they read while listening to a book at their current reading-ability level (i.e., at *i-1*; Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 16). As can be seen in the Table 1 below, 56% of the 58 respondents reported positively on their extensive listening assignment. On the other hand, 38% reported that the extensive listening they did was difficult, and 6% said it was boring.

It was reported helpful because, for example, "It removed resistance when I read", "Narrator read slowly so I could understand whole picture (sic)", "I can know accent (sic)", and "I could understand the character's feelings well". It was reported enjoyable because, for example, "I can

read faster than [when] reading by myself", "the voice made me excited", "the tape was read with much feelings" (sic), and "I felt more terrible [terrified] than when I read the book" (all responses *sic*). Thus, for these subjects the EL experience was useful for language knowledge and skills development. Moreover, because the content was at an appropriate level and was interesting, the subjects could comfortably allocate their cognitive resources towards processing the two-channeled input.

It was reported difficult because, for example, "I cannot follow the story as the reader's voice is very fast", "I couldn't concentrate", "I couldn't find the word", "[It was] difficult until I got used to it", "I couldn't understand content without book" (sic). This implies that easier texts would have been better received as these subjects evidently had perceptual-processing problems.

In Study 2, three groups totaling 48 first-year English language students followed the three modes of reading-only, reading-while-listening, and listening-only to stories.

Three complete stories were selected by the teacher (*The Elephant Man*, *One-Way Ticket*, and *The Witches of Pendle*), all at the 400-headword level. The texts had been modified for a concurrent vocabulary experiment. Thus, in each story, there were 28 unknown words of varying frequency, the meanings of which subjects had to infer. It was ensured, however, that text coverage remained high: at the outset, subjects knew at least 95% of the running words. Having read, read and listened, or listened to the stories, the subjects were asked which one they liked the most; which they felt was easier; and which mode they preferred.

A majority of the 48 respondents (58%) said they preferred reading-while-listening mode because, for example, "Only listening or reading I may miss words, content and atmosphere", "I remember better this way", "listening mode, tape too fast, reading mode takes long time" (sic), "could hear pronunciation and see words", "could concentrate better", "could understand almost all words", "could read with my eyes and ears", "the words can enter my heart from both my eyes and ears", "knowing the pronunciation helped reading", and "only listening is too difficult."

Many students (40%) said they preferred the reading-only mode because "listening mode makes me sleepy", "can know the spelling this way", "can read at my own pace", "can control pace", and "I can re-read parts".

**Table 1. Subjects' perceptions of their first experience of extensive listening**

Item	Enjoyable	Helpful	Difficult	Boring
Opinion about the EL activity?	28%	28%	38%	6%

**Table 2. Subjects' preferred modes of input**

Item	Reading-only	Reading-while-listening	Listening-only
Which mode did you prefer?	40%	58%	2%

Both studies confirm the subjects' potential difficulty with, or inclination away from, the listening-only mode. In Study 1, although all texts were self-selected and done in reading-while-listening mode, 38% of the subjects still had perceptual-processing problems. In Study 2, only one subject out of 48 said she preferred listening-only mode.

### Implications for teachers

These studies indicate that teachers should consider the following when introducing extensive listening.

- Introduce extensive listening in gradual stages: reading-only mode, followed by reading-while-listening mode, leading to listening-only mode.
- When the students' reading-ability levels are established (i.e., when they have 95% or greater coverage of the running words), they should go down one level before embarking on reading-while-listening mode because their listening ability appears to be considerably lower than their reading ability.
- They should go down two levels (i.e., have 98% or greater coverage) before undertaking listening-only, to aid the automaticity of recognition of words in their spoken form.
- Teachers should provide a program for improving listening comprehension, including a diagnosis of perceptual-processing problems in listening, followed up by remedial exercises that aim to prevent these problems from recurring (Field, 2003; Wilson, 2003).
- In the listening-only mode, at the outset it should be ensured that the text's narrative order and chronological order coincide, and that there are not too many characters involved in the plot so as to make the listening easier.

### Conclusion

Providing structured, top-down listening instruction is a necessity. This is addressed by setting up an extensive-listening program comprised of audio recordings of the most popular and best quality titles in the ER Collection. Choosing titles that have been recognized with language learner literature awards such as those granted by the Extensive Reading Foundation helps ensure that students are introduced to superior recordings.

Although most of these titles will be recordings of graded readers and thus are scripted and produced in a studio, they nonetheless expose listeners to the rhythms, segmentation patterns, and catenation of connected speech. Therefore, all genres of literary texts are suitable for the listening class. Moreover, Goh (2002) claims that, "because literary works are created to move the heart and mind, they have great potential for developing creative and critical thinking through listening tasks" (p. 45). Furthermore, because fiction genres contain many different text types such as descriptions, recounts, expositions, conversations, and speeches, they are also useful for developing different types of listening.

Finally, in reiterating the power of this form of instruction, it is worth recalling Sheerin (1989) who says, "One of the most enjoyable listening experiences for foreign students can be to listen to fiction read aloud. This can either be complete short stories or opening chapters of longer books. [Moreover] ... the text of the story has the advantage of providing a ready-made tapescript" (p. 81).

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## RESOURCES • MY SHARE

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### ...with Jerry Talandis

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We welcome submissions for the My Share column. Submissions should be up to 700 words describing a successful technique or lesson plan you have used which can be replicated by readers, and should conform to the My Share format (see any edition of *The Language Teacher*). Please send submissions to <my-share@jalt-publications.org>.

#### MY SHARE ONLINE

A linked index of My Share articles can be found at:  
<jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/>

**O**UR FIRST activity this month, from Gregory Jember, is one that helps students practice writing through descriptive paragraphs. Following that, Steven Ahola introduces a CALL activity designed to raise awareness of how the media portrays gay and lesbian issues.

## Who am I?

**Gregory K. Jember**

**Saga University**

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### Quick Guide

**Key words:** Personal description, peer editing, paragraphs, writing

**Learner English level:** Intermediate to advanced

**Learner maturity level:** High school to adult

**Preparation time:** Minimal

**Activity time:** 45 to 90 minutes

**Materials:** One sheet of lined A4 writing paper for each student, copy machine

### Introduction

This highly motivating and enjoyable activity is an exercise my students do in the first semester of a 1-year English composition class. I designed it to be a practice and review exercise for a unit on descriptive paragraphs, but it can also be used in advanced classes as an icebreaker during the first class meeting. It works extremely well in classes of 30 to 40 students, but it can easily be adapted for smaller or larger groups. I have been using this exercise for over 12 years, and students have always responded positively and enthusiastically.

### Procedure

**Step 1:** If necessary, review basic paragraph structure and vocabulary associated with personal description.

**Step 2:** Give students one sheet of paper each and have them write, "Who am I?" as a title at the top of the page. Instruct them NOT to write their name or any other form of identification on the sheet.



**Step 3:** Ask students to write a first-person descriptive paragraph that includes the following information:

- Physical characteristics (three or four sentences describing their facial features, physique, hair color and style, and any distinctive marks)
- Clothing and accessories (three or four sentences describing items such as their footwear, clothing, eyewear, and jewelry)
- Personality (two or three sentences describing their personality, outlook on life, blood type, or zodiac sign)
- *Variation:* Depending on proficiency level and time constraints, instead of writing a complete paragraph, have your students brainstorm a list of words and phrases for each aspect of the description.

**Step 4:** Allow 20 to 30 minutes to complete the assignment, then collect, shuffle, and return the papers. Make certain that no student receives his or her own paper. For classes of 60 or more, you may wish to divide the class into two groups and distribute the papers accordingly.

**Step 5:** Give students a few minutes to read through the description and then ask them to stand up, look around, and find the person who wrote it. At this point, students quickly realize the importance of concrete detail in descriptive writing! As soon as they have identified the author, they should check all the information for accuracy, ask for clarification where necessary, and finally have the author write his or her name at the end of the paragraph.

**Step 6:** Tell the students to edit the paragraph and rewrite it in the third person on a separate sheet of paper. The title of the revision will be the name of the author of the original document. Make sure they write their own name at the end of the paragraph and attach the revision to the original. This may be done either in class (the 90-minute version) or as a homework assignment.

**Step 7:** Collect all the papers and make comments and corrections as appropriate. Make copies of the revisions and return all the papers so that students will have both their own originals and a copy of the peer-edited version.

# Gay and lesbian portrayals in advertisements: A CALL activity for upper intermediate and advanced learners

**Steven K. Ahola**

**INTERLINK Language Center**

**<steboahola@hotmail.com>**

## Quick guide

**Key words:** Advertisements, CALL

**Learner English level:** Upper Intermediate and above

**Learner maturity level:** College

**Preparation time:** 30-60 minutes

**Activity time:** 75-90 minutes

**Materials:** CALL with Internet access

## Introduction

A goal for many instructors is getting their students to think more about the world around them. One way to do this is by discussing world events or controversial issues in the news. An issue that has received a lot of attention in recent years is whether gays and lesbians should be allowed to marry. This issue has been discussed extensively on television, in newspapers and magazines, and on countless Internet sites. The following CALL activity uses a website that contains hundreds of print ads and television commercials featuring gays and lesbians. During this activity, your students will have an opportunity to view the ads and to discuss them in class.

## Preparation

**Step 1:** Preview and select some print ads and television commercials from *CommercialCloset.Org*. I suggest showing both positive and negative ads. Some of the positive and negative print ads I

have used include: *Baby, Outdoors, Two Dads*, and *Lucky You Had a Breath Saver*. Some of the positive and negative commercials include: *Boyfriend, Son, Mess, Dining Room Table, The Kiss, Mom*, and *Meet the Parents*.

**Step 2:** Prepare some questions relating to the images being portrayed in the ads for your students to discuss, such as:

- What is happening in the ad?
- What product do you think is being advertised?
- What do you think is the message of the advertisement?
- Why do you think it is considered a positive (or negative) portrayal of gays and lesbians?

Be aware that some students may feel uncomfortable discussing topics about gays and lesbians, as Summerhawk (1998:12) notes: "It is especially important for us as teachers to minimize the discomfort and provide an atmosphere where the issues can be discussed honestly with respect for our various values."

## Procedure

**Step 1:** Explain to your class they will be viewing some print ads and commercials featuring gays and lesbians on a website. Stress the importance of being respectful as they watch the ads.

**Step 2:** Show several print ads and TV commercials from *CommercialCloset.Org*.

**Step 3:** Write the discussion questions on the board or give a handout to each pair of students.

**Step 4:** Have the students describe and discuss three print ads and three TV commercials in pairs.

**Step 5:** Following that initial discussion, allow students 15-20 minutes to view some ads independently.

**Step 6:** Each student should choose one ad and describe it to a partner.

**Step 7:** Make time for students to introduce their ad to the class or write a short paper about it by answering the questions relating to its purpose, message, and portrayal.

## Conclusion

When I do this CALL activity with my students, I hope they will think about issues relating to gays and lesbians, especially how they are portrayed in the media. While brainstorming about a print ad featuring a gay couple for the clothing store Dolce & Gabbana, one of my students described the portrayal like this: "They look a bit serious, but I can see from their faces that their relationship is quite tight and deep. It's telling like that gay people are not so rare then we think, and those people want us to understand more about them." I feel this student "dug deep" into the heart of the ad and provided a thoughtful response. I hope you will receive similar responses when you introduce this lesson to your students.

## Reference

Summerhawk, B. (1998). From closet to classroom: Gay issues in ESL/EFL. *The Language Teacher*, 29(9), 21-23.

**"Wow, that was such a great lesson, I really want others to try it!"**

**「すばらしい授業!、これを他の人にも試してもらいたい!」**



Every teacher has run a lesson which just "worked." So, why not share it around? The **My Share** Column is seeking material from creative, enthusiastic teachers for possible publication.

全ての教師は授業の実践者です。この貴重な経験をみんなで分かち合おうではありませんか。My Share Columnは創造的で、熱心な教師からの実践方法、マテリアルの投稿をお待ちしています。

For more information, please contact the editor.

詳しくは、ご連絡ください。

**<my-share@jalt-publications.org>**

**Advert - EFL Press**

## ...with Robert Taferner

&lt;reviews@jalt-publications.org&gt;



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

## BOOK REVIEWS ONLINE

A linked index of Book Reviews can be found at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/reviews/>

**T**HIS MONTH'S column features Stella Yamazaki's evaluation of *Getting Ready for Speech*, a speaking textbook for beginners. Also, *Active Listening*, a textbook for developing listening skills for conversation, is reviewed by Cheryl Kirchoff.

## Getting Ready for Speech: A Beginner's Guide to Public Speaking

[Charles LeBeau & David Harrington. Medford, OR: Language Solutions. 2002. pp. vi + 98. ¥1,974. ISBN: 1-929274-45-9.]

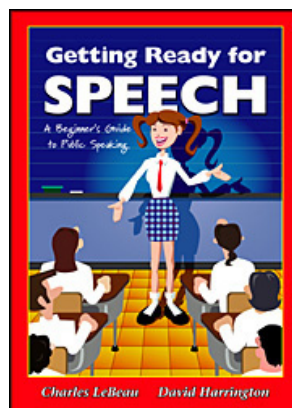
**Reviewed by Stella Yamazaki,  
Hosei University**

Many universities are now modifying their curricula to become more competitive (and in response to the call by the Japanese government for more academic classes (MEXT, 1998)). EFL instructors are increasingly faced with the job of teaching traditionally advanced academic skills to low-level students. I was assigned to teach public speaking in English to two 16-member freshman English classes, one a group of low-intermediate students, the other high beginners. These classes met twice a week for 90 minutes each time.

*Getting Ready for Speech* is a beginning speaking textbook marketed with minor modifications

in various countries, including Brazil, Spain, and Japan. It appeals to international students by including descriptions of famous sights, people, and works of art from different parts of the world. Notes in Japanese at the bottom of each page provided my students with vocabulary explanations.

*Getting Ready for Speech* consists of seven chapters, representing the seven types of speeches that the students are expected to produce: 1) Self-introduction, 2) Introducing someone, 3) Demonstration speeches, 4) Layout speeches, 5) Book and movie reviews, 6) Show and tell, and 7) Presenting and accepting awards. Each unit is composed of six parts. The model pages present two or three sample speeches with a listening comprehension activity. The language section contains groups of useful sentence patterns, arranged in speech order, for writing the target speech, and a choral repetition exercise reviewing



essential grammar. The delivery section covers an aspect of body language or voice control followed by exercises. The practice section is typically a paired information exchange activity using a model speech. In the speech section, the key speech expressions are presented in speech order again, and the student

chooses from among them and adds his own information to complete a written copy of his speech. The one-page structure section ending each chapter has exercises reviewing grammar, word choice, or word order. Answer keys and scripts for all listening activities are available online at <www.languagesolutionsinc.com>. This site also provides lesson plans and supplementary activities. With its simple language, clearly organized speech outlines, and abundant models, this text appeared to be at the appropriate level for both of my classes.

The strengths of this book are many. First, it takes a process approach to speech writing. After listening and completing exercises with speech models, students collect data and finish an outline before writing their own speeches in full, after which they receive teacher correction. This system roughly follows the process approach to writing, espoused by Raimes (1983), which is now widely accepted in American university programs in Japan. The system also saves lower students from struggling with western organiza-



tion and searching for standard speech expressions. Instead, they have more time to focus on content and delivery.

Second, this book offers a number of imaginative exercises on physical presentation. The *catch-hold-release* exercise was the first I had ever seen for developing eye contact. I used it regularly and with good results. The free gestures exercise near the end of the book allowed my students to create their own natural gestures for familiar concepts and encouraged individuality in their presentations. Finally, the speech topics and accompanying exercises were interesting to my students and matched their schemata.

The downfall of this book is that it varies in level, chapter by chapter. Chapters 1, 2, and 7 were simple and within the ability of both of my groups. Chapter 3, a demonstration speech, used very technical models and could easily have frustrated the students. I limited our speeches to simple food preparation. Chapter 4, the layout speech, also presented long and involved models. I used them as close exercises and only worked with the explanation of maps. I also needed to supplement the text with pronunciation and stress exercises. There was not enough material for an entire course.

Despite its flaws, I must say that I recommend this book. It was within the ability of both of my groups, although perhaps better suited to the low intermediate level. On year-end surveys the students gave favorable reactions to the book. Some praised the topics and range of activities. Several mentioned that the language support and outline format helped them to say what they wanted to say. Using this text, these students gave nine speeches in 13 weeks, and most progressed in their presentation skills. Of the speech books available in Japan, this was the only one I found which was level appropriate and which put the emphasis where it should be, on the process of developing the speech itself.

## References

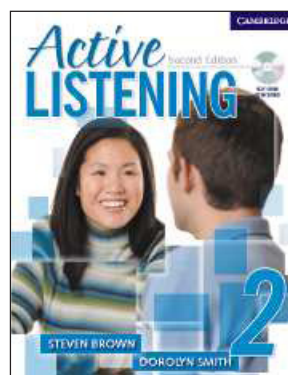
- (MEXT) Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology. (1998). A vision of universities in the 21st century and reform measures to be distinctive universities in a competitive environment. Retrieved June 20, 2007, from <[www.mext.go.jp/english/news/1998/10/981010.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/english/news/1998/10/981010.htm)>.
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. New York: Oxford University Press.

# Active Listening: Level 2 (Second Edition)

[Steven Brown and Dorolyn Smith. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2007. pp. 102. ¥2,100. ISBN: 978-0-521-67817-9.]

**Reviewed by Cheryl Kirchhoff,  
Nagano Prefecture Junior College**

*Active Listening (Second Edition)* is a revised textbook series that involves students in tasks that develop listening skills for conversation. The three-level series is designed for high-beginning to high-intermediate level young adults. I used Level 2 with a class of 2nd-year high school students. I found the content of each unit to have a tight focus and a smooth progression that began with stimulating students' schema on the topic, then involved students in two listening tasks, and ending with a pronunciation tip and a personalized speaking task. The audio CDs use primarily North American English speakers with the exception of the Expansion units introducing other cultures.



The student textbooks are visually inviting with a large variety of illustrations and photos. The topics used to unify the lessons are current (environment, relaxation methods, reality TV shows), realistic (noticing impoliteness, bad luck on a vacation), and international. Social factors of communication are introduced in topics

such as appropriate small talk and body language.

Each level contains 16 four-page units and 4 two-page Expansion units. One unit can be completed in 60 minutes or extended with optional activities from the Teacher's Manual. The audio content for the main units utilizes conversations whereas the content for the Expansion units utilizes narratives. The Expansion units are authentic narratives about a country, its customs, and its culture. This balance of conversation and narrative seems to be a good balance for motivating

intermediate students to want to use English to communicate with people from other countries.

Each unit begins with a warm-up task designed to stimulate the students' current knowledge of the unit's topic. This is followed by two listening tasks in which students are directed to listen for a main idea, details, or to infer. Students respond with simple checking, circling, or numbering of multiple-choice answers with very little writing involved. The fourth and final page of each unit does a nice job of leading students to personalize the topic and have a meaningful conversation with a partner. This page also teaches aspects of pronunciation (stress, intonation, reduced chunks), first by noticing them when listening and then using them in conversations with partners.

In an EFL situation such as Japan, helping students to practice listening to English outside of the classroom is difficult. Yet the student book provides an audio CD for self-study lessons on each unit. The self-study lesson involves listening to conversations and responding with simple tasks similar to the main unit. The self-study lesson done as homework can then be used in the next class as a warm-up pair-conversation activity.

*Active Listening* not only tests students' listening comprehension but also teaches some skills for how to listen. The introduction lesson is very clear in explaining the different listening goals: details, main idea, and inference. The multiple tasks do teach how to listen and this is repeated throughout the text. Note taking, an important listening skill, is not mentioned in the text or Teacher's Manual. Perhaps the emphasis on listening for interpersonal communication is the reason for omitting note-taking.

The Teacher's Manual is a very valuable resource. It includes detailed descriptions of how to teach the lessons and the audio scripts, as expected. It also includes warm-up activities, a couple of well-explained optional speaking activities, and a listening strategy with each unit. Listening strategies include skills such as shadowing, clarification questions, and body language. There is also a complete set of quizzes and tests with its own audio CD.

The publisher's description of *Active Listening* states that because of the increased awareness of teaching vocabulary, the revised edition "provides a more refined vocabulary syllabus and a preview of words" (p. viii). Some of the units begin with a partial list of words used in the unit, but unfortunately there is no list of target vocabulary in the student book or the Teacher's Manual.

I recommend *Active Listening* for intermediate-level listening classes and for oral communication

or conversation classes that desire more listening practice. The textbook can easily be extended with speaking activities to make a communicative syllabus. The great variety of listening tasks kept my students interested and involved in learning.

## Resources • Recently Received

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

A list of textbooks and resource books for language teachers available for review in *TLT* and *JALT Journal*.

## RECENTLY RECEIVED ONLINE

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

\* = first notice; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed 31 Dec. For queries please write to the appropriate email address below.

## Books for Students (reviewed in *TLT*)

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

*Communication Spotlight: Speaking Strategies & Listening Skills (High Beginner, Pre-Intermediate)*. Graham-Marr, A. Tokyo: ABAX, 2007. [Incl. CD, student notebook].

\* *English for Academic Study (Listening, Pronunciation, Speaking)*. Smith, J., McCormack, J., et al. Reading: Garnet Education, 2007. [Incl. CDs].

! *Moving on with English: Discussion, Role Plays, Projects*. Bray, E. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 2007. [Incl. CD, teacher's manual].

## Books for Teachers (reviewed in *JALT Journal*)

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

\* *Task Design, Implementation and Assessment*. Towndrow, P. A. Singapore: McGraw Hill, 2007.

## THE LANGUAGE TEACHER WIRED

...with Paul Daniels  
& Malcolm Swanson

<tlt-wired@jalt-publications.org>



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

### TLT WIRED ONLINE

As well as our feature columns, we would also like to answer reader queries. If you have a question, problem, or idea you'd like discussed in this column, please email us or visit our website at:

<jalt-publications.org/tlt/wired/>



## Blog communities

Adam Murray

Tokyo Denki University

**B**LOGS ARE online journals or diaries that are regularly updated with entries that are displayed in chronological order with the newest entry at the top of the screen and the oldest entry at the bottom. Blogs are becoming more and more popular each year. As of October 2007, the popular search engine, Technorati, was tracking more than 108.8 million blogs.

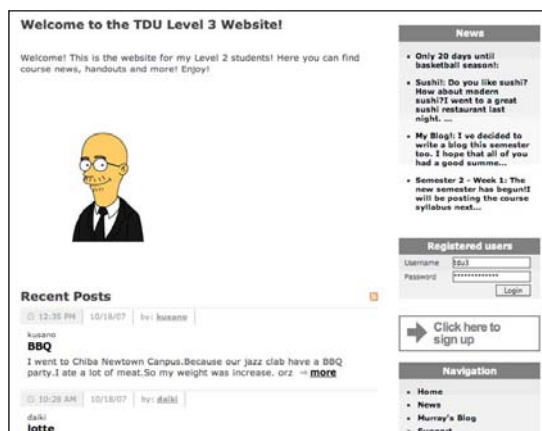
Language learning blogs take two forms: teacher blogs and student blogs. A teacher blog is written by the teacher to communicate with students outside of the classroom. For example, many teachers use blogs to post class news, homework assignments, handouts, and other course-related documents. Some teachers also post interesting pictures, videos, and links to other websites that may be of interest to the students. Although

students are usually encouraged to interact with the teacher and classmates by posting questions and comments, this kind of blog tends to be very teacher-centered.

Student blogs are blogs that are written by students. Depending on the nature of the class, the purpose of these blogs can be varied. Some blog projects are intended for communication with classmates and the teacher. Other projects are designed to be a virtual exchange program with students around the world. Finally, some projects are simply an electronic substitution of traditional writing assignments.

### What is a blog community?

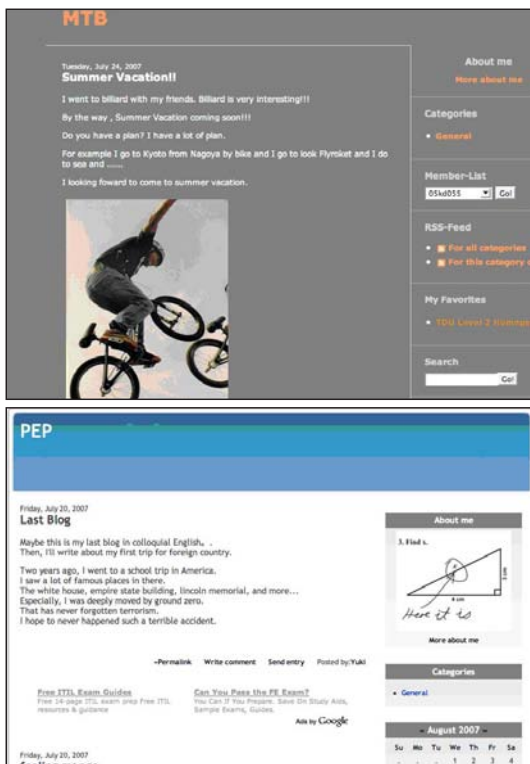
A blog community is a website that consists of two levels. The first level is the community's front page – the general point of entry. This page, maintained by the community administrator, usually contains a welcome message and the latest news and announcements. It also contains links to the members' individual blogs and external websites of common interest to the community. However, the most important feature of the community front page is the latest posts written by the community members.



### A sample community front page

The second level consists of the members' blogs. These blogs resemble regular blogs because various features such as the template, fonts, and links can be customized. The main difference between a regular blog and a blog-community blog is that links to all community members also automatically appear on the page. This allows readers to easily jump from one member's page to another page.





### Sample student blogs

### Why use a blog community?

Many teachers use one of the top three hosted blog services [Typepad, Blogger, or LiveJournal], and tell each student to register a blog account. The students then tell their teacher and their classmates the names of their blogs. Although all the blogs are on the same blog service, they can be difficult to find. There can be a feeling of isolation because a student blog is just another blog on a website with millions of other blogs. This can result in a lack of interaction between the writer and the readers. Without interaction with the readers, a blog is merely a personal diary on display to the public. In the case of student blogs, interaction with the readers is essential for authentic and meaningful communication and for motivation.

A blog community can prevent isolation by informing the community of the recent activities of the members. The administrator's front page shows the title and the first couple lines of the latest posts by individual members. This makes it easy for members to see which blogs have been updated and it allows them to see possible entries of interest in an efficient manner. This encourages interaction between community members while preventing isolation.

Another benefit of a blog community is that the teacher, as blog community administrator, can oversee the activities of the students.

### Blog community hosting

I originally planned to install Wordpress MU on my website. Unfortunately, my webhost does not support virtual domains and is unable to host a Wordpress MU community. Unwilling to change webhosts, I looked for a free hosting service for my community. *21publish.com* is a website that was founded in 2004. It hosts notable blog communities such as Amnesty International, *Business Week*, and McGraw-Hill. It is a full-featured blog community hosting service that provides free hosting for a community of up to 100 members and requires no maintenance fees. Some of the key features offered by 21 Publish include:

- E-mail or mobile blogging
- SSL security
- Access protection (paid feature)
- Customizable texts (TOS, Disclaimer, Privacy statement, Help...)
- Customizable layouts (bar, footer, buttons)
- Detailed statistics

The statistics provided are very useful. Overall statistics such as daily activity (number of visits, average visit time, pages accessed, etc.) are reported. Individual statistics for community members are also reported. Statistics such as number of comments posted and received by individual members make it possible for the teacher to assess the students' level of participation.

Although *21publish.com* is a monolingual website, it is possible to give first language support by customizing the texts. If a teacher feels that the students cannot deal with an English only environment, this is a great feature.

### Conclusion

If you are a teacher that has used blogs in the past with limited participation or if you are a teacher considering using blogs in your classroom, you might want to try starting a blog community!

**Adam Murray** is a recent graduate of University of Technology, Sydney. His research interests are vocabulary acquisition, learner autonomy, and online learning. He currently teaches at Tokyo Denki University, Kanda campus.



**Advert: CUP**

## ...with Joseph Sheehan

&lt;jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org&gt;



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.

**JALT FOCUS ONLINE**

A listing of notices and news can be found at:  
<jalt-publications.org/tlt/focus/>

**JALT Calendar**

Listings of major upcoming events in the organisation. For more information, visit JALT's website <jalt.org>, or see the SIG and chapter event columns later in this issue.

- ▶ 10 Feb 2008: Temple University Applied Linguistics Colloquium at Temple University Japan Campus. Tokyo. Co-sponsored by Tokyo JALT and Pragmatics SIG.
- ▶ 31 May – 1 Jun 2008: JALTCALL 2008 "New Frontiers in CALL: Negotiating Diversity" at Nagoya University of Commerce & Business, Nagoya.
- ▶ Jun 2008: Kagoshima TEYL Conference (joint chapter and TC SIG event) at Kagoshima University.
- ▶ 1-3 Nov 2008: JALT2008 at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo. Details to be announced.

# JALT Notices

**Publications positions available****JALT Journal**

The JALT Publications Board invites applications for the position of associate editor of the *JALT Journal*. The associate editor will work with the editor to produce the journal. After being recommended by the Publications Board and approved by the JALT Executive Board, the successful applicant will serve as associate editor for 1 to 2 years before serving as editor for a similar period. The successful applicant will have the following:

- Previous editorial/ referee experience
- Ability to meet deadlines and handle correspondence professionally
- A sound background in language education or a related field
- A master's degree or higher in language education or a related field
- Seven or more years of experience teaching language, at least two of which have been in Japan
- Current residency in Japan and definite intention to maintain such residency for the period of expected service to the *JALT Journal*
- A record of publications in competitive and refereed journals (in-house university-bulletin articles will be considered as part of a publishing record on their merits, but some of the applicant's publications should include recognized, reputable, and anonymously-refereed journals at either the national or international level)
- Association with JALT through membership and previous participation in publications are valued, but meritorious applications from nonmembers will also be considered provided that such applicants meet or exceed the above requirements and become members if selected for the position.

Duties include processing submissions, sending them out for review, communicating with authors and reviewers, working with authors to help them improve promising manuscripts, editing the Perspectives section of the *JALT Journal*, and assisting the editor as required. As editor, duties increase to include editing feature articles and the research forum, overseeing all other sections, working with proofreaders and the layout company, and guiding the future of the journal in accordance with JALT policies.

Candidates should submit the following application materials by email attachment by 30 Jan 2008.

- A curriculum vitae, including a complete list of publications
- A statement of purpose indicating both why they would like to become associate editor (and later advance to editor) and their qualifications
- Copies of five publications of which some should be recent

Application materials should be sent to both the Publications Board Chair, Kim Bradford-Watts <pubchair@jalt-publications.org>, and the current associate editor, Ian Isemonger <jj-editor2@jalt-publications.org>.

Applicants will be notified of the Board's decision, which is subject to approval by the JALT Executive Board, in 2008.

### *The Language Teacher and JALT Journal*

...are looking for people to fill the positions of English language proofreaders and Japanese language proofreaders.

### *JALT2007 Conference Proceedings*

...is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Co-Editor for the 2007 volume.

### More information

Job descriptions and details on applying for these positions are posted on our website <www.jalt-publications.org/positions/>.

### ...with Damian Rivers

<memprofile@jalt-publications.org>



Showcase is a column where members have 250 words to introduce something of specific interest to the readership. This may be an event, website, personal experience or publication.

Please address inquiries to the editor.

**I**N THIS month's Showcase, Andy Gillett talks about English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and some of the challenges he faces in teaching such courses in the UK.

## SHOWCASE

### Andy Gillett

EAP refers to the language and associated skills that students need to undertake study in higher education through the medium of English. EAP courses are based on needs analyses—which specify clearly what students have to do in English. EAP courses are usually fixed term and may be taken before academic study on summer pre-session courses or during the academic year on in-session courses.

These courses are taught in groups with the content determined by the lecturer. This causes a number of problems. Access to these classes is difficult for many students, who have full days of teaching. It is often very difficult to find a time and a room when students are available. Another difficulty with these classes is that the needs of the students vary enormously. Some students need to improve their writing, while others need to improve their listening. Even if it were possible, for example, to form a group of post-graduate business students from one country who all wanted to improve their writing, there could still



be very big differences in the competence and needs of the students. Students, especially from different cultures, also have different preferred learning styles; they prefer to work in different ways. Some students, for example, prefer to work alone while some prefer to work in groups. Some students prefer a step-

by-step presentation by the lecturer whereas others like a holistic presentation.

Using the Internet on a self-access basis can help to solve these problems. Students can access the materials whenever they want from wherever they are. The classes still continue for those

students who prefer to work in a more structured way, but the self-access component is available for students with different needs, who did not like the way the classes are taught or who cannot easily attend the classes. I have developed materials for such a purpose at <[www.uefap.com](http://www.uefap.com)>.

What is missing here is subject-specific language but I hope to work on this in the future.

Andy Gillett is a Principal Lecturer in English for Academic Purposes at the University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, UK.

## JALT FOCUS • GRASSROOTS

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### ...with Joyce Cunningham & Mariko Miyao

<[grassroots@jalt-publications.org](mailto:grassroots@jalt-publications.org)>



The co-editors warmly invite 750-word reports on events, groups, or resources within JALT in English, Japanese, or a combination of both.

### Arranging presentations

I have found the following order to work well:

1. Set the dates of upcoming meetings well in advance and be sure to check with chapter members about conflicting events.
2. Secure the presenter.
3. Secure the place. Ibaraki is quite long and narrow, so there is no one convenient, centrally-located place to meet. Fortunately, we have access to seven sites.
4. Get the publicity out (*TLT*, chapter email list, chapter website, fliers).

### Presenters

Securing presenters is usually not a problem. At conferences I'm always alert to add names to my future presenters file. (Note: This file is handy in case of a sudden cancellation.)

- Publishers: We have had very good results with publishers' reps as presenters. They tend to be very professional, but beware, they may require an assurance of 20-25 attendees.
- One-off program chair: Once or twice a year other officers have stepped forward to invite a presenter to our chapter, taking care of all of the arrangements. This has been a tremendous help to me.
- Agreements: In recent years we have arranged some mutually-beneficial agreements to bring dynamic SIG presenters to our chapter. The SIG covers transportation expenses and we cover the honorarium, meals, and lodging.
- Honorariums: With the exception of publishing companies and commercial presenters, we give an honorarium of ¥10,000 for an outside presenter and ¥3,000 for a chapter presenter. After accepting this, they are welcome to contribute some of it to the book fund, if they wish.
- Meals: All presenters (publishers included) are treated to lunch and usually a send-off snack or drink as well.



IN THIS month's column, Martin Pauly describes his experiences as program chair in Ibaraki JALT and shares the insights he has gained.

## About JALT chapter programs

I became the Ibaraki JALT chapter program chair several years ago because it's one area in which I feel competent. Other duties such as financial matters, administration, or publicity are best left to those with such strengths. As I get along with people fairly well and like to attend interesting presentations, I think I've found the correct calling. Our chapter receives a grant of around ¥160,000 every fiscal year based on the chapter grant distribution formula. My feeling is that this is sufficient to put on several attractive programs throughout the year. In this report I'll touch on some program-related topics and pass on some insights.



## General organization

- **Book fair:** This has worked wonderfully. People bring their old novels, texts, teaching materials, etc. Everything is ¥50. People throw money into the can and we use it to defray *bonenkai* expenses.
- **Officers:** We have 16 officers! With many people sharing in the work and feeling part of the team, we have avoided burning out key officers.
- **Communication:** Chapter officers communicate and make decisions by a small officer-email list and then pass on the information to the general chapter list consisting of chapter members and invited guests.
- **Social:** We strive to make the atmosphere of each meeting as welcoming and social as possible. Tea time and the book fair are always scheduled in as well.
- **All-day meetings:** As preparations for monthly afternoon meetings were beginning to overwhelm officers, less frequent all-day meetings have gained popularity. Our last one consisted of five chapter presenters in the morning, followed by a 2-hour lunch and get together, topped off with a featured presenter in the afternoon.
- **Learning from others:** Why are some chapters successful and others not? I've long wondered how the Gunma chapter has been able to successfully put on a summer workshop for 19 years, so this year I will attend one to find out.

At present, our chapter is running fairly smoothly, but we have had some incredible blunders. I believe we all have learned from them, and I believe struggling chapters may learn from them, too.

- **Blunder 1:** Back in 1988 the Ibaraki chapter sponsored a 2-day Kanto-area conference on Mt. Tsukuba. I was the site chair, which was not easy, **but from all the feedback the conference was a big success, but...** Before the conference, after our featured presenter had accepted our offer to speak, I asked him how much the honorarium should be. He answered something like, "It's up to you." So I asked one of my colleagues how much we should pay. He said that a presenter of the stature of Sen Nishiyama (Simul Academy, English-to-Japanese simultaneous interpreter for the US moon landing) should get ¥100,000. I gave him that amount and our chapter was digging itself out of the financial hole for 2 years. I later asked someone from the Chiba chapter how

much they had presented to him for a lecture at their chapter. The answer: ¥20,000.

- **Blunder 2:** We invited a presenter from the US who was on a SIG-organized tour. Though over ¥50,000 and a great deal of time was spent organizing the presentation, only four people attended. For several weeks I had written repeatedly on our chapter list about how, when the Four Corners Tour presenters from China came, I had given my University of Tsukuba classes an assignment entitled *Language Education in China*, and how we had had about 70 attendees. I hoped that if students attended (and we collected ¥500 from each) that we could partially recover our costs. What happened was that the two chapter members who had expressed interest in the presenter's topic took her to their own university classes, so no students attended the JALT presentation.
- **Blunder 3:** One of our chapter members requested that ¥50,000 be contributed to help two SIGs sponsor a presenter coming from abroad for a workshop at British Hills in Fukushima. We donated ¥25,000 because some of the wiser people of our chapter alerted me to do a reality check about what I was doing and avoid saying "Yes" so easily. Only one Ibaraki chapter member attended, and she had to pay a large attendance fee.
- **Blunder 4:** I once requested that everyone who had attended the national conference give a short report at the next meeting. Few did. *Everyone* assumed that *everyone else* would prepare reports.

## Lessons learned

I have learned that there are those in JALT who see nothing improper about using local chapter people, especially program chairs, for their own individual reasons, and that it is the responsibility of the program chair not to allow the money of the chapter, or the time of the local members, to be squandered.

I have learned that having a program where "Everyone will..." or "Let's all..." does not work. The program chair has to contact individual presenters, get their assurance that they will present, and get their names on the publicity.

I have learned that I must not assume that because I have been doing this for a long time that I am above mistakes. I must be careful and continue to learn.

Finally, I have learned that I must stay in close touch with and listen to the suggestions of the



members, especially the women, who seem to have a keener sense than me of judging individual character and potentially dangerous situations. It is my hope that readers will learn from this report and avoid repeating our errors.

## Conclusion

Although the program chair has a strong role to play, that role must be carried out along with the other officers to insure the success and welfare of the chapter. Maintaining an environment of cooperation and open communication may be the most important task for the program chair to fulfill.

*Martin Pauly, program chair, Ibaraki chapter*  
[www.kasei.ac.jp/JALT/](http://www.kasei.ac.jp/JALT/)

## COLUMN • SIG NEWS

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### ...with James Hobbs

[<sig-news@jalt-publications.org>](mailto: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.

### SIGs at a glance

Key: [🔍] = keywords [📖] = publications [📝] = other activities [✉] = email list [💬] = online forum

**Note:** For contacts & URLs, please see the Contacts page.

### Bilingualism

[🔍] bilingualism, biculturalism, international families, child-raising, identity [📖] *Bilingual Japan*—4x year [📝] monographs, forums [✉]

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.bsigs.org>](http://www.bsigs.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.bsigs.org>](http://www.bsigs.org)をご覧ください。

### Computer Assisted Language Learning

[🔍] technology, computer-assisted, wireless, online learning, self-access [📖] *JALT CALL Journal Newsletter*—3x year [📝] Annual SIG conference, regional events and workshops [✉]

The CALL SIG is proud to announce the theme for the 2008 conference, *New Frontiers in CALL: Negotiating Diversity*. The conference dates will be Sat 31 May-Sun 1 Jun (with possible pre-conference workshops on Fri 30 May). The 2008 conference will be held at the Nagoya University of Commerce and Business Administration. Please check our website for further information. [<www.jaltcall.org>](http://www.jaltcall.org).

### College and University Educators

[🔍] tertiary education, interdisciplinary collaboration, professional development, classroom research, innovative teaching [📖] *On CUE*—2x year, *YouCUE* e-newsletter [📝] Annual SIG conference, regional events and workshops [✉]

Information about what is going on in CUE can be found at [allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/](http://allagash.miyazaki-mu.ac.jp/CUE/). Check for regular updates on the 15th of each month.

### Gender Awareness in Language Education

GALE's purpose is to research gender and its implications for language learning and teaching. We welcome submissions for our newsletter on topics, both theoretical and practical, related to our purpose. Book reviews, lesson plans, think pieces,

poetry—all are welcomed. Past newsletters are available at <[www.gale-sig.org](http://www.gale-sig.org)>. Send your submission to Joanne Hosoya at <[joanna@rb4.so-net.ne.jp](mailto:joanna@rb4.so-net.ne.jp)>. To join GALE please use the form in the back of *TLT* or contact the membership chair, Thomas Hardy <[thomas\\_merlot@yahoo.com](mailto:thomas_merlot@yahoo.com)>.

### Global Issues in Language Education

[🌐 global issues, global education, content-based language teaching, international understanding, world citizenship] [📖 *Global Issues in Language Education Newsletter*—4x year] [🌿 Sponsor of Peace as a Global Language (PGL) conference] [👤] [🗣️]

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! Our website is <[www.jalt.org/global/sig/](http://www.jalt.org/global/sig/)>. For further information, contact Kip Cates <[kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp](mailto:kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp)>.

### Japanese as a Second Language

[🌐 Japanese as a second language] [📖 日本語教育ニュースレター *Japanese as a Second Language Newsletter*—4x year] [🌿 Annual general meeting at the JALT conference] [👤] [🗣️]

### Junior and Senior High School

[🌐 curriculum, native speaker, JET programme, JTE, ALT, internationalization] [📖 *The School House*—3-4x/year] [🌿 teacher development workshops & seminars, networking, open mics] [👤] [🗣️]

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. We are also intensely interested in curriculum innovation. The large-scale employment of native speaker instructors is a recent innovation yet to be thoroughly studied or evaluated. JALT members involved with junior or senior high school EFL are cordially invited to join us for dialogue and professional development opportunities.

### Learner Development

[🌐 autonomy, learning, reflections, collaboration, development] [📖 *Learning Learning*, 2x/year; *LD-Wired*, quarterly electronic newsletter] [🌿 Forum at the JALT national conference, annual mini-conference/retreat, printed anthology of Japan-based action research projects] [👤] [🗣️]

Take a look at the *community* section of our website <[ld-sig.org/community/](http://ld-sig.org/community/)> for local contacts if you are interested in meeting informally to share experiences, ideas, or research related to learner development!

### Lifelong Language Learning

[🌐 lifelong learning, older adult learners, fulfillment] [📖 *Told You So!*—3x/year (online)] [🌿 Pan-SIG, teaching contest, national & mini-conferences] [👤] [🗣️]

The increasing number of people of retirement age, plus the internationalization of Japanese society, has greatly increased the number of people eager to study English as part of their lifelong learning. The LLL SIG provides resources and information for teachers who teach English to older learners. We run a website, online forum, listserv, and SIG publication (see <[www.eigosenmon.com/tolsig/](http://www.eigosenmon.com/tolsig/)>). For more information or to join the mailing list, contact Amanda Harlow <[amand@aqua.livedoor.com](mailto:amand@aqua.livedoor.com)> or Eric Skier <[skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp](mailto:skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp)>.

成人英語教育研究部会は来る高齢化社会に向けて高齢者を含む成人の英語教育をより充実することを目指し、昨年結成した新しい分科会です。現在、日本では退職や子育て後もこれまでの経験や趣味を生かし積極的に社会に参加したいと望んでいる方が大幅に増えております。中でも外国語学習を始めたい、または継続を考えている多くの学習者に対してわれわれ語学教師が貢献出来る課題は多く、これからの研究や活動が期待されています。TOLでは日本全国の教師が情報交換、勉強会、研究成果の出版を行い共にこの新しい分野を開拓していこうと日々熱心に活動中です。現在オンライン<[www.eigosenmon.com/tolsig/](http://www.eigosenmon.com/tolsig/)>上でもフォーラムやメールリスト、ニュースレター配信を活発に行っております。高齢者の語学教育に携わっていらっしゃる方はもちろん、将来の英語教育動向に関心のある方まで、興味のある方はどなたでも大歓迎です。日本人教師も数多く参加していますのでどうぞお気軽にご入会ください。お問い合わせは Amanda Harlow <[amand@aqua.livedoor.com](mailto:amand@aqua.livedoor.com)>。または Eric Skier <[skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp](mailto:skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp)>までご連絡ください。

## Materials Writers

[💡 materials development, textbook writing, publishers and publishing, self-publication, technology] [📖 *Between the Keys*—3x year] [🐦 JALT national conference events] [🐟] [🗣️]

The MW SIG shares information on ways to create better language learning materials, covering a wide range of issues from practical advice on style to copyright law and publishing practices, including self-publication. On certain conditions we also provide free ISBNs. Our newsletter *Between the Keys* is published three to four times a year and we have a discussion forum and mailing list at <groups.yahoo.com/group/jaltmwsig/>. Our web site is at <uk.geocities.com/material-writersig/>. To contact us, email <mw@jalt.org>.

## Other Language Educators

[💡 FLL beyond mother tongue, L3, multilingualism, second foreign language] [📖 *OLE Newsletter*—4-5x year] [🐦 Network with other FL groups, presence at conventions, provide information to companies, support job searches and research]

## Pragmatics

[💡 appropriate communication, co-construction of meaning, interaction, pragmatic strategies, social context] [📖 *Pragmatic Matters* (語用論事情)—3x year] [🐦 Pan-SIG and JALT conferences, Temple University Applied Linguistics Colloquium, seminars on pragmatics-related topics, other publications] [🐟]

Pragmatics is the study of how people use language. As teachers we help students learn to communicate appropriately, and as researchers we study language in use. This is clearly an area of study to which many JALT members can contribute. The Pragmatics SIG offers practical exchange among teachers and welcomes articles for its newsletter, *Pragmatic Matters*. Find out more about the SIG at <groups.yahoo.com/group/jalt-pragsig/> or contact Donna Fujimoto <fujimoto@wilmina.ac.jp>. For newsletter submissions, contact Anne Howard <ahoward@kokusai.miyazaki-mic.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 <groups.yahoo.com/group/PALE\_Group/>. For information on events, visit <www.jalt.org/groups/PALE>.

## Teacher Education

[💡 action research, peer support, reflection and teacher development] [📖 *Explorations in Teacher Education*—4x year] [🐦 library, annual retreat or mini-conference, Pan-SIG sponsorship, sponsorship of speaker at the JALT national conference] [🐟] [🗣️]

## Teaching Children

[💡 children, elementary school, kindergarten, early childhood, play] [📖 *Teachers Learning with Children*, bilingual—4x year] [🐦 JALT Junior at national conference, regional bilingual 1-day conferences] [🐟] [🗣️]

The Teaching Children SIG is for all teachers of children. We publish a bilingual newsletter 4 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 <groups.yahoo.com/group/tcsig/>. 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.tcsig.jalt.org>.

児童教育部会は、子どもに英語(外国語)を教える先生方を対象にした部会です。当部会は、年4回会報を発行しています。会報は英語と日本語で提供しており、この分野で活躍している教師が担当するコラムもあります。また、指導上のアイデアや質問を交換する場として、メーリングリスト<groups.yahoo.com/group/tcsig/>を運営しています。活発な部会を維持していくために常に新会員を募集しています。特に日本人の先生方の参加を歓迎します。部会で開催するイベントに是非ご参加ください。詳細については<www.tcsig.jalt.org>をご覧ください。

## Testing & Evaluation

[💡 research, information, database on testing] [📖 *Shiken*—3x year] [🐦 Pan-SIG, JALT National] [🐟] [🗣️]



## ...with Aleda Krause

<chap-events@jalt-publications.org>



Each of JALT's 36 active chapters sponsors from 5 to 12 events every year. All JALT members may attend events at any chapter at member rates—usually free. Chapters, don't forget to add your event to the JALT calendar or send the details to the editor by email or t/f: 048-787-3342.



### CHAPTER EVENTS ONLINE

You can access all of JALT's events online at:  
<[www.jalt.org/calendar](http://www.jalt.org/calendar)>.

If you have a QRcode-capable mobile phone, use the image on the left.

**I**T'S PARTY time! Find a chapter nearby and join a Christmas party or *bonenkai*, hear about what happened at JALT2007, or learn about testing at West Tokyo's micro-conference. If your local chapter isn't listed, or for further details, go to the online calendar. There may be newly added events and updates.

**Gifu—Christmas and *bonenkai* party.** Join us for our annual turkey dinner with all the fixings. If you would like a map or train info, please contact Steve Quasha <[quasha@yahoo.com](mailto:quasha@yahoo.com)>. Happy holidays! *Sat 15 Dec, 19:00-21:00; Aoi's Kissaten-Kasamatsu City; one-day members ¥2500.*

**Hokkaido—Bonenkai potluck party.** The times could change so please check out the JALT Hokkaido website for final details. Everyone is expected to bring some food or drink. *Sun 16 Dec, 16:00-19:00; HIS (Hokkaido International School), 1-55 5-jo 19-chome, Hiragishi Toyohira-ku, Sapporo (near Sumikawa Subway Station); one-day members: see chapter website for details.*

**Ibaraki—1) Research-related presentations** by Jereon Bode and Jorge Romero; **2) Reports from chapter members who attended the National Conference;** **3) Bonenkai/hanashikai** at the Drunk Duck. Info: <[www.kasei.ac.jp/jalt/](http://www.kasei.ac.jp/jalt/)>. *Sun 9 Dec 14:00-17:00 (Registration from 13:30); Mito Shiminkaikan; one-day members ¥500.*

**Kobe—Chapter potpourri meeting and *bonenkai*.** Kobe chapter members will present. Please join us for our annual *bonenkai* afterwards. *Sat 15 Dec, 16:00-18:00; Kobe YMCA, 2-7-15 Kano-cho, Chuo-ku, Kobe, (t: 078-241-7204); one-day members ¥1000.*

**Kyoto—Student resistance in Japanese universities: What, who, how, and why?** by Keiko Sakui and Neil Cowie. Student resistance is not a common research topic, but it is a classroom reality that many teachers experience. The presenters will critically examine what student resistance is, how we can understand it, and why some students might resist. Ample opportunities will be provided so that the participants can reflect on their own experiences. *Sat 8 Dec, 18:30-20:30; Kyoto Kyoiku Bunka Center, Marutamachi, Sakyo-ku; one-day members ¥1000.*

**Matsuyama—Developing intercultural competence: An important role for foreign language teachers** by Alvino Fantini, Graduate Faculty, MA Program in Language Communication, Matsuyama University. Intercultural competence (ICC) is needed to transcend one's native language culture to interact effectively and appropriately with people of other backgrounds. In this presentation, language teachers explore its multiple dimensions—definitions, traits, components, levels, and the role of language proficiency for intercultural success. The importance of developing ICC in our students is also considered as an important aspect of the foreign language experience. *Sun 9 Dec, 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan 4F; one-day members ¥1000.*

**Miyazaki—Promoting a holistic approach to speaking in the classroom** by Simon Capper, Japanese Red Cross Hiroshima College of Nursing. Many language learners, teachers, and materials have a tendency to overly focus on linguistic features, at the expense of the paralinguistic and nonverbal aspects of communication. Capper will demonstrate how materials and activities that raise awareness of these important features can be created. NB. This presentation was cancelled in July due to typhoon weather. Info: Steve Davies <[sdavies@miyazaki-mic.ac.jp](mailto:sdavies@miyazaki-mic.ac.jp)> or Paul Hullah <[hullah@cc.miyazaki-u.ac.jp](mailto:hullah@cc.miyazaki-u.ac.jp)>, 0985-58-7449. *Sat 15 Dec, 15:00-17:00; Miyazaki Municipal University, Room 310, Funatsuka 1-1-2 (t: 0985-20-2000); free for all.*

**Nagasaki—December news.** Winter greetings from Nagasaki JALT! We do not have a meeting planned at present for this month, but we are making plans for a mid-December pre-Christmas/*bonenkai* party. Thank you to everyone for a good 2007, and looking forward to an even better 2008. In the meantime, please check our websites for more information, or feel free to subscribe to our monthly email newsletter. Websites are <jalt.org/groups/Nagasaki> and <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/nagasaki.html>; email newsletter signup site is <www.kyushuelt.com/jalt/nagaimail.php3>.

**Okayama—Rethinking the relationship between vocabulary and reading** by **Rob Waring**, Notre Dame Seishin University. Waring will review data about the rate of acquisition of vocabulary from reading, by looking at major research from the last 20 years. Recent research shows that acquisition rates may be exaggerated and are far more complex than previously thought. The implications will be presented in relation to how it affects the amount and type of reading that should be done. There will be a *bonenkai* party afterward. *Sat 15 Dec, 15:00-17:00; Nishigawa Ai Plaza 4F, 10-16 Saiwai-cho, Okayama City (t: 086-234-5882); one-day members ¥500.*

**Omiya—My Share and bonenkai by the talented members and guests of JALT Omiya.** The chapter welcomes short presentations—25 minutes or less. Please contact the Program Chair if you are interested in presenting. *Sun 9 Dec, 14:00-17:00; Sakuragi Kominkan 5F (near Omiya Station, west exit, see map at <jalt.org/chapters/omiya/map.htm#sakuragi>); one-day members ¥1000; free if presenting.*

**Sendai—JALT Conference reports and bonenkai.** *Sun 23 Dec, 14:00-17:00; AER Building, 28F, ken-shushitsu 2 (see map at <www.geocities.com/jaltsendai/map-e.gif>); one-day members ¥1000.*

**Shizuoka—Two presentations by Alastair Graham-Marr.** Each presentation is one hour.  
**1) Actually teaching listening.** How can you go beyond giving practice in listening and actually teach listening skills? Knowledge of script helps students with top-down predictive skills. Supra-segmental phonology helps with bottom-up decoding skills.  
**2) Teaching the strategies of speaking.** We all use strategies when we speak: to confirm or clarify, to show interest, to maintain

and develop conversations, to help with fluency, and to compensate for language we don't have. *Sun 9 Dec, 14:00-21:00; Kyouiku Kaikan (across from Shin-Shizuoka) in the basement (5-min walk north from JR station); free for all.*

**West Tokyo—The West Tokyo Chapter and the TEVAL SIG (Testing & Evaluation Special Interest Group) announce the sixth in a new series of micro-conferences.** This time **Terry Yearly** (TOFL Seminar), **Gerry Lasche** (Miyagi Gakuin Women's University), **Andy Boon** (Toyo Gakuen University), **Kristie Sage** (Komazawa University), and **Jeff Hubbell** (Hosei University) will be examining testing—both standardized tests and the ones we make for our own classes. Contact <westtokyojalt-owner@yahoo.com> for further details. *Sun 16 Dec, 9:45-17:30; Tokyo Keizai University, Daiichi Kenkyuu Center, Room 1310. One-day members ¥2000.*

**Yamagata—Six reasons for communication problems between Japanese and English speakers** by **Steve Ryan**. English and Japanese speakers can hear the same sentence but have a completely different interpretation of the words uttered. This presentation will give six intercultural reasons why English speakers (mainly from the US) and Japanese speakers misunderstand each other. Examples and discussion from the audience are welcome. *Sat 8 Dec, 13:30-15:30; Yamagata Kajo Kominkan Sogo Gakushu Center, Shironishi-machi 2-chome, 2-15 (t: 0236-45-6163); one-day members ¥800.*

### Is your membership due for renewal?

Check the label on the envelope this TLT came in for your renewal date, then go to <jalt.org/main/membership> and follow the easy instructions to register. Help us to help you! Renew early!

## ...with Heather Sparrow

<chap-reports@jalt-publications.org>



The Chapter Reports column is a forum for sharing with the *TLT* readership synopses of presentations held at JALT chapters around Japan. For more information on these speakers, please contact the chapter officers in the JALT Contacts section of this issue. For guidelines on contributions, see the Submissions page at the back of each issue.

**Akita: September—*Action Log and topic-based instruction* by Mamoru “Bobby” Takahashi.** Takahashi explained the theory behind the use of an Action Log (AL). AL is a kind of action research. It is a tool that enables teachers to understand what students are thinking. Takahashi presented research findings on the use of two versions of an AL in his CALL class and showed how employing it in conjunction with a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), such as MOODLE, was much more effective.

Takahashi demonstrated how to conduct topic-based instruction in the classroom. Merely exposing students to a piece of knowledge only once is not enough to improve their English skills. He showed how to organize teaching materials under a specific theme or topic. The theme chosen was global warming and the various activities demonstrated included: jigsaw tasks, blackboard races, and board games. All the hands-on tasks revolved around the central theme. The presentation ended with theoretical discussion of topic-based instructions, followed by a question and answer session.

*Reported by Stephen Shucart*

**East Shikoku: October—*Talking heads: Language in context of brain and cognition* by Dieter Hillert.** How our mind and brain computes language is still a mystery to scientists. Effortlessly, we can recall particular words and combine them in endlessly diverse ways to express facts, ideas, and feelings. Hillert discussed recent neuron-imaging results that provide further information about the temporal and spatial parameters involved in language processing. He presented different kinds of evidence such as genetic, neurological, cognitive, and linguistic data to draw a picture of the human language system that

challenges the classical view of the neurological organization of the human language system.

Hillert's research suggests: 1) operations of the human language system involve different cognitive and neural components that are also used in other cognitive domains; 2) there is sufficient evidence that immediate linguistic processes, such as access to lexical representations or syntactic parsing, operate in a modularized way and involve the left (dominant) fronto-temporal network exclusively; 3) non-automatic controlled linguistic processes such as discourse or metaphor comprehension activate the bilateral fronto-temporal network; 4) cortical networks are multifunctional, that is, there is no specialized neural structure that seems to support linguistic processing; and 5) linguistic rules seem to be derived from universal principles of human cognition—the language of thoughts.

*Reported by Darren Lingley*

**Fukuoka: September—*Using literature in teaching language* by Patrick Rosenkjar.** Rosenkjar outlined some of the potential uses of poetry and literature in the Japanese EFL classroom and offered useful ways to move away from the traditional approach to literature, i.e., looking at difficult works and listening to lectures on the theory of literature. One of the key elements presented was the distinction between literary and nonliterary writing. Where nonliterary writing simply conveys information, literary writing “creates the illusion of actually having an experience.” In exploring this topic, a great deal rests on the use of the text to convey meaning and feeling. In order to further examine a text, students need to be taught techniques to find carefully how writers create the perceptually salient features of any writing sample. To demonstrate, Rosenkjar asked groups to discuss certain features of a poem and then share their findings with the class. The class then brainstormed different meanings of the features and discussed ideas that could be supported by the text. In closing, Rosenkjar presented a model of how these techniques could be incorporated into the classroom.

*Reported by Quint Oga-Baldwin*

**Gunma: July—*Multimedia showcase in the age of Web 2.0* by Hideto Harashima.** The evolution of The World Wide Web into Web 2.0 has provided educators with a variety of technological tools, that can be of great use in the classroom, includ-



ing: Text to Speech (TTS) conversion technology for listening materials, podcasting, Skype and Skypecast, Yackpack, blogs, and Google (Google Earth/Gmail/ Google image).

Harashima gave an explanation of the origin and evolution of Web 2.0 and its distinction from Web 1.0. This was followed by a demonstration of TTS technology. The merits of using TTS (with a special focus on Moodle online courses) were discussed, as were evaluation criteria for different TTS engines. Next in the presentation came podcasting, its origins, instructions for creating and using podcasts, as well as integrating podcasts with Skype and TTS. Harashima demonstrated the advantages of, and classroom applications for, Yackpack, Gmail, Google set, and Google image.

*Reported by Harry Meyer*

**Hiroshima: September—Teaching listening and speaking strategies** by **Alistair Graham-Marr**.

Every class should have “take-home value” and each human language has a *social script* which informs its instruction and learning. “Listening,” said Graham-Marr, “is at once a process of speculation...and decoding.” What the student brings to the proposed study material is as important as what the material offers and Graham-Marr repeatedly emphasized the value of extensive listening, arguing that listening should be broken up into sub-skills: i.e., using background, situational knowledge, and understanding centralized vowels. Practicing each technique would, he inferred, lead to a better holistic grasp of the language.

Speaking should also be presented within a framework that illuminates sub-skills, especially the field of communication strategies, where hesitation devices are as important as clarification questions or circumlocution.

Strategies were presented as being doubly important because although each individual’s needs are numerous and unpredictable, a syllabus that tries to polish as many skills as possible would be enormously helpful.

*Reported Ewen Ferguson*

**Ibaraki: September—Mini-Conference at Tsukuba Gakuin University** by **Kevin Knight**. 1) *Motivating learners through pain and pleasure*. Knight explored various unique and effective techniques adapted from corporate training used to build learner confidence, motivation, and performance. 2) *The Global Workforce Development through Business Internship Program at Kanda University of International Studies*. An alternative to traditional internship programs, conference attendees participated in portions of the program in which the students develop business models using English. The course is based on practical experience with close observation at the English Hills Resort in Fukushima.

*Report by Dan Waldhoff*

**Shinshu: September—Encouraging young learners, and their teachers, to communicate in English** by **Sue Fraser Osada**. Fraser Osada gave a quick overview of the theories behind and issues concerning the teaching of foreign languages to children and the practical implementation of these theories. Osada led the participants in considering: 1) the abilities, behavior, and interests of young learners; 2) why foreign languages should be introduced at an early age; 3) how children learn; 4) the ideal teacher of young learners; 5) classroom management; 6) what should be taught; 7) possible problems and pitfalls; and 8) types of foreign language activities for young learners.

Participants tried the activities, placing themselves in the position of young learners. Osada demonstrated how common pitfalls could be avoided through her adaptations of popular activities such as Simon Says (giving instructions), the use of flashcards and puppets, songs, and story reading. Some of these activities were conducted in a language foreign to the participants, reminding teachers of how it feels to be a complete beginner. Osada’s adaptations of activities popular among children are tailored to their mindset, thereby facilitating their acquisition of foreign languages.

*Reported by Mary Aruga*

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## ...with James McCrostie

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following information: location, 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 gender, race, age, or nationality must be modified or will not be included in the JIC column. All advertisements may be edited for length or content.

**Job Information Center Online**

Recent job listings and links to other job-related websites can be viewed at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs/>

## Breaking into an ELT publishing house

After an especially dreadful day teaching an exceptionally difficult class, you may have daydreamed about changing careers. Working for an ELT publishing company might seem more attractive than trying to discipline unruly students. But what would it take to turn such daydreams into reality? To find out more about careers in the publishing industry I asked five publishing company employees about their jobs in Japan.

### 1. What are the entry-level jobs?

Most people start out as a sales representative. This job involves travelling to schools, meeting with teachers, gathering information about what they like and do not like about their textbooks, and, last but not least, trying to sell them your company's books. It also requires working at book fairs and giving presentations.

### 2. What are the necessary qualifications and qualities?

In addition to having a BA, a successful sales rep needs to be a people person. Shy types will find the job stressful at best. For example, you need to be able to walk into a new school and introduce yourself to the office staff and then try to meet the teachers, who may not feel like talking to a sales person. Teaching experience is also important because sales reps meet with teachers everyday and have to speak their language. Other adjectives that popped up during my interviews included: organized, flexible, and determined.

### 3. What level of Japanese do you need?

Sales reps need to be able to use business level Japanese. Similarly, Japanese staff require a high degree of English proficiency.

### 4. How much travel is involved?

Face-to-face meetings remain the best way to gather information and sell books so that means sales reps spend anywhere between 3 to 10 weeks of the year on the road. Plus, autumn weekends tend to be full of book fairs and other events.

### 5. What do people like/not like about their jobs?

Most employees mentioned how much they liked meeting lots of interesting, intelligent people. The need to meet people during the rainy season after carrying a big bag of books to schools located miles from the train station proved less enjoyable. The hours will also be longer and the vacations shorter than many teachers in Japan have probably become accustomed to.

### 6. What kind of advancement opportunities are there?

After a few years working as a sales rep, promotion to a position in marketing, research, or editing is possible. Plus, depending on the company, it may be possible to transfer to an office in another country.

### 7. How would one get their foot in the door?

Some publishers hire more than others but a position somewhere in Japan tends to open up every year. The biggest barrier is that publishers

typically recruit directly rather than post job ads. Therefore, one of the best things you can do is get to know people in the industry. Attend book fairs, present at conferences, and take advantage of opportunities to pilot or review publisher materials.

If you would like to know more about any other teaching related careers please contact the editor with your suggestions.

## Job Openings

The Job Information Center lists only brief summaries of open positions in *TLT*. Full details of each position are available on the JALT website. Please visit <[www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs/](http://www.jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs/)> to view the full listings.

**Location:** Tokyo-to, Shinjuku-ku

**School:** The Society for Testing English Proficiency (STEP)

**Position:** Full-time editor

**Deadline:** 21 Dec 2007

**Location:** Tokyo-to, Hachioji

**School:** Chuo University (Tama Campus), Faculty of Law

**Position:** Part-time teaching positions

**Start Date:** April 2008

**Deadline:** 31 Dec 2007

## COLUMN • CONFERENCE CALENDAR

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### ...with Alan Stoke

<[conferences@jalt-publications.org](mailto:conferences@jalt-publications.org)>



New listings are welcome. Please email information to the column editor by the 15th of the month, at least 3 months before a conference in Japan, or 4 months before an overseas conference. Thus, 15 Dec is the deadline for a March conference in Japan or an April conference overseas. Feedback or suggestions on the usefulness of

this column are also most welcome.

## Upcoming Conferences

**12-14 Dec 07—12th English in South-East Asia Conference: *Trends and Directions***, at King Mongkut's U. of Technology, Bangkok. **Contact:** <[arts.kmutt.ac.th/sola/esea](mailto:arts.kmutt.ac.th/sola/esea)>

**19-21 Dec 07—PAAL2007: 12th Conference of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics**, in Pattaya, Thailand. **Contact:** <[paaljapan.org/conference2007/index.html](http://paaljapan.org/conference2007/index.html)>

**7-11 Jan 08—Responding to Change: Flexibility in the Delivery of Language Programmes**, in Hong Kong and Chiang Mai, Thailand. An international conference sponsored by Hong Kong U. of Science and Technology, and Payap U., Chiang Mai. **Contact:** <[lc.ust.hk/~centre/conf2008/](http://lc.ust.hk/~centre/conf2008/)>

**18-20 Jan 08—Colloquy on Contemporary Issues in Language Education**, at Akita International U. Invited speakers include Batia Laufer (U. of Haifa), Angel Lin (City U. of Hong Kong) and Anne Pakir (National U. of Singapore). **Contact:** <[english@aiu.ac.jp](mailto:english@aiu.ac.jp)> <[www.aiu.ac.jp/pdf/colloquy.pdf](http://www.aiu.ac.jp/pdf/colloquy.pdf)>

**24-26 Jan 08—ThaiTESOL2008: *English Language Teaching: Progress in Practice and Policy***, in Khon Kaen. **Contact:** <[www.thaitesol2.org/index.php](http://www.thaitesol2.org/index.php)>

**7-9 Feb 08—VALS-ASLA Conference 2008: *Changing Societies: Methodological Challenges for Applied Linguistics***, in Lugano, Switzerland. **Contact:** <[www.vals-asla.ch](http://www.vals-asla.ch)>

**8-10 Feb 08—Third International and 39th Annual ELTAI Conference: *Learning to Teach: A Life-Long Journey***, in Chennai, India. **Contact:** <[www.eltai.org/activities.htm](http://www.eltai.org/activities.htm)>

**23-24 Feb 08—Fourth CamTESOL Conference: *Building Bridges to the World***, in Phnom Penh. In English; designed to be practical and of direct benefit to practicing teachers. **Contact:** <[www.camtesol.org/2008conference/Index.html](http://www.camtesol.org/2008conference/Index.html)>

**6-8 Mar 08—ELF Forum: *First International Conference of English as a Lingua Franca***, at U. of Helsinki. **Contact:** <[www.eng.helsinki.fi/ELFforum/](http://www.eng.helsinki.fi/ELFforum/)>



**13-15 Mar 08—AACL2008: American Association for Corpus Linguistics**, at Brigham Young U., Utah. **Contact:** <corpus.byu.edu/aac2008/>

**14-16 Mar 08—GURT08: Telling Stories: Building Bridges among Language, Narrative, Identity, Interaction, Society and Culture**, at Georgetown U., Washington, DC. **Contact:** <www8.georgetown.edu/college/gurt/2008/>

**17-19 Mar 08—International Conference on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning 2008: Innovating Minds, Communicating Ideas: Reinventing Language Teaching and Learning**, at Hilton Petaling Jaya Hotel, Malaysia. **Contact:** <imcicon.mmu.edu.my/index.php>

**29 Mar-1 Apr 08—AAAL2008 Annual Conference**, in Washington DC. Annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics. **Contact:** <www.aal.org/aal2008/index.htm>

**2-5 Apr 08—42nd Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibit: Worlds of TESOL: Building Communities of Practice, Inquiry, and Creativity**, in New York. **Contact:** <www.tesol.org/2008convention>

**7-11 Apr 08—42nd Annual International IATEFL Conference and Exhibition**, in Exeter, UK. **Contact:** <www.iatefl.org/content/conferences/2008/index.php>

**18-20 Jun 08—Language Issues in English-Medium Universities: A Global Concern**, at U. of Hong Kong. **Contact:** <www.hku.hk/clear/conference08>

**25-28 Jun 08—30th Language Testing Research Colloquium: Focusing on the Core: Justifying the Use of Language Assessments to Stakeholders**, in Hangzhou, China. **Contact:** <www.sis.zju.edu.cn/sis/sisht/english/ltrc2008/main.html>

**26-29 Jun 08—Ninth International Conference of the Association for Language Awareness: Engaging with Language**, at U. of Hong Kong. **Contact:** <www.hku.hk/clear/ala>

**3-5 Jul 08—Fifth Biennial Conference of the International Gender and Language Association**, at Victoria U. of Wellington, NZ. **Contact:** <www.vuw.ac.nz/igala5/>

**9-12 Jul 08—ACTA2008: Pedagogies of Connection: Developing Individual and Community Identities**, in Alice Springs. **Contact:** <www.tesol.org.au/conference/>

**10-11 Jul 08—CADAAD2008: Second International Conference of Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines**, at U. of Hertfordshire. **Contact:** <cadaad.org/cadaad08>

**21-26 Jul 08—18th International Congress of Linguists**, at Korea U., Seoul. **Contact:** <cil18.org><bspolsky@gmail.com>

**5-6 Aug 2008—WorldCALL2008: Third International Conference**, in Fukuoka. WorldCALL is a worldwide association of teachers interested in computer-assisted language learning. **Contact:** <www.j-let.org/~wcf/modules/tinyd0/>

**24-29 Aug 08—15th World Congress of Applied Linguistics: Multilingualism: Challenges and Opportunities**, in Essen, Germany. **Contact:** <www.aila2008.org>

### Calls for Papers or Posters

**Deadline: 15 Dec 07 (for 3-4 May 08)—2008 International Conference on English Instruction and Assessment: Change from Within, Change in Between**, at National Chung Cheng U., Taiwan. **Contact:** <www.ccu.edu.tw/flcccu/2008EIA/English/Eindex.php>

**Deadline: 15 Dec 07 (for 31 May-1 Jun 08)—JALT CALL SIG Annual International Conference: New Frontiers in CALL: Negotiating Diversity**, at Nagoya U. of Commerce & Business. The keynote speaker will be Phil Hubbard. The deadline for the second call for papers will be 15 Feb 08. Notification of acceptance is due by 15 Mar 08. **Contact:** <www.jaltcall.org>

**Deadline: 25 Dec 07 (for 23-26 Oct 08)—NCYU 2008 International Conference on Applied Linguistics**, in Taiwan. **Contact:** <web.ncyu.edu.tw/~chaochih/ncyu2008ical.htm>

**Deadline: 10 Jan 08 (for 29 Mar 08)—Wireless Ready: Interactivity, Collaboration and Feedback in Language Learning Technologies**, at NUCB Graduate School, Nagoya. A one-day event to examine the role of wireless learning technologies in language education. **Contact:** <wirelessready.nucba.ac.jp><michael.thomas@nucba.ac.jp>

**Deadline: 25 Jan 08 (for 6-8 Mar 08)—2008 TATESOL Conference: *Language and Music: The Perfect Blend***, in Memphis, Tennessee. **Contact:** <www.tatesol.org/TATESOLFlyerMemphis2008.pdf>

**Deadline: 31 Jan 08 (for 26-28 Jun 08)—Building Connections with Languages and Cultures**, at Far Eastern National U., Vladivostok. **Contact:** <feelta.wl.dvgu.ru/upcoming.htm>

**Deadline: 1 Feb 08 (for 16-20 Jul 08)—11th International Conference on Language and Social Psychology**, in Tucson, Arizona. **Contact:** <www.ialsop.org/Conferences.html>

**Deadline: 15 Feb 08 (for 10-11 May 08)—Seventh Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference 2008: *Diversity and Convergence: Educating with Integrity***, at Doshisha U., Shinmachi Campus. Plenary speakers will be Tim Murphey and Junko Yamanka. To be hosted by the Pragmatics SIG, Testing and Evaluation SIG, Teacher Education SIG, Materials Writers SIG, Other Language Educators SIG, Gender Awareness in Language Education

SIG, Lifelong Language Learning SIG, and Kyoto Chapter. **Contact:** <www.jalt.org/pansig/2008/pansig08/>

**Deadline: 25 Apr 08 (for 31 Oct-3 Nov 08)—JALT2008: 34th JALT International Conference on Language Teaching and Learning & Educational Materials Exposition**, at National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo. **Contact:** <conferences.jalt.org/2008>

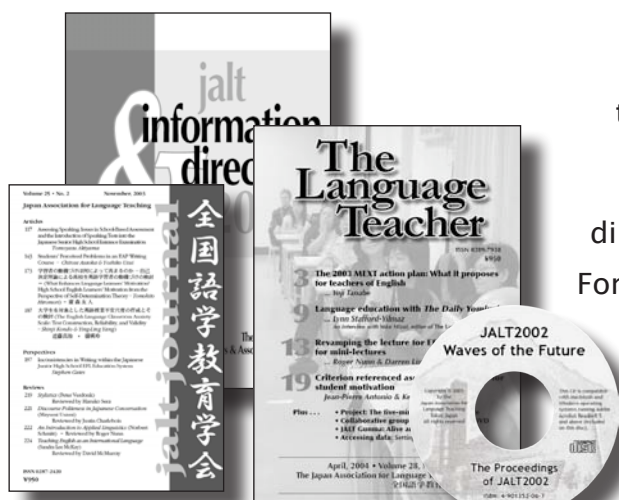
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The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. If accepted, the editors reserve the right to edit all copy for length, style, and clarity, without prior notification 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会(APA)スタイルに基づき、スタックリストページにある各コラムの編集者まで締め切りを留意して、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 sub-headings (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
- include a list of up to 8 keywords for indexing
- 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 list of up to 8 keywords for indexing
- 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-editors.

**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。

**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-editors.

**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、著作権にはお気を付け下さい。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。

**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 in under 750 words
- 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> に関合わせ、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も特に歓迎します。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。

**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: 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, 1½ 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 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。

**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: 15<sup>th</sup> of month, 6 weeks 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コ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、連絡発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 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: 15<sup>th</sup> 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か月前までに、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。

**Chapter Reports.** This column is a forum for sharing synopses of presentations given at JALT chapters around Japan. Submissions must therefore reflect the nature of the column and be written clearly and concisely. Chapters are limited to one report per month. 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 200 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、ご注意ください。

**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。JC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 within an email message 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。



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## The Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT)

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

### Annual international conference 年次国際大会

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

### JALT publications include:

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

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

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

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

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

- IATEFL—International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
- JACET—the Japan Association of College English Teachers
- PAC—the Pan Asian Conference consortium
- TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

## Membership Categories 会員と会費

All members receive annual subscriptions to *The Language Teacher* and *JALT Journal*, and member discounts for meetings and conferences. 会員は*The Language Teacher*や*JALT Journal*等の出版物を購読出来、又例会や大会にも割引価格で参加出来ます。

- Regular 一般会員: ¥10,000
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For more information please consult our website <jalt.org>, ask an officer at any JALT event, or contact JALT Central Office.

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# Old Grammarians...

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

## The TLT weekly blues concert review

**T**HE GREAT blues master Mickey “Sneezy” Portnoy made a dramatic return to the stage Sunday night at the Blue Sheet in Tokyo. After a brief delay caused by the city transit authority inadvertently parking an out-of-service bus in front of the club’s entrance, followed by a rousing opening set by Squelch Control, a local udon-delivery-punk band, Portnoy and the Prorates treated the crowd to an evening of genuine barrelhouse. With upwards of 15 die-hard and nearly dead blues fans in attendance, it was standing room only (chairs were banned from the Blue Sheet after the great Geraldo Riot of 1988).

Until this show, Portnoy had not performed since 4 years ago, when he suffered a near-fatal onstage accident with a cigar roller. Tonight’s comeback marked the third time Sneezy (born Michael Hyperallergenic Portnoy) has renounced retirement and returned to sing his inimitable brand of blues. His original retirement came in 1952, when at a show in Arkansas—his first, as a matter of fact—his agent, promoter, and backup band all discovered at the same time that Mickey could neither sing nor play the guitar. But after 4 years of soul searching and a strict diet of whiskey and cigarettes, Portnoy perfected the gravel-voiced, nose-whistling approach that is his trademark today, and which renders a sense of pitch irrelevant at any rate. (Mastering his guitar technique took considerably longer, and some critics say Portnoy has yet even to start on that leg of his musical journey.)

His second retirement came after the death of Edna, his potted palm. Edna was his second palm, whom he met following a bitter divorce with his first palm, Edna (no relation). That divorce had provided Mickey with some of his deepest, most poignant material, like “Butter My Elbow” and “These Boots Were Made fer Catchin’ Terbacky.” Unfortunately, the loss of his second Edna proved too great a blow for him emotionally, and he announced his retirement during a surprise appearance at a town

hall meeting of the Minter City Chamber of Commerce. His motion to retire, however, was disallowed on a technicality (failure to wipe off the microphone after concluding a statement), so he was immediately pressed back into service and sent on his next tour.

The accident resulting in his third retirement 4 years ago left little doubt in music circles that the world had seen and heard the last of Sneezy Portnoy. So it was to great astonishment—and not a little agitation—that Portnoy’s return to gurgling the blues was announced yet again 2 months ago.

This night at the Blue Sheet was triumphal for Portnoy. In fact, the sight of him making the two-meter walk from the wings to center stage by himself—aided only by a crutch and a bottle of Jim Beam—drew an extended ovation from the crowd. (A wheelchair was provided for his guitar.) He started the set with his standard opener, “Back Matter Blues,” which he traditionally ends with a prolonged bottle-draining tug on his whiskey. Tonight was no exception. He then launched into some of his newer material, including “Ain’t Gonna Give Up On Belgian Waffles” and “Whack-a-Mole Blues.” With each song he slouched further and further down in his seat, making it increasingly difficult to hear his singing, but at the same time serving to highlight the talents of his backing band, The Prorates, who were in fine form.

Portnoy took requests, but as he is legally deaf, none of them were played. Ninety house-rocking minutes later, Rodney Slack, the band’s amazingly gifted trianglist, announced that Sneezy had fallen asleep and that the show was over. There wasn’t a dry nose in the house.

Portnoy and the Prorates will play the Blue Sheet again this weekend, and then will take their set across town to do a special halftime show at the Giants-Swallows game on Sunday. Seeing as baseball doesn’t have a halftime, details on that show are still sketchy as of this writing.

# Building bridges: Instant Messenger Cooperative Development

Andrew Boon, Toyo Gakuen University

## Appendix

### *JALT Research Project: Questionnaire*

Name	Type of institution (e.g. university, high school, language school)
1. What current procedures do you use to work on your professional development?	
2. Are these procedures institutionally-provided or undertaken by yourself?	
3. Have you ever felt isolated as a teacher?    Yes    /    No	
Explain	
<b>THANK YOU</b> I may wish to contact respondents for further information. If it would be okay for me to contact you, please write your email address below:	