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‹jalt.org/conference›

Feature Articles . . .

Readers' Forum . . .

My Share . . .

Book Reviews . . .

accent
argot
articulation
brogue
cant
communication
dialect
diction
dictionary
discourse
doublespeak
expression
gibberish
idiom
interchange
jargon
lexicon
lingua franca
palaver
parlance
patois
phraseology
prose
signal
slang
sound
speech
style
talk
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CONTENTS

Feature Articles

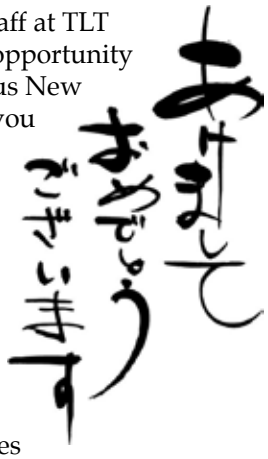
Readers' Forum

Resources

JALT Focus

Columns

In this month's issue . . .



As 2011 is upon us, the staff at TLT would like to take this opportunity to wish you a prosperous New Year. We hope 2011 will bring you much success and professional fulfillment. To help start you off this year, we have put together an issue packed with informative articles, lesson shares, interviews and book reviews.

There are two Feature articles in this edition. The first, by **Peter Burden**, addresses issues of the mechanization of teaching and evaluating at Japanese universities. The second, by **Toshie Agawa et al**., is a good complement to Burden's as it examines the various factors which contribute to demotivation amongst Japanese students at the tertiary level.

In the Readers' Forum section, **Steve Fukuda** and **Naomi Hashimoto** discuss how they promoted the development of a more democratic classroom by giving students the opportunity to take more control of their learning. **David Penner** takes an

Continued over

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***TLT* Coeditors:** Damian Rivers & Jennifer Yphantides
***TLT* Japanese-Language Editor:** Mihoko Inamori

in-depth look at the numerous linguistic and contextual factors that make reading in English problematic for Japanese students. **Mayumi Asaba** and **J. Paul Marlowe** offer tips on using peer assessment in the language classroom and **Daniel Dunkley** reports on an interview he conducted with John Read about measuring student vocabulary.

The My Share column includes a piece by **Azzedine Bencherab** on pre-reading strategies. In addition, **Darby McGrath** provides advice on helping students with citations and references. **Matthew Porter** spices things up with his conversation lesson on hotel English, and **Yukie Saito** discusses using TOEIC Part 2 to help students with indirect speech acts. In Book Reviews, **John Bankier** looks at *Reading Explorer 1, 2, 3 & 4* and **Julian Pigott** reviews *English Firsthand 2, 4th edition*.

Submitting material to *The Language Teacher*

Guidelines

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Japan. As well as for feature articles, readers' forum articles, interviews, and conference reports, we also need material for our many columns.

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To contact the editors, please use the contact form on our website, or through the email addresses listed in this issue of *TLT*.

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We hope you enjoy what we have for you in this issue and that it will contribute to your professional development in meaningful ways! All the best for the New Year.

Jennifer Yphantides, TLT Coeditor

2011年の年頭にあたり、本年が皆様にとって素晴らしい年になり、皆様の成功と専門的成就の年となりますようにTLTスタッフ一同お祈りします。新年のスタートにふさわしく、情報たっぷりの記事、授業のアイディア、インタビュー、書評などを満載しています。

今月号には2つの Feature が掲載されています。まず、Peter Burden が日本の大学における指導と評価の機械化の問題点について論じています。次に、Toshie Agawa et.al.が日本人大学生の学習意欲減退の様々な要因を調査しています。

Readers' Forum では、Steve Fukuda とNaomi Hashimoto が、学生に学習をコントロールする機会を多く与えることで、より民主的な教室をいかに作り上げていったかついて論じます。David Penner が、日本人学生にとって英語読解の問題点となる数多くの言語学的、状況的要因を詳しく調べます。Mayumi Asaba と J. Paul Marlowe が、語学授業で学生による相互評価を用いる際のアドバイスをしています。Daniel Dunkley が、学生の語彙力測定についてJohn Read に行ったインタビューを報告しています。

My Share では、Azzedine Bencherab が、プレリーディング・ストラテジーについて述べています。さらに、Darby McGrath は、学生の引用文献と参考文献に関する助言をしています。Matthew Porter は、ホテル英語に関する会話の授業にスパイスを加えています。Yukie Saito は、学生の間接的発話行為の理解促進のためにTOEIC Part 2を使うことを論じています。Book Reviews には、John Bankier が *Reading Explorer 1, 2, 3, 4* の書評を、Julian Pigott が *English Firsthand 2 (4th edition)* の書評を寄稿しています。

今月号の内容が皆様にとって楽しく、かつ専門性の発展に役立つものであることを祈ります。新年が最高の年になりますように。

Jennifer Yphantides, TLT Coeditor

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The mechanization of teaching: Teachers' metaphors and evaluation in Japanese tertiary education

Keywords
student evaluation, metaphors, teacher improvement, effective teaching

Twelve ELT university teachers reflected, through using metaphors, in interviews about the use of Student Evaluation of Teaching surveys (SETs) in their respective universities. Studying teachers' metaphor reveals their first-hand experience of how they were affected in their teaching by SETs. Metaphors suggest that SETs do not match teachers' conceptions of teaching as an art. Such evaluation has caused relations between teachers, administrators, and students to fracture due to competitive ranking. While participants accept formative evaluation as a necessary process to give insights to teachers, they wish for a more open, improvement-focused, cooperative, specific evaluation. They want more teacher involvement and more dialogue between teachers to discuss the results of SETs to aid the reflective process for change.

各大学での学生による授業評価（SETs）について、12名のELT担当の大学教師へのインタビュー調査を実施し、回答に用いられたメタファー（比喩）を分析した。その結果、SETsで各教師の実際の教え方にどのような影響があったかが明らかになり、SETsと教師側の「教える」という概念とは一致しないことが示唆された。このような評価は、競争的な順位付けをすることで教師側・大学当局側・学生側の関係を壊している。被験者の大学教師達は、教師の自己洞察のために必要な過程として形成的評価を受け入れる一方で、よりオープンで改善を目的とした、連携的で具体的な評価を望んでいる。さらに、SETsの結果に教師がもっと関わり、教師間で意見交換することで授業改善を進めることを希望している。

Peter Burden
Okayama Shoka University

The introduction of student evaluation of teaching

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan has made the implementation of self-evaluation in tertiary education compulsory since 1999 (MEXT, 2004). Reflecting the popularization of higher education, end-of-semester student evaluation of teaching surveys (SETs) have been encouraged in the belief that popular teachers and courses offer student satisfaction, will attract potential students and, for private institutions dependent on fees for income, will make them more able to retain students once they have entered.

In this study, twelve ELT university teachers reflected, through using metaphors, in interviews about the use of SETs in their respective universities. The paper will first outline how SETs are administered in tertiary education and then briefly focuses on contentious areas that have led the author to question the use of SETs from an ELT perspective. After outlining the research methodology in which details are given about the interview style and the participants, the importance of metaphorical expressions which teachers employ when talking about their professional beliefs about evaluation is discussed. Teachers' spontaneous use of metaphors during interviews revealed participants' perceptions of their roles in tertiary education, and the following discussion offers some implications for improving the use of evaluation. These include a greater need for clarity of the evaluation purpose, more 'horizontal' dialogue between

the parties involved in evaluation, and the use of multiple data sources so that evaluation becomes more personally meaningful for teachers.

The administration of SET surveys

SETs in tertiary education in Japan usually utilize paper and pencil questionnaires containing Likert-type 1-5 scales anchored from "Very poor (1)" to "Very good (5)." These questions are coupled usually, but not always, with a final global characteristic of 'overall satisfaction' of the course and 'effectiveness' of the teacher. Many schools require the students to anonymously fill in closed-item questions which are subsequently used for data analysis by the school administration and are the basis for summative scores. Many writers, for example Feldman (1988, p.291), note that if faculty and students do not agree as to what constitutes effective teaching, then faculty members may well be "leery" of students' overall ratings of them. Often, there is not any explicit statement of purpose delivered either to schools or to teachers, or any indication of a remedial path for teachers who receive poor evaluations. While many may see the introduction of SETs ultimately as a benign attempt to encourage teachers to somehow improve or innovate their teaching, for many teachers the lack of any remedial path, the delay in feedback, and the actual timing of the administration suggest a summative decision-making perspective.

Rationale for the study

Gorsuch (2000) argues that knowledge in Japan is traditionally seen in terms of immutable truths so, there is a danger of dissonance through oversimplifying the conditions required for language learning to a set of discrete points instead of recognizing that the "whole is more than the sum of the parts" (Crabbe, 2003, p.27). While Darling-Hammond and Snyder (2000, p.523) suggest that "teaching is becoming more complex in response to increasingly challenging curriculum expectations and growing diversity among students," the emphasis seems to be one of controlling behavior and learning in such a way that they will conform to pre-determined ends or an "identical path to understanding" (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000, p.523).

Recognizing that effective teaching is contextual, if definitions of the constituents of effectiveness are not in place, teachers and administrators may have conflicting expectations (Stronge & Tucker, 1999). This researcher started to hear concerns among English language teaching colleagues when SET surveys began to be administered at the end of a single semester of English education. Is it possible for 'communicative' language teachers who encourage functional language proficiency involving the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning to be evaluated after just a single fifteen-week semester by first-year undergraduates who may not previously have experienced such a teaching approach during six years of junior high and high school English education? Teaching is too important an activity to be conducted without critical inquiry and as there have been insufficient explorations of teachers' perceptions into the introduction of SETs, research focusing on faculty perceptions and how evaluation affects teaching is clearly warranted. To understand teachers' personal understandings of the introduction of teaching evaluation, and whether the use of SETs matches their conceptions of teaching, data from teachers' spontaneous use of metaphors during interviews were collected.

If evaluation through one tool, SETs, is to encourage improvement, the key element of receptivity to this form of evaluation from teachers cannot be ignored, as feeding back useful, diagnostic information creates energy, which can then be directed through reflection into an action plan which leads to development.

SETs and the use of metaphor

Reform in Japanese education has been described as top-down (Gorsuch, 2000), but made opaque through the "extraordinary reluctance to clarify, define, and articulate policy" by MEXT (Miyoshi, 2000, p.681). While evaluation should be seen as "an agent of supportive program enlightenment and change" (Norris, 2006, p.578), it can be argued that if evaluation is left to the end of a course, it loses any opportunity to inform and influence teaching. The longevity of SETs use in America may suggest presumptive 'evidence' for the benefits, but studies considering the institutional effects on teachers are "scarce or non-existent." (Kulik, 2001, p.15).

It is fruitful to consider what sorts of metaphors teachers use to refer to evaluation, how the metaphors are used, and to discuss what implications can be drawn from teachers' metaphor. They serve as "pattern making devices" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.225), placing the metaphors into the larger context of evaluation and the teachers' position within the current evaluation method. Metaphor also "captures the thinking of teachers in their own language, rather than in the language of the researcher" (Munby, 1986, p.198), while De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) suggest that teachers employ metaphorical expressions when talking about their professional beliefs, which reflect how teachers understand their world.

As metaphors reveal "tensions, surprises, confusion, challenges and dilemmas" (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, & Stackman, 2003, p.143), an examination of metaphor use can encourage reflection on the relationships teachers have with other stakeholders—students, colleagues, parents, and administrators.

Method

Twelve tertiary English language teaching (ELT) faculty were asked to outline their perceptions of the introduction of SETs in their tertiary institution through interviews. The interview questions were flexible and encouraged teachers to reflect on their first-hand experience of how they were affected in their daily teaching by the introduction of SETs. A range of perspectives from both male and female ELT teachers was sought to enhance credibility (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Seven male and five female teachers from five different universities—one national and four private universities—in one city in Western Japan participated. Their ages ranged from early 30s to late 50s, while their teaching experience in the tertiary sector ranged from one year to close to thirty years. The two Japanese teachers of English in this study were full-time tenured faculty. Seven of the ten expatriates had lower-status, limited term contracts and the remaining three were tenured. As evaluation is inherently political, anonymity and confidentiality procedures were outlined, and participants understood that the tape-recorded interviews would be transcribed verbatim.

The interviews took place approximately two months after teachers had administered evaluation during the final weeks of the second semester ending in early February. It was assumed that the university administration had had sufficient time to analyze and send the data back to teachers in anticipation of the new school year starting in mid-April. However, none of the teachers had received feedback despite the two-month gap.

Findings

Findings suggest that teachers feel threatened by the introduction of SETs and are concerned about the purpose and consequences of this form of evaluation. Participants' metaphors reveal their lack of involvement, voice, and feelings of distance from power holders, which often encourages an absence of trust in accepting organizational change.

Metaphors to describe those who devised SETs items

The participants feel threatened by the opaque evaluation purpose and use uninformed speculations while disparaging others they have not met. Participants have little confidence in the ability of administrators who wrote the questions. Administrators are seen as "powers that be," "big cheeses," or "old farts" and "groups of little men" who form "nameless committees" and "get together" in "darkened rooms" and whose views are not consonant with teachers' educational goals and conceptions of teaching. Questions are seen as "outdated" and "irrelevant," being written "about a million years ago" by some "Japanese statistician type" or by "someone in the hard sciences a long time ago." One teacher compared the questionnaires to dictionaries which build on the original corpus and only slowly change over passing years.

Participants' feelings of unease about the role of the administration reflect findings in Ryan, Anderson, and Birchler (1980), which suggested that SETs usage increased the distance between faculty and administration. In the current administrative climate, participants fear they are evaluated unfairly because consequences of SETs are often unknown as stakeholders hold different purposes for evaluation, and so considerations

of what or who the evaluation serves is far from clear. While the developmental formative nature of evaluation is often recognized in English language teaching literature (see Hedge, 2000), without clear description, teacher understanding is incomplete and so teachers do not understand which behaviors to improve, which to retain, and what the likely consequences of this form of evaluation are.

Metaphor to describe evaluation as a form of consumer satisfaction

For participants, another focus of evaluation is to directly improve the quality of student satisfaction so "the goal is getting more students and keeping them in business" so they become "cash cows" and should not be "let go for four years." Therefore, participants suggest that evaluation has become a "popularity contest" and, while those teachers whose "little numbers and charts" look "good" are safe, universities can say to "poor" teachers in the face of declining admissions: "You've had consistently low evaluations and we don't need your services any more." Evaluation is seen as a "marketing tool" to "sell" the school and if teachers are "not jumping up and down in class" the students may not perceive it as enthusiasm and so give a poor overall global evaluation. One participant suggests that "popular teachers" can get a "good reputation" and can "make the school money" in "fun" classes. Schools' survival is addressed through evaluation - "because the kids basically walked in doesn't mean that they're going to stay" as students may drop out due to a lack of immediate "satisfaction." This caused one teacher to ponder:

> I know I shouldn't feel scared or uncomfortable by doing this because teachers should be evaluated. I think students have to be satisfied but at the same time they don't know how to study, they don't know what the good education is so we have to make them do things they don't want to do. Even though they hate it, it doesn't mean that the teacher is a bad teacher. This is the difficulty. One teacher said, "Of course I get the bad scores because they don't want to study." So he knows that he isn't popular.

The issue of "popularity" is a fundamental issue for another participant who says the degree of preparation, or "hidden labor" is not addressed through evaluation while he hears students complaining of workloads. He says:

> You could be a real, quote, "strict" teacher. I tend to give a lot of homework and the comments are, "You make us work too hard." But I don't think that it's too hard. It depends on your interpretation. I think they can handle it. I think the work they do outside the classroom is just as important as in it. They've got to bring English into their daily lives so I have them doing things outside and then I get complaints.

However, he worries that "if student complaints are reflected on here [evaluation forms] then I'm a bad teacher." Participants suggested that classes where content is not emphasized will lead to "dumbing down" because teachers will need students to have "a good time" so that "appropriate" education becomes secondary to an education the student "wants," which is problematic when students enter school with little initial academic interest. Participants suggest the competition for students means that teachers need to be a "draw" to attract students through word of mouth, which may promote speculation and tension among contracted teachers with regards to their future employment.

Metaphors to describe fracturing relationships

Similarly, participants are "wary" of ranking teachers in "league tables" which emphasize "winning and losing" as they can can lead to "a competitive win-lose situation" (Braskamp & Ory, 1994, p.7) where faculty learn little about "*how* to improve, only that they *should*" (p.6). This decline in collaboration and dialogue has led to harboring bitter feelings expressed through metaphor towards colleagues, especially teachers of "conversation." These classes are seen as "fun," "non-challenging classes" with colleagues who "play games," "jump around" and "act like a jack-in-the-box." This resentment may well stem from a belief that the evaluation "playing field" is not even, with evaluation being unfair as it is only used to judge part-timers. One

participant has heard of tenured faculty with "poor" evaluations being retained at the expense of part-timers with better scores. Participants are suspicious of others' teaching methods, the ability of students to appreciate and evaluate "academic" classes, and whether teachers manipulate evaluation data to inflate their scores. As the parameters are unclear, teachers question, "When is 'good' good enough?"

Perhaps paradoxically, while many teachers seem to oppose the use of SETs for summative purposes, they lament the teaching performance of those around them. Most participants implement their own evaluation to aid reflection on their own practice, but point to a lack of professionalism of those around them. Participants talk of "dead wood," suggest that tenured, full-time university teachers "go through the motions" or "fall into ruts" or "comfortable routines," and "devalue teaching because it gets repetitive." Comments above may reflect different levels of evaluative scrutiny for tenured or non-tenured faculty, similar to Nasser and Fresko's (2002) findings where few tenured faculty reported changing their teaching as a result of course evaluations.

Metaphor as an expression of conceptions of teaching

Participants saw their teaching through metaphors of "art," which suggests "a unique set of personal skills" (Freeman & Richards, 1993, p.206). As one participant says:

> I can feel when the kids are tired or preoccupied. But I'm sure there are teachers who wouldn't feel anything. Teaching is not a craft or a skill you can learn, or a set of techniques. Art is something that is inside that I can develop. Other teachers are more mechanical; it's more like they've studied techniques and things. I feel I pick it up as I go; I develop it and can see it working and feel when something worked or didn't work.

He feels evaluation reinforces a view of teaching as a set of techniques which can be learned but which do not form a "complete teacher." He suggests teachers need to have the "space" to "develop" ideas and to experiment even at the risk of failure. However, SETs surveys reinforce specific faculty teaching behaviors, and "may constrict teaching styles rather than encouraging a diversity of classroom strategies" (Braskamp & Ory, 1994, p.182). Another participant commented:

> The questions are predetermined by administrators who know little about teaching, and who actually determine what techniques should be used. In the same sense that a textbook assumes a certain method or approach, evaluations show techniques a teacher is required to use. Evaluation is not responding to the humanity of the teachers or students. Knowledge for me is something that they can discover for themselves, but as it is a foreign language it's not something inside them; to discover from examples by themselves is a good way but just to sit and tell them this is what we do here- I don't think that's an effective way - getting them to reach answers for themselves is the best way.

For a third participant, rather than behaviors or "techniques," teaching is a "creative process" which requires constant reflection leading to "refinement" and "development." While teaching can be "learned" like mathematics so that "there are practices you can follow so that anyone can carry out a teaching job," unreflective teachers are "unempathetic," while "good teachers" can "know when [they've] caught the audience and can lead them to tears or laughter." Other participants suggest similar metaphors, seeing their roles as a "magician" or "a creator" who "creates the sequence or order to best fit the students in different classes," or, again, as an artist being creative in order to hold onto, and encourage, interpersonal relations and positive attitudes.

Another teacher illustrates the irrelevance of the evaluation drawing a distinction between teachers' concerns with the day-to-day running of classes—"the small details and things like atmosphere"—and the university interest in the "framework" or the "published, visible side" of what teachers do inside the classroom. Therefore, participants have little confidence in the ability of power holders whose views are not consonant with teachers' educational goals and conceptions of teaching.

Metaphor as an expression of teacher programming

Teachers see a "robotic" or "cloning" metaphor implicit in SETs and its representation of teaching as "teacher programming." One teacher observed that:

> It makes clones out of everybody; do this and this and this and you'll be an acceptable teacher. Yet every teacher has a different personality…you have to watch what other teachers do and listen to the students and if you want to know whether a teacher is effective or not you need to know a lot more than the answers to a few questions.

"A robot could do that" [the teaching implied by the evaluation], while "it could be programmed," with the questions seen as "limiting" because they emphasize the "little aspects of teaching" and so "diminish the trust of teachers." It is suggested that the "Ministry" is trying to project an image of a "correct institution" which "squashes the teaching style." There is a lack of a shared sense that SETs reflect important aspects of teaching, and the use is not consonant with teachers' educational goals and conceptions of teaching. An extended quote from one of the participants serves as a useful summary:

> SETs evaluation is based on the concept of the class as a lecture and somewhere in here maybe the bureaucratic control the belief is that there is a good way to teach…these questions are a good way to teach. If you can do XYZ then you're a good teacher and breaking down teaching into these nice little categories that are numerically controlled.

Another laments: "I would like to say my job is a profession but it's just a job." Giroux's (1988) school-as-factory metaphor comes to mind as SETs reduce teaching to basic, predetermined skills to quantify and make tangible figures out of teaching. Teachers learn to understand and change their work behavior by continually examining, analyzing, hypothesizing, theorizing and reflecting as they work (Schön, 1983). Teachers' valuing evaluation and using feedback depends on how the teaching act is construed, and there is little in evaluation which considers the 'thought' behind teaching.

Discussion

Increasingly, the introduction of student evaluation of teaching is seen to "focus on the abilities of teachers" (MEXT, 2001), but the underlying conception of what *good* teaching entails and how it can be encouraged has not been made clear.

All of the participants accept that *formative* evaluation is necessary as a process to give insights to teachers. The participants suggested they often administer self-generated student evaluations which offer students opportunities to provide additional, qualitative comments about the course, the teaching and the teacher, as well as to evaluate their own course performance. However, they all wished for a more open, improvement-focused, cooperative—but specific—institutional evaluation. They want more teacher involvement, more dialogue between teachers to discuss the results to aid the reflective process for change, and the removal of the pervasive atmosphere of secrecy that surrounds data results.

Openness about the process encourages knowledge of both the purpose and what happens to the surveys after they leave the classroom. It should also be made clear how important each student's opinion is, how the opinions impact on non-tenured teachers and on elective classes. If the university evaluating body has criteria by which the evaluations are reviewed these should be made known; if there is an overall objective to which teachers are supposed to be working it would be useful to know what that is so that classes might be adjusted. While teachers do not wish to take a lot of student time, more specific questions would push students to think more about answers. Also underpinning SETs are judgments from an accountability perspective whereby there is an assumption that all students pursue an identical path to understanding. This view erodes individual teacher's artistic and intuitive knowledge. There is a loss of a "sense of involvement of teachers" (Prabhu, 1990, p.172) as the participants distanced themselves from mechanical SETs. One participant sees evaluation as personally irrelevant to his notions of improvement as he sees teaching as a personal, sharing act, from which knowledge grows. He does not see education in terms of "concrete" improvement.

Teachers also suggest that using other evaluation methods would create more of a balance and useful feedback. One participant says:

> Well, I would want that decision not to be based solely on one thing. Any kind of assessment needs to have multiple sources. However these universities are understaffed and overworked and they don't have any money and they don't care.

All of the teachers suggest that using SETs as the sole criterion for evaluating teachers is flawed. As another participant says:

> Students should be given every opportunity to give feedback to teachers about their teaching. If they cannot, then the teacher is missing a vital perspective on the effectiveness of lessons taught. However, this should be balanced with the views of one's colleagues. I feel that if the survey were balanced with some form of peer review, such as classroom observation and feedback, then it would be a more valuable exercise. Evaluation only by one's students seems a dangerous path for education and educators and worrying for the future development of Japanese education.

Using other evaluation methods would create more balanced, useful feedback. Instead of easy to administer SETs, peer review would enable teachers to learn from each other, while self-evaluation would encourage deeper reflection, without "condemning" teachers. Rating teachers on low-inference, observable behavior as the sole basis for judgments is still widespread, contradicting the recommended use of multiple sources (Seldin, 1993). Even *if* SETs are intended for formative development, many teachers do not gain any new knowledge as they question the value of the source of information. Utilizing focus groups may be one way forward for authentic teaching improvement through representatives of students, teachers, parents, and administrators discussing evaluation in a peer-group context.

Conclusion

The relation between MEXT who impose evaluation, school administrators who introduce individual school evaluation mechanisms, and the teachers who carry out evaluation, is problematic. Teachers have legitimate concerns over the use of data and everyone involved—faculty, administrators, and students—need to discuss how the data should be collected, who should receive the data before any SETs are collected, and how those results are used. Also, participants' metaphors suggest the need for more teacher involvement and ownership and more dialogue between teachers to discuss the results. This would aid the reflective process for change and remove both competitive feelings and the pervasive atmosphere of secrecy that surrounds data results.

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大学生の英語学習における動機減退要因の予備調査

Keywords
demotivation, amotivation, anxiety, self-efficacy, L2 self 動機減退、無動機、不安、自己効力感、L2セルフ

This research focused on EFL learners' demotivation and investigated what affective factors were related to Japanese EFL learners' demotivation and whether or not English learners' demotivated attitudes were unique to English study. 122 university students completed two self-evaluation questionnaires using Likert scales. Factor analyses were run on the responses, and correlations between factors were examined. One of the resulting factors was amotivation, which positively correlated with an aversion to making an effort, resistance to grammar and vocabulary learning, and anxiety about using English. The results indicated that demotivated English learners tend to make less effort. This likely lowers their competence, which in turn may raise their anxiety of using English. Furthermore, examination of aversions to making an effort implies that demotivated English learners tend to have an insular mentality, and show difficulty in making an effort which was not exclusive to English.

本論では、EFL学習者の「動機減退（demotivation）」に注目し、どのような要因が英語学習におけるdemotivationと結びついているのか、またdemotivationは英語学習に限ったことなのかを調査した。122名の大学生による2つのアンケート調査の回答を因子分析し、下位尺度間相関を調べた。その結果、特に、「無動機（amotivation）」要因は「文法・語彙学習への抵抗感」、「努力嫌い」、「英語使用への不安」との間に正の相関が見られた。動機づけの低い学習者は、あまり努力をせず英語の習熟度も低くなりがちで、英語使用への不安や、英語に限らず努力することが苦手だという傾向がみられた。

Preliminary study of demotivating factors in Japanese university English learning

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背景

第2言語習得（SLA）の分野において、学習者がいかにして動機づけされるのか、また学習者に本来内在するとされる「学びたい」という動機をどのように伸ばしていくのかということに関する研究は、理論的また実践的にも近年大きく発展してきた。その議論の前提にあるのは、学習者がすでに学ぶ意欲をもっているということである。しかし日本の大学で、特に基礎教育必須科目としての英語学習において教師が直面するのは、英語を学ぶ意欲が見られない学生たちが多く存在しているという現実である。

こうした学ぶ意欲の喪失や減退は、動機の促進という光に対し影のように存在しうるもので、demotivationに関しての知見が深まれば、逆に学習者の動機づけに活かせる可能性がある (Zang, 2007) といえる。しかしその要因、解決の糸口などについては、ごく最近まで看過されてきたのが実情である(Dörnyei, 2005)。

学習者が動機を失っていく段階をNakata (2006)では1) demotivation, 2) amotivation, 3) learned helplessnessとその症状の軽い段階から重い段階へ分類している。最初の段階のdemotivationと次の段階のamotivationとの違いに関しては、demotivationを元々はあったやる気が何らかのきっかけで減退している、あるいは無くなっている状態とし、amotivation を“a lack of motivation”、すなわち、それまでの経験の積み重ねにより、期待される結果が自分にとって非現実的で、達成能力がないと感じる状態としている。最終段階のlearned helplessnessは、すべての事に対して無力感にさいなまれて何もやろうとしない状態と分類されている(p.93)。

大学で英語を教えている教師からは、英語学習にみられるやる気の無さは、学習や生活態度全般に及ぶのではないか、との指摘もある。英語において、予習・復習をすることの大切さを唱えても、そのような習慣が無い場合は定着しづらいのでは、という懸念がある。この場合、教科の学習の根底にある、学習者のdemotivationという問題点の共有や包括的な視点の必要性が論じられる。

こうした懸念の裏づけとして、家庭学習全般に関して、その習慣がほとんど無い生徒の割合が、小学校から中学、高校と年を追うごとに大きくなる傾向にあるという報告がある。 その報告によれば、小学生では「家庭学習」を「ほとんどしない」割合は3割弱であるが、その比率は中学2年生では6割強、高校2年生では8割近くになる(久冨, 2005:148)。そしてこれら高校卒業生の半数以上が大学に進学しているのが現状である。

加えて、学びたいという動機と社会における自分像との関わりに対して、次のような指摘もなされている。「自分はこうありたい」、「こうあるべきである」という自分像が、帰属している社会に存在するか否かによって、そこへ向かう原動力としての学習者の動機と深く関わるということである (Higgins, 1998)。日本における英語学習でいえば、こうありたいと望む理想の自分像として、英語を使いこなす未来の自分が社会の中に描けるのであれば、学習者はその自分像を目標点として努力を重ねていくことができる。

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) では、学習者のこうした自分像に関して、第2言語という観点から考察を加え、英語という第2言語 (L2) を習得し使うことが自分像に内包されているかどうかを意味する“L2 Self”という概念を提示している。このことは裏返せば、学習者は、英語を習得することが将来あるべき自分の姿に関連が無ければ目標を見失い、学習意欲が失われる可能性がある。

これらを踏まえ本調査のリサーチ・クエスチョンは、被験者が英語学習の意欲を無くした経験があるのであれば、1) どのような要因が英語学習におけるdemotivationと結びついているのか、そして2) demotivationは英語学習に限ったことなのか、それともむしろ学習全般や生活態度に関連があることなのか、の2点である。

先行研究 (demotivation)

垣田ほか (1993) は学習意欲を高める要因を3つ挙げている。それによると同じ要因が意欲増進を導いたり、反対に、意欲喪失の原因になったりするとされている。同様に考えてみれば、意欲減退も同じように大きく3つの要因に分けられよう(p.25)。

1. 環境の要因—社会環境、家庭環境、学校の物理的・精神的雰囲気など
2. 教授の要因—教材、教授法、教授の質(教育機器、学習形態、授業時数、評価方法など)、教師など
3. 生徒自身の要因—身体的・精神的健康、性格、情緒傾向、知能、適性、興味、態度、英語学習の目的・到達目標、欲求、英語学習背景や英語学習の方法・習慣など

まず、意欲減退を促す学習者の環境として、1) が示すように社会的環境要因をはじめ、家庭的環境要因があると考えられる。社会的環境要因に関しては、以前の日本が外国語能力を全体には求めない社会、すなわち外国語能力は仕事の上で一部の習熟者にのみ求めるのにとどまっていたことがその遠因であったとされる (伊村, 2003:28) 。しかし近年、外国語能力 (特に英語力) に対する期待が急速に増し、例えば2006年の経済財政諮問会議ではTOEIC700点以上の取得者の倍増計画が掲げられた。外国語能力習得の重視と目標値への到達が自分の能力では非現実的であるといった心理状態が、英語学習に対する反発につながることもあると考えられよう。

しかし多くの研究が2) の教授による要因を意欲減退の要因としている。特に教師の態度が大きく影響すると結論づけている研究が多い。荒井(2004) は日本の大学生への調査結果から教師が意欲喪失の要因の50％近くを占めることを指摘したが、その内訳で最も多かったのは、「生徒に対する接し方」で、教師と学習者との間の「十分な意思疎通や信頼関係」の希薄さが意欲減退につながることを示している。Hasegawa (2004) では日本の中学・高校生の英語授業内での意欲減退の要因を調査し、クラスの雰囲気に加え、教師に対する不満がその顕著な要因であるという結果を得ている。Zhang (2007) は日本をはじめ、アメリカ、中国、ドイツの4カ国の大学生への調査を通して、どの国でも共通して教師の態度、特に教授能力の欠如が意欲減退の大きな要因であると述べている。

3) が示す学習者が要因となる意欲減退には、テストの結果の低さ、海外滞在中の不快な経験、友人との不愉快なエピソードなどが考えられる。山森 (2004) は定期テスト等の結果に関する自己効力感の欠如などにより意欲が減退することを指摘している。Tsuchiya (2006 a, b) は入学直後の大学1年生129名を成績の高低によって分け、その意欲減退要因を調べ、成績のよい学生では内的な要因よりも外的な要因が意欲減退の要因となり、成績の悪い学生の場合は「自信のなさ」が意欲減退の要因となると述べた。

次の2つは日本人を対象として意欲減退の要因を明らかにすることを試みた最新の研究である。Kikuchi and Sakai(2009)では112名の大学生を対象に高校での英語学習経験についてのアンケート調査を行い、Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) では高校生656名を対象とした意欲減退の研究を行っている。2つの研究では、意欲減退の因子がそれぞれ5つ抽出された。そのうち4つは「不十分な教室設備」、「教師の教授能力と教授スタイル」、「学習内容と教材」、「テストの得点」で両研究に共通しているが、1つのみは異なっており、それは前者では「コミュニカティブではない教授法」、後者では「内発的動機づけの欠如」であ

る。その違いは、前者の大学生を対象とした研究では全ての因子は外発的なものであったのに対し、高校生の場合は、「内発的動機づけの欠如」という内発的な因子があったことである。

上記の荒井 (2004) にも指摘されているように外国語学習におけるdemotivationに関しての研究は希少である。そしてそれらの研究は英語の授業における学習者の体験を基に作られ、英語学習に限ったものが多い。本調査では、リサーチ・クエスチョンの１つである、demotivationは英語に限らないのではないか、という英語教師の疑問に関しての質問項目を加え、1) や3) などにも及ぶdemotivation要因に関しても調査した。

メソッド

参加者は首都圏の3大学に通う122名の1年生－4年生で、うち1年生が大半の69名を占めている（男子32名、女子90名）。ほとんどが文系の学生で、122名中64名は外国語学部などの英語に関連の深い学部生、他の55名はこれらの学部以外の文系学部の学生である。参加者の英語力を知る指標としては英検・TOEFL・TOEICの項目があるが、参加者のほとんどが受験をしていたのは英検のみで、準2級取得者が39名と最も多く、次いで3級の33名だった。

リサーチ・メソッドとしては、Dörnyeiの『外国語教育学のための質問紙調査入門』(p. 57)をもとに作成した項目をプールし、その中から、英語学習に対しての不安や苦手意識などの情意要因が demotivation と結びつくかということに関しての項目をまとめて質問紙1とした。また、学生のやる気の無さは英語に限らないのではないかという疑問に関して、英語学習その他の学習に対する考え方をまとめて質問紙2とした（Appendix）。アンケート調査は秋学期に10分程度の時間を費やして行われた。

これらの項目に、4段階 (1. とてもあてはまる－4. 全然あてはまらない) のリッカート・スケールを用いて、参加者に回答してもらった。件数を奇数 (5件法など) にすると, あまり考えずに真ん中のカテゴリー「どちらでもない」、「中ぐらい」を選ぶ回答者がいると思われるため (Dörnyei, 2003) である。

データはSPSSを用いて因子分析し、下位尺度間相関を調べた(Pearson)。アンケート裏面には自由記述の欄を設け、アンケート項目に挙げられている項目以外で、学生が意欲を無くす原因となったことなどがあれば記入してもらうこととした。自由記述で出された意見については、学習動機減退に関するコメントのみを抽出した。

結果と考察

アンケート回収後、英語学習に対しての不安や苦手意識などの情意に関しての質問紙（質問紙1）の10項目と、英語学習その他の学習に対する考え方についての質問紙（質問紙2）の10項目についてそれぞれ主因子法・プロマックス回転による因子分析を行った。2つ以上に負荷する項目、十分な負荷量を示さなかった項目を除きながら因子分析を繰り返し、質問紙1では4因子が抽出された（表1）。しかしそのうち1つの因子は、信頼性係数が低かった（α =.28）ため除いた（表1、第4因子）。残る第1～第3因子のα係数は、それぞれα=.68, α=.66, α=.62と許容できる値が得られたため、それぞれを「英語への苦手意識」、「英語使用への不安」、「文法、語彙学習への抵抗感」と名づけた。同様の手順を踏んで、質問紙2では3因子が抽出された（表2）が、そのうち1つの因子はα係数が低く（α =.50）除外した（表2、第2因子）。残る第1、第3因子についてはそれぞれα=.77, α=.72と、十分な信頼性が得られたため、これらを「無動機」、「努力嫌い」と命名した。最終的に質問紙1と質問紙2であわせて5因子が抽出されたところで、これら5因子すべてについて下位尺度間相関をみた。その結果、「無動機」、「苦手意識」、「文法、語彙学習への抵抗感」について、他のすべての因子との間に相関がみられた。このうち「無動機」に含まれる項目には、「外国（英語圏も含む）の言語や文化、人に興味がない」、「何のために英語を勉強しているのか分からない」などがある。したがって、この下位尺度得点が低いほど英語学習者は、統合的動機、道具的動機ともに持ち合わせておらず、無動機に近い状態であることを表すといえる。本調査は英語学習者の動機減退に焦点を当てており、動機減退の帰着点である無動機の状態について知ることは、動機減退のメカニズムについて知見を得ることにつながると考える。また、分析から「無動機」は他のすべての因子と相関があることが示された。したがって、ここでは「無動機」と他の因子との関連について議論し、これらの因子が動機減退とどのように結びついているかについて考察を加える。

「無動機」は「文法・語彙学習への抵抗感」、「努力嫌い」との間に正の相関 (それぞれr = .42, p <.01; r =.28, p <.01) がみられ (表3)、動機づけの低い学生達による、英語学習に向けての取り組み不足が示された。また、「努力嫌い」に含まれる項目は「コツコツと努力することが苦手」と「忍耐力や持続力があまりないと思う」の2つである。このことから、この因子の下位尺度得点が低い者は、英語に限らず、努力や忍耐が要求される物事に取り組むのが苦手だと考えられる。この「努力嫌い」と「無動機」の間に弱い正の相関が見られたことで、英語に対する動機づけの低い学生は、他の教科や日常生活においても、やる気や根気を持って取り組むことができない可能性があることが示唆された。このことは、「家庭学習をしない割合が高校2年生で8割近くに及ぶ」、とのリサーチ結果 (久富, 2005) とも符合し、こうした教室外での学習状況に関しても議論の必要性が示唆された。

さらに、動機づけの低い学習者は英語使用への不安が高い傾向にあることも示された（r = .41, p <.01）。彼らが努力嫌いであったり、文法や単語の学習への抵抗感があったりすることを考え合わせると、動機づけの低い学習者は英語の成績や、ひいては習熟度も低くなりがちだと考えられよう。英語の成績の低い学習者は自己効力感が低い傾向にある（Templin, 1999）ことから、努力不足が自己効力感の低下を介して英語使用の不安に結びついていると考えることもできよう。山森 (2004) は、定期テストの点数の低下が自己効力感の低下をもたらし、それが動機減退につながることを指摘している。本研究では参加者の成績に関する調査は行わなかったが、英語学習への取り組み不足は当然習熟度の低下につながると考えられるため、山森の調査でみられるように、習熟度や成績の低下が自己効力感の低下をひきおこし、動機づけの減退につながっている可能性を示唆できよう。だだし、もともと不安の大きい学習者が、発言の機会の多い英語授業に対して拒否反応を示して英語学習への取り組みを行わなくなるなどという可能性もあり、この点について結論づけるにはさらなる調査が必要である。

これらの結果が示唆しているのは、苦手意識や英語使用に関しての不安をなるべく抱かせないよう自己効力感の低下を招かないような指導の重要性であろう。しかし、単語力や文法の習得が、元来こつこつと努力をした積み重ねによってなされていくことを考慮すれば、教師が学習

者の英語使用に関しての不安を少なくしながら自己効力感を持たせるために孤軍奮闘したとしても、動機減退の打開策を打ち出そうとするのは困難にみえる。また、本調査結果の因子分析により浮上した「無動機」要因から導き出されるのは、学習者における道具的動機の存在の希薄さや、英語を使う自分像“L2 Self”(Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009) を確立しようとしない学習者の姿であり、それはグローバリズムの潮流とは別のものである。教室を離れた学びのあり方や、学習者の自律的な努力、その積み重ねの上に培われる進歩の実感やその結果向上していく自己効力感の重要性に関しては、今後英語にとどまらぬ教科を超えた連携の必要性が示唆された。

また、荒井 (2004), Hasegawa (2004), Zhang (2007) は、教師の態度が学習者のやる気に大きな影響を及ぼすと主張しているが、今回の自由記述のアンケートで得られた回答の中にも、英語学習者の動機減退の要因が教師にあることを示すものが見られた。例えば、学生の誤りに対して教師から叱責や嘲笑された経験がやる気を無くす要因となったという記述がみられた (2件)。教師の励ましがかえって精神的な負担になる、という記述もみられた (1件)。また、学生自身は進歩したつもりでも、「進歩していない」と教師から指摘されると落胆するという記述があった (1件)。上記のような先行研究の結果や自由記述回答から、学習者の動機づけを構成する要素として教師の態度が含まれる可能性は十分にあると考えられる。今後調査を行う際は、自由記述だけでなくスケール尺度のアンケートにおいても学習動機と教師の関連が示唆されるよう、質問項目を見直すなどの必要がある。

教室で実践するための示唆として、やる気を無くしている英語学習者に対して、授業を自分自身の学びへとどう繋げるかということの指導が望まれる。例えば、予習・復習の積み重ねや、理解できなくとも簡単には諦めないといった学習態度を身につけさせることは肝要であろう。また自国以外の文化や言語に対する興味や関心を抱かせる工夫や、英語の持つlingua francaとしての役割を認識させることも必要であろう。さらに、英語習得に向けて努力することによって、己の内なる国境を超えた社会の中で、自己の存在意義を見つけたり、英語を使うことのできるL2 Selfを確立したりする可能性を示すことも、学習者が学ぶ動機を取り戻すきっかけに繋がるであろう。

結論

以上の結果をまとめると、次のようなことが言える。本研究では動機づけの低い学習者は、努力が苦手で文法・語彙学習への抵抗感があることが示されており、英語学習への取り組み不足が生じていると推測することができる。また、他の教科の学習や日常生活上の困難に対しても、やる気と忍耐力を持って臨むのが苦手なのではないかと考えられる。英語学習においては、この努力不足が習熟度と自己効力感の低下を介し、英語使用の不安に結びついている可能性が示唆される。ただし、因果関係の結論づけにはさらなる分析が必要である。

今回の調査で、因子として抽出されたものの、信頼性係数が低かったためにその後の分析結果の検討から省いたものがあった。また自由記述式アンケートや先行研究の結果から因子の存在が示唆されているものの、4件法アンケートにおいては、因子分析の結果、因子として採用するには至らなかったものもあった。今後、このような結果を参考に質問項目を見直し、アンケートの改良を行う必要がある。

また下位尺度間の相互相関をみることによって、英語学習者の動機減退と結びついているいくつかの因子間に関連があることが明らかになったが、これらの因子が英語学習への動機減退を引き起こしているのか、逆に英語学習への動機づけが低いことが要因でこれらの因子との相関関係がみられたのか、あるいは双方が影響しあっているのかなどについては、明らかにできなかった。「無動機」は複数の因子との間で相関がみられたため、これらの因子がお互いにどのように影響しあっているのかを探ることによって、大学生の英語学習に対する動機減退の要因を究明することができるかもしれない。この点を今後の研究課題としたい。

注:この調査は科学研究費助成金研究本研究の予備調査として行ったものである。

表1. 質問紙1の因子分析の結果

	1	2	3	4
Q9	**.76**	.24	.17	.01
Q8	**.74**	.27	.09	.10
Q17	**-.41**	.05	.00	-.02
Q10	.13	**.67**	.11	.39
Q11	.18	**.64**	.17	.02
Q16	.02	**.56**	.01	-.06
Q12	.02	.06	**.81**	.19
Q13	.44	.27	**.56**	-.10
Q15	-.04	-.05	-.01	**.47**
Q14	.13	.14	.15	**.37**

表2. 質問紙2の因子分析の結果

	1	2	3
Q21	**.84**	-.35	-.08
Q24	**.70**	-.15	.27
Q20	**.50**	-.07	.17
Q22	**-.49**	.47	.01
Q25	**.38**	-.17	.35
Q23	-.11	**.94**	-.04
Q18	-.13	**.32**	-.02
Q26	.06	-.01	**.76**
Q27	.14	.01	**.70**

表3. 質問紙1と質問紙2の因子の下位尺度間の相関関係

	苦手意識	不安	文法、語彙学習抵抗	無動機	努力嫌い
苦手意識					
不安	.40**				
文法、語彙学習抵抗	.39**	.30**			
無動機	.33**	.41**	.42**		
努力嫌い	.20*	.15	.43**	.28**	

**p<.01, *p<.05

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Appendix

英語の学習意欲減退に関するアンケート

1〜7までにはあてはまる番号を、8からは、

1. とてもあてはまる、2.まあ、あてはまる、3.あまりあてはまらない、4.全然あてはまらない、のいずれかを選んでください。

Q1 性別	1) 男性　2) 女性
Q2 年齢	1) 18歳　2) 19歳　3) 20歳　4) 21歳 5) 22歳
Q3 学年	1) 1年　2) 2年　3) 3年　4) 4年
Q4 学部	1) 文学部・外国語学部・国際学部など 2) 1) 以外の文系学部 3) 理系学部　4) その他
Q5 英検	1) なし　2) 4級　3) 3級　4) 準2級 5) 2級　6) 準1級　7) 1級
Q6 TOEFL	1) なし　2) 250~299　3) 300~349　4) 350~399 5) 400~449　6) 450~499　7) 500以上

Q7 TOEIC　1) なし　2) 350未満　3) 350~449
4) 450~549　5) 550~649　6) 650~749
7) 750以上

質問紙1

Q8　中学の時から英語が苦手だ
Q9　高校入学以降、英語が苦手と感じる
Q10　声に出して発音をするのが恥ずかしい
Q11　質問されて答えを間違えるのがいやだ
Q12　単語を覚えるのが面倒だ
Q13　英語の文法がわかりにくくていやだ
Q14　英語を話す自分や顔見知り同士で英語を話すことに違和感を感じる
Q15　クラスの人数が多すぎて、十分練習できない
Q16　クラスの人数が少なすぎて、すぐに質問がまわってくるのがいやだ
Q17　先生が励ましてくれたり、がんばった時に認めてくれると、やる気がおこる

質問紙2

Q18　先生が自分の英語の進歩した程度をいってくれるとやる気がおこる。
Q19　自分には語学のセンスがある
Q20　外国語（英語も含む）の言語や文化、人に興味がない
Q21　英語を勉強しても、どうせ一生使わないですむと思う
Q22　英語を身につけることは重要で将来役にたつと思う
Q23　英語の勉強は、自分の成長につながる（例:忍耐力を養う）
Q24　何のために英語を勉強しているのか分からない
Q25　英語そのものに興味が無いし予習復習する習慣もあまりない
Q26　コツコツ努力することが苦手だ
Q27　忍耐力や、持続力があまりないと思う

裏面:自由記述:
項目に関してのコメントなどを書いてください。

Reaching for their own goals: A more democratic classroom

Keywords
student perspectives, learning goals, learning motivation, democratic classroom

While most research is written from the teacher's perspective, this paper, which originated as a self-assigned report by the first author, considers the outcomes of a university English course from a student's viewpoint. Many teachers criticize students for having no motivation or learning goals, forgetting they place students in teacher-controlled situations that influence motivation and goal-setting. In this pilot study, we explore the influence a more democratic classroom has on motivation when students work to achieve their own goals. Two courses were compared with a democratically-taught course for first-year engineering majors. Questionnaire results and student journal entries indicate students had positive attitudes and high motivation at the end of the course. Compared with the two other courses, the democratic course received higher marks in both satisfaction and achievement.

多くの授業研究の成果は教師の視点から書かれている。しかし、本論は学生の視点から、大学英語授業シラバスの効果を述べたものである。多くの教師が、最近の学生には目標ややる気がないと批判しているが、実際は教師が授業の目標と進度を決めることによって、学生の目標設定ややる気を制御しているのではないだろうか。本研究では、工学部1年生の3つの必修英語クラスを比較することで、学生が目標を達成しようとするとき、より自己主導型の授業形態が動機づけに及ぼす影響を調べた。アンケート結果と学生の日誌から、伝統的なシラバスより、教師のサポートで学生が自ら目標や進度を決める方法のほうが、学生の積極的な態度を養い、またやる気を高めることが示された。他の2クラスと比べると、この自己主導型な授業形態は満足感と達成度において、より高い評価を得た。

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College students are criticized for lacking motivation and goals (Izawa, 2009), which is arguably related to social problems such as increasing unemployment (Oe, 2006) and high job turnover (Hara, 2010). This lack of motivation may be attributed to a teacher-centered, exam-oriented high school culture where most students have not had the experience of setting and achieving their own learning goals. In classrooms, students are constantly being directed, making them passive recipients of information. Robinson (2001) argues that many students actually possess a high level of intrinsic motivation, but traditional teaching methods often stifle it. With Japan being a test-based society (Goodman & Phillips, 2003), students have become so addicted to exams they no longer study unless it is for a score (Smith, 1998). Students growing up in this environment become addicted to studying for extrinsic rewards and forget the joy of learning or achieving goals. These students ask, "Will this be on the test?"

Need for democratic classrooms

It may be time for teachers to take responsibility by providing a more student-centered method of instruction. Experiments since the 1930s have observed the effects of different styles of instruction. For example, Lewin's (1938) landmark study examined three different styles of instructors: (a) autocratic, (b) laissez-faire, and (c) democratic. During the experiment, the students exposed to an autocratic instructor worked submissively and only when the instructor was present. When the group was taught in a laissez-faire method, students did the least amount of work and there was chaos when the instructor left the room. However, when the group was led in a democrat-

ic style, students had the highest motivation and originality in their work and studied continuously even without the teacher present. Lewin's results demonstrate the impact instructional styles have on learning attitudes and motivation and their potential to change them. More recently, researchers (e.g., Glasser, 2001) have also reported that instructional methods can enhance students' learning motivation, particularly when students are given choices.

To illustrate further, Deci (1996) conducted an experiment using the puzzle-solving paradigm. The participants were either (a) offered choices of puzzles to work on without time limits, or (b) assigned puzzles with time limits. Consequently, the subjects who had been offered the choices spent more time working on the puzzles and reported liking them more than the subjects not offered choices. These opportunities to choose had made a difference in their experience and had strengthened their motivation.

A more democratic instructional course offering choices and allowing students to create their own goals has potential to change attitude and motivation toward learning. In this framework, the present study examines the influence a more democratic classroom may have on students' learning attitude and motivation by measuring their (a) learning attitude, (b) feeling of active participation, (c) satisfaction with their learning experience, and (d) feeling of achievement in the course.

Course outline

The democratic course was based on the syllabus developed by Finch and Sampson (2005). The 15-week semester was divided into three parts. The first six weeks were centered on decreasing anxiety while gradually increasing autonomy through various activities. It culminated with a short presentation on a topic of choice. Activities were aimed at creating a relaxing classroom atmosphere where students could talk to friends or the instructor in English. From the first meeting, the instructor did not give many instructions, and most activities were flexible in how they were to be conducted. During the activities, the instructor did not interfere with students unless they asked questions or when checking their progress.

During the following six weeks, the students chose themes to study and a final assessment of student's choice (i.e., presentation, report, etc.). Not every student wanted to work in groups; some chose to work individually. For instance, a student created a goal of improving reading comprehension individually, and decided to use graded-readers and write book reports creating a portfolio. Initially, some groups passively waited for instruction. Despite this passive attitude, the instructor did not immediately give direction and let them struggle with the situation. This struggle guided students to find a way to work for themselves.

Eventually, students adapted to learning autonomously while concentrating on both fluency and accuracy. For instance, one group brought materials, such as pictures for discussions, to work on speaking fluency. Another group, while preparing for their final presentation, brought a grammar book and discussed grammatical aspects of the language. Interestingly, even when the instructor left the classroom, the students did not readily notice the teacher stepping out of the classroom and continued on with their activities.

The next two classes were set aside for any presentation rehearsals and then final presentations. The rehearsals were based on the idea that people learn effectively when they actually have a chance to experience mistakes or failures. The whole class viewed all of the final presentations.

The focal point of the final class was reflecting on and furthering autonomous study. The students calculated their own grades based on their mini-presentation, final assessment of choice, and class participation. They were also assigned a reflection writing assignment in which they reviewed what they had and had not achieved in the class and then planned how they would continue their studies.

Throughout the course, we used a class journal (CJ). Students received the CJ at the beginning and submitted it at the end of each class. The CJ allowed students to record attendance and self-assess class participation, homework, and final assessment scores. There was also a column for questions and comments. The CJ provided us with opportunities to view students' progress and give formative feedback. For the students, it meant continuous reflection and more communication practice.

Participants

Our course consisted of 40 first-year students majoring in mechanical engineering. There were 122 majors in all, and the other two classes (N = 42, N = 40) were also surveyed. The syllabus of one course was based on a commercially published textbook to enhance reading comprehension, and the other course used movies with the aim of improving listening comprehension. We viewed these courses as using a traditional method because the instructor decided goals, activities, and assessment methods. Each class met once-a-week for 90 minutes in a 15-week semester.

Survey

Student feedback concerning the course was collected with an anonymous Likert-scale survey administered in the final class. The survey consisted of four questions (Table 1). The Japanese version of the survey was administered by the instructors of each course in the last ten minutes.

Table 1. Survey questions

(1) I have gained a greater interest in this subject to motivate further study. この授業で学習を続けられる興味や関心がついた。
(2) I have become an active participant in my learning. 学習に対する積極性があった。
(3) I have achieved the goals of the class. 授業の目標を到達できた。
(4) I am satisfied with the class as a whole. 全体的に考えてこの講義に満足している。

Results and discussion

Compared to the traditional courses, the democratic course received more positive feedback for all four questions (Table 2 and 3). Eighty percent of students had increased their interest in their English studies; 50 percent of the students strongly agreed. Throughout the course, positive attitudes and increasing motivation had been observed. One student in the first half of the class changed his attitude for the better after deciding his goal of understanding spoken English. This attitude change was observed from his CJ comments, where he wrote 'I think English is difficult' in the first class, and in the second half of the course wrote comments such as 'I'm happy. Today is a good class' and 'Today is enjoy.' In the other two courses, 55.0 and 47.6 percent of the students gained interest for further study.

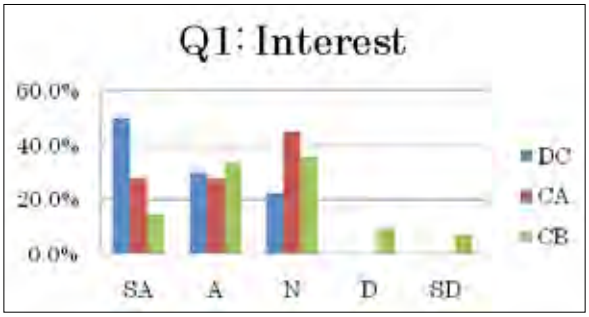

Figure 1. Survey question 1 results

*SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = neither, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree

** DC = democratic course, CA = course A (reading), CB = course B (movies)

When students were asked if they felt they were an active participant in the class, 97.5 percent of the students agreed. In the two traditionally taught courses, 77.5 and 76.2 percent of the students felt active. The democratic course allowed the students to feel more active in their own learning.

The students' apparent feeling of being active was noticeable when groups were preparing for their final presentations. One group, after memorizing their script early, asked for advice on how to better convey their message using PowerPoint slides and additional out-of-class sessions. Another group, presenting on rare trains in the world, explained the topic thoroughly in a quiz format, after collecting data from classmates beforehand.

In addition, students gradually became more autonomous towards the end of the class. For instance, they did not ask the instructor what to do, or wait for directions. Some groups started working even before the instructor came to class. On rehearsal day, some groups that did not have to attend, arrived to practice or to continue group work. Pearson and Gallagher (1983) would refer to this as the gradual release of responsibility. In other words, the transfer of

responsibility from the instructor to the student resulted in students becoming more active in their own learning.

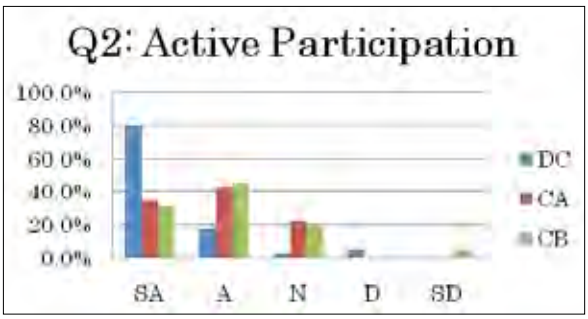

Figure 2. Survey question 2 results

A key objective of the course was for students to create their own goals and work towards achieving them. In the democratic classroom, 92.5 percent of students felt a sense of achieving a goal. Though we have no clear data representing changes in proficiency, the feeling of achievement through autonomous learning could potentially motivate further study leading to gains in proficiency. By contrast, in the two traditional courses, 72.5 and 42.9 percent felt they had achieved a goal.

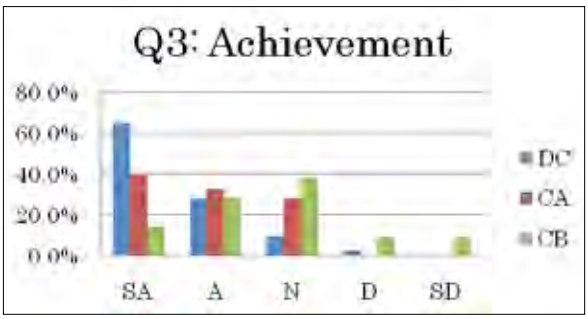

Figure 3. Survey question 3 results

The question pertaining to satisfaction resulted in 87 percent of the students answering positively. Unfortunately, which part of the course they were satisfied with is unclear. Nonetheless, this satisfaction potentially motivates efforts to continue their studies. Compared to the traditionally taught courses in which 57.5 and 45.2 percent answered positively, students in the democratic course were more satisfied with their course.

Figure 4. Survey question 4 results

Students worked on activities collaboratively without constant didactic instruction. Their own goals motivated them to study with positive attitudes. In the end, only two students had negative comments about learning English in the CJ. Thus, we speculate that those few students who answered the survey negatively were hard on themselves.

Teachers planning to implement a more democratic approach may want to consider implementing group-building activities to ensure productive group work. In addition, a well-prepared but flexible semester plan of allowing students to create different objectives, materials, and assessments is essential. Moreover, teachers must guide students into autonomous learning gradually while clearly stating objectives of each activity. Finally, it is important for teachers to receive continuous feedback from students. A CJ can serve this purpose.

Further investigation

Despite our positive results, a further study with more rigorous data collection is necessary. Remaining questions include which part of the course specifically improved learning attitudes or enhanced motivation and if positive learning attitudes and motivation were sustained after the democratic course. As Deci (1996) noted, extrinsic reward such as course credit, can undermine intrinsic motivation. Once students no longer need credit or have to take another traditionally taught course, the possibility of the students' learning attitudes and motivation declining cannot be overlooked.

Table 2. Survey results of questions 1 and 2

	Q1: Interest			Q2: Active Participation		
	Democratic Course	Course A	Course B	Democratic Course	Course A	Course B
strongly agree	50.0%	27.5%	14.3%	80.0%	35.0%	31.0%
agree	30.0%	27.5%	33.3%	17.5%	42.5%	45.2%
neither	22.5%	45.0%	35.7%	2.5%	22.5%	19.0%
disagree	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%
strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%

Table 3. Survey results of questions 3 and 4

	Q3: Achievement			Q4: Satisfaction		
	Democratic Course	Course A	Course B	Democratic Course	Course A	Course B
strongly agree	65.0%	40.0%	14.3%	45.0%	25.0%	11.9%
agree	27.5%	32.5%	28.6%	42.5%	32.5%	33.3%
neither	10.0%	27.5%	38.1%	15.0%	35.0%	38.1%
disagree	2.5%	0.0%	9.5%	2.5%	7.5%	11.9%
strongly disagree	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%

Conclusion

A more democratic course centered on student choices and instructor facilitation showed positive results in learning attitude and motivation. Throughout the investigation, changes in students' attitude were observed, such as those discerned in CJ comments changing from negative to positive. Students' motivation seemed to increase, for example, when students started seeking opportunities for more English practice.

Instead of just criticizing students, more needs to be done to provide them with opportunities to create and pursue goals. If instructors take a purely autocratic stance without giving choices, students will likely give up or become passive. This stance encourages negative attitudes and undermines motivation.

If students are given more opportunities to contemplate, create, and achieve personal goals, with support from instructors, they can persist with positive attitudes and high motivation. The first author can support this idea with her own experience as a university student. When she was given the opportunity to create her own goal in her English class (a subject she hated), she came to like and realize the importance of English. Likewise, instructors should provide more choices and autonomous learning opportunities for their students to study for (not by) themselves. This opportunity encourages positive attitudes and enhances motivation for students to set goals and challenge themselves to achieve them.

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Linguistic and contextual factors that affect Japanese readers of EFL

Keywords
Japanese, reading, context, scope of SLA, reading problems

By exploring the linguistic and contextual factors that cause problems for Japanese readers of EFL, this essay adds support to the sociocontextualist side of the ongoing debate regarding the scope of SLA research – that is, should SLA research be limited to the study of language use or should it include language-learning in context? In support of a more global approach, linguistic factors and contextual factors that cause Japanese readers difficulty are explored, including differences in orthography, morphology, orthographic depth, and phrasal structure, as well as ethnocentric influences, enculturated writing patterns, non-motivating classrooms, and enculturated learning strategies. Since Japanese readers are affected not only by linguistic factors but by social factors as well, both linguistic and contextual factors should be considered when teaching and researching second language acquisition.

本論は外国語としての英語学習（EFL）環境にある日本人の読解に関する問題の原因となる言語学的・状況的要因を調査する。さらに、第2言語習得（SLA）研究は言語使用の研究に限定されるべきか、状況に応じた言語学習も含めて行うべきかという昨今の議論において、「社会的文脈」派の立場を支持する。本論ではより包括的なアプローチで、正字法、形態論、正字法深度、句構造等の違いに加え、自文化中心主義の影響、文化適応したライティングパターン、動機づけの低い教室、文化適応した学習ストラテジー等、日本人の読解に関する問題の原因となる言語学的・状況的要因を検討する。日本人の読解力は言語学的要因だけではなく社会的要因からも影響を受けているので、第2言語習得を指導研究する際には、言語学的・状況的要因を考慮すべきである。

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Zayed University

After nearly a half-century of cognitivist hegemony, Firth and Wagner's (1997) manifesto supporting "a reconceptualization of SLA… that endeavors to attend to… the *social* and *cognitive* dimensions of S/FL use and acquisition" (p. 286, their emphases) further split an already divided field (cf. Larsen-Freeman, 1991; Berretta, 1991). Gass (1998) countered stating that research should focus on the "*language* used and not on the act of communication" (p. 84, her emphasis). Likewise, after Freeman and Johnson (1998) asserted that "language teaching cannot be understood apart from the sociocultural environments in which it takes place" (p. 409), Yates and Muchisky (2003) responded that by "ignoring the core subject areas of language and SLA research… the field [will] lose any coherence as a separate discipline" (p. 144). To weigh in on this debate regarding SLA's research scope, I contend that for teachers and researchers not to consider context as part of SLA research amounts to professional malpractice, since linguistic factors and contextual factors combine to affect acquisition. In support of this claim, the factors that affect Japanese readers of EFL will be examined - linguistic factors include differences in orthography, morphology, orthographic depth, and phrasal structures and contextual factors include ethnocentric attitudes, enculturated writing patterns, non-motivating classrooms, and enculturated learning strategies.

Linguistic factors

L1 orthography affects English word recognition

Japanese readers of EFL must reduce the negative transfer resulting from different writing systems, as bottom-up word recognition skills remain vital for comprehension (Akamatsu, 1998). Although not disadvantaged in terms of "visual dis-

crimination" speed (Iwai, 2008, p. 47), Japanese students have less experience in the "intraword component… computational analysis" (Akamatsu, 1998, p. 20) required to recognize phonemes compared to English learners whose L1 writing systems are "decomposable phonetically" (Morton & Sasanuma, 1984, p. 26). As such, French or Thai speakers would less likely have trouble distinguishing the three meaning-forming phonemes in the word *thoughtfully* compared to Japanese speakers. This difficulty results from Japan's two types of writing: kana, which are read phonetically, and kanji, which are read visually (Morton & Sasanuma, 1984, p. 40).

As "syllabograms" (Iwata, 2007, p. 253), most kana, i.e. 40 out of 46, follow a consonant-vowel pattern. With no consonant clusters to contend with, "Japanese children learn kana-sound correspondences by rote" (Morton & Sasanuma, 1984, p. 26), relying on memory to attach phonemes to ideographic units. As a result, readers must nurture their analytical skills so that they can more easily bundle constituent units into speech units (Akamatsu, 1998, p. 20). Otherwise, when presented with English words, such as *hotdog* and *McDonald's*, they realize them, instead, as *hottodogu* and *Makudonarudo*.

As "morphograms" (Iwata, 2007, p. 253), kanji pictorially signify nouns and verbs. Even though phonemic units come attached, translating kanji into meaning "proceeds without any phonological activity" (Morton & Sasanuma, 1984, p. 38). One reason for this is the "[high] degree of homophony in Japanese" (p. 38) – phonological decoding does little to assist in accessing meaning. For example, sounding out the word *toukou* - internally or externally – is hardly useful since more than 13 definitions of the word exist. As a result, when kanji are read, the meaning forming "lateral fusiform gyrus" (Sakurai, Momose, Iwata, Sudo, Ohtomo, & Kanazawa, 2000, p. 113) activates, and the "middle occipital gyrus" (p. 113), the area believed to be responsible for "grapheme-to-phoneme conversion" (p. 114), remains inactivated. In contrast, when kana are read, the middle occipital gyrus activates as well (p. 113). Therefore, with not much experience in attaching phonemes to nouns and verbs in Japanese, attaching them to words in English sentences becomes counterintuitive and unnatural.

These "dual processing routes for word recognition" (Aro, 2006, p. 535), one based on sound attachment and the other based on word recognition – both dissimilar to the process of converting "letter clusters" (Akamatsu, 1998, p. 18) into phonemic units – make it difficult for Japanese students to become "good readers" with "superior phonetic segmentation and recoding abilities" (Stanovich, 1980, p. 64).

Differences in morphology affect reading comprehension

Japanese readers have much to learn regarding English morphology. For example, in Japanese there are no inflections on verbs to indicate person or number, but many other types exist, such as negation, desire, probability, obligation, volition, and causation, so relying on the L1 to inform morphological processing is not often an option. Inflections in Japanese are written in kana and attached to kanji, so morphological parsing remains clear (Morton & Sasanuma, 1984, p. 38). On the other hand, parsing in English is more difficult since there is nothing to signal when the "morph ends and the morpheme begins" (p. 38). In order to understand "novel forms such as *fruitpepper* and *reflocking*," students must familiarize themselves with "the constituent morphemes of complex and compound words" (Libben, 2003, p. 221).

Orthographic depth affects word recognition

The orthographic depth hypothesis, promulgated by Katz and Frost (1992) states that "the ability to read a text is dependent… [on] the regularity of transcription of phonemes" (as cited in Spencer, 2006, p. 42). Aro (2006) also suggests that depth depends on "transparency, regularity, and consistency" (p. 532). Japanese became a shallow orthography with a simple grapheme-phoneme correspondence as a result of the Meiji government's (1868-1912) decree to establish a one-to-one relationship between pronunciation and kana (Coulmas, 2002). English, on the other hand, remains a deep orthography, where "grapheme-phoneme correspondences are complex and irregular" (Aro, 2006, p. 532). In fact, "31% of English monosyllabic words are inconsistent (Ziegler, Stone, & Jacobs, 1997, as

cited in Aro, 2006, p. 533), mainly because of the preservation of spelling and pronunciation in loan words and the lack of standardisation until the middle of the 18th century. Another factor that creates orthographic depth in English is its "morphophonemic" (p. 534) spelling system, i.e. the spelling of roots is phonemic (e.g. *kick*), and the spelling of derivatives tends to be morphemic (e.g., in the word *kicked*, *ed* sounds like *t* - not e*d*). As a result of these inconsistencies, reading in English takes two or three years longer to master than other European languages (Seymour et al., 2003, as cited in Spencer, 2006). Beginning readers must, therefore, learn to replace grapheme-phoneme conversion strategies with strategies that encourage the recognition of "units such as rime and whole word" (Aro, p. 532).

L1 phrase structure affects English sentence reading

Another hurdle for Japanese EFL readers is their difficulty in merging individual words into "larger phrase or clause units" (Fender, 2003, p. 305), since their L1 is, structurally, a head-last language. Results from a reading task comparing the word integration skills of a head-first ESL group, Arabic, with a Japanese ESL group, indicate that lexical integration for Japanese speakers takes longer, since parsing prepositions instead of postpositions and placing verbs before objects are not automatic processes (p. 301). To illustrate this difficulty, when Japanese readers are presented with the sentence, "He did not jump on the camera," they are used to reading, "He camera on jump not did." Juffs (1998) indicates that postlexical word processing skills remain challenging even for highly proficient Japanese readers of English (p. 413).

Contextual Factors

Ethnocentric influences affect attitude

Compounding Japanese EFL linguistic-based problems are contextual factors, such as Japan's strong sense of nationalism. Although Japan is the first country in Asia to consciously and deliberately emulate the West, "they did it on their own terms" (Smith, 1965, as cited in Coulmas, 2002, p. 204). As well, the late 19th century drive toward modernization provoked mass "anti-Western nationalism" (p. 212). With suggestions to remove kanji, and even to adopt the English alphabet resulting in a violent backlash, the Japanese language became known as the "spiritual blood of the people" (p. 212), and a "key symbol of Japan's ethno-national identity" (p. 203). Indeed, whereas high school students in Canada take *English* class, Japanese students take *national language* class. In modern times, nationalistic sentiment still incites debate regarding the "necessity of promoting English language education" (Kawai, 2007, p. 41). With such strong nationalistic sentiment tied to language, individual citizens' motivation to adopt an L2 may falter.

Cultural writing patterns influence formal schemata

As a result of students' culturally learned formal schemata, arriving at the "top-level ideas" (Carrell, 1987, p. 469) of a Western-style English academic text could prove challenging. The contrast between Japan's commonly used "specific-to-general (inductive) pattern" and Western countries' "general-to-specific (deductive)… pattern" (Silva, 1993, p. 664) does little to serve Japanese readers of English, since "rhetorical form is a significant factor, more important than content, in the comprehension of the top-level episodic structure of a text" (Carrell, 1987, p. 476). Readers may have difficulty recognizing the structure of Western-style texts, such as descriptive, persuasive, and cause-effect, which all begin with a thesis, continue with supporting arguments, and then reassert the thesis in the conclusion. This structure differs from Japanese texts, such as discussion, where the topic is introduced, both sides are considered and readers are left to form their own opinions, or the *ki sho ten ketsu* text type, where the *ten* part presents an alternate way of considering the problem. Without enough "multicultural pluralism" (Connor, 1996, p. 7), that is the ability to anticipate the "appropriate formal schema for a particular text" (Carrell, 1984, as cited in Barnett, 1989, p. 46), readers retrieve and retain less information.

Classrooms affect motivation

Japanese high school English classrooms cause readers to lack motivation, since they tend to be overcrowded, teacher-centred, and non-communicative (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008, p. 135). Teachers often focus more on students streamlined

for university, so below-average students may fall even further behind or not feel compelled to study (Atsuta, 2003, p. 14). Reader interest also drops because Ministry prescribed texts are often boring. Japan's enculturated "perfectionistic tendency" (Sumi & Kanda, 2002, p. 824) may also demotivate students from attempting to speak English for fear of making a mistake and shaming themselves in front of their peers. Since the above factors influence students' ability to learn English, reading comprehension also suffers.

Enculturated learning practices affect comprehension

Other contextual factors include the intensive-reading and grammar translation strategies students develop in preparation for university entrance exams (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008, p. 136). Rather than read to learn or for enjoyment – tenets of extensive-reading programs – high school students read intensively to strengthen their analytical and grammatical skills (Iwai, 2008, p. 45). By close-reading short passages for accuracy, students build their vocabulary and attempt to understand, not only meaning, but also how syntax produces meaning (Brumfit, 1978, pp. 175-176). School-taught grammar-translation methods, as well, rather than promote "[thinking] about… meaning in context" (Iwai, 2008, p. 45), emphasize understanding mainly at the lexical level. As a result, students miss out on "process-oriented instruction" that provides "an awareness of the nature of the reading process" (Block, 1992, p. 336). Even after entering university, students continue to "consult their dictionaries every time they come across an unknown word" (Iwai, 2008, p. 47), putting themselves in danger of "forgetting what they have already read" (p. 47).

Concluding discussion

As deduced above, both linguistic factors such as orthography, morphology, orthographic depth, and phrasal structure, and contextual factors such as ethnocentric influence, enculturated writing patterns, non-motivating classrooms, and enculturated learning strategies combine to affect L2 reading comprehension. EFL reading teachers and researchers must take both factors into consideration in order to optimally assist and empathise with Japanese readers of EFL.

The very existence of a debate between cognitivists and sociocontextualists regarding purity, perspective, and practical application could mean that the field of SLA is experiencing growing pains, just as clinical psychology split into applied and cognitive psychology 50 years ago (Barone, Maddux, & Snyder, 1997, pp. 7-8). Since cognitivists draw upon the term *acquisition* in the initialism "SLA" to girder their purist position, one wonders if "SLA" is the correct way to describe the field. Perhaps the categories of Context and Acquisition would be more equally perceived if they were placed under a broader term, such as "Bilingualism". This might make the most sense, since SLA researchers, just like psychologists, are unlikely to change "the way they frame their understanding of learning" (Larsen-Freeman, 2002, as cited in Zuengler & Miller, 2006, p. 46). No matter what term is used, however, it remains true that attempts to get Japanese EFL readers to read logographically cannot take place when external conditions cause them to keep their textbooks shut.

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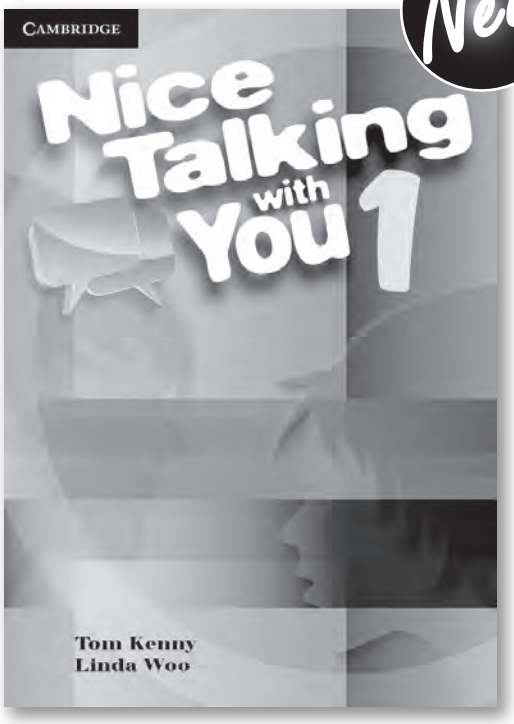

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Using peer assessment in the language classroom

Keywords
assessment, activities, grading, higher education

Educators often speak of creating student-centered classes that increase student involvement, responsibility, and motivation. Peer assessment, if thoughtfully implemented, can help promote these goals while supplementing and increasing the reliability of traditional forms of teacher assessment. This article first outlines reasons why and how peer assessment can be used in a foreign language learning context. Then it explains when and how to use peer assessment successfully in foreign language classrooms. Finally, it introduces six tips to consider when using peer assessment.

学生の授業参加を促し、責任感や動機を高める学習者中心のクラス作りは、しばしば教師たちの話題となる。相互評価を正しく行えば、従来の教師評価の信用性を高めると同時に、学習者中心のクラスを実現することも可能となる。本論では、まず外国語学習でなぜ、どのように相互評価が行われるかを概説する。次に、いつ、どのように効果的に相互評価を行うべきかを説明する。最後に、相互評価の際に留意すべき6点を紹介する。

Mayumi Asaba
Konan University
J. Paul Marlowe
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What is peer assessment?

Often, educators speak of creating student-centered classes that increase student involvement, responsibility, and motivation. Peer assessment, if thoughtfully implemented, can help promote these goals while supplementing and increasing the reliability of traditional forms of teacher assessment. Peer assessment can be defined as "an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status" (Topping, 1998, p. 250). Although there has been a lot of research indicating that peer assessment is an effective and reliable form of evaluation in both business and first language pedagogy, little attention has been given to promoting its use in the second language classroom. This article will outline reasons why and how and some of the issues related to using peer assessment in a foreign language learning context.

Why use peer assessment?

There are several reasons why peer assessment should be implemented in language classrooms. First, it offers more reliability and fairness. Because peers have closer contact with each other, they often observe more than an instructor (Morahan-Martin, 1996). Having multiple sources of observation from peers enables students to receive a more impartial grade than one given by a sole evaluator. It can also offer a complementary or alternative way of rewarding those students who assume a larger role in collaborative tasks. By integrating teacher and student results, the opportunity for students to attain a

score relatively equal to their share of the work increases.

Second, peer assessment helps students become conscious and independent learners. Peer assessment allows students to feel a greater sense of responsibility when supervising others (Saito & Fujita, 2004). Traditionally, students are used to receiving a grade from one sole authority (instructor) in the classroom. With peer assessment, grading becomes a participatory and collaborative activity. Additionally, by being included in the grading system, students become more aware of themselves as learners. Peer assessment provides an opportunity for students to become familiarized with the grading criteria. Students are able to identify the purpose of the task and understand what is expected of them by assessing others. Therefore, by participating in the process of peer assessment, students can increase their awareness of themselves as learners and further their understanding of the expectations of the instructor and the course.

Finally, peer assessment provides alternative perspectives that can be useful for both instructors and students. Instructors can benefit from the feedback provided by students because this may reveal different aspects of each student's performance they may not have previously noticed. Furthermore, peer assessment also makes it possible for students to receive more specific feedback on their performance.

When to use peer assessment

Group work

Peer assessment is ideal for groups because it can supplement the group score and provide a more accurate and complete picture of each student's contribution during the task process. Additionally, if students are aware of the grading instrument prior to assessment, it can promote cooperative learning (Kwan & Leung, 1996, in Matsuno, 2009) and improve individual performance (Topping, 1998).

Writing

Peer review has become a common form of assessment in second language writing courses (Cheng & Warren, 2005) due to the overwhelming task of instructors providing extensive and detailed corrective feedback. Peer reviews offer a practical alternative to finding errors commonly made by writers while also exposing reviewers to more language and raising awareness of what is expected in their own writing. With continued and routine use, peer assessment can be integrated as part of the writing process.

Homework

Providing feedback for daily homework can often be a necessary nuisance to teachers who want students to practice learning language outside of the classroom but don't have the time necessary to provide corrective feedback for each student. Often, teachers dictate answers to the class and students check their own or a partner's work. Although this is an efficient method, it offers learners little feedback and understanding of the mistakes made. In order to provide a richer learning experience, students can check homework in groups. First, they compare and check answers and try to reconcile differences in answers. If students cannot resolve the differences or simply do not understand the problem, they can request assistance from the instructor. Additionally, groups can determine an assessment score for each student and record these scores on a group homework log to be collected, checked, and recorded by the instructor.

Oral presentations & speeches

Presentations and speeches provide an opportunity for quick, on-the-spot assessment of students. However, because these are often in real time, the teacher is forced into multiple roles ranging from classroom manager, time keeper, stage hand, audience, *and* evaluator. Trying to balance these roles can greatly reduce the teacher's main objective of assessing students. With the help of student evaluators, the speaker or presenter is more likely to receive more involved feedback and a more accurate score. Furthermore, giving students the responsibility to assess one another helps keep the audience members engaged and attentive.

In-class group activities/discussions

In order to address large classroom sizes and time constraints, instructors often must observe

and assess multiple pairs or groups simultaneously during a graded activity. Peer assessment can assist the instructor by complementing the instructor's more general observations with more specific feedback. During graded discussions, peer observers can count the number of times a student contributed to the conversation/discussion, used target language, or identified use of conversation/discussion strategies such as follow-up questions or rejoinders. Additionally, ranking peers could be used following in-class group activities to identify students who contributed the most during the activity. Extra points could be awarded to the top students in each group.

Six tips for using peer assessment

Peer assessment is by no means a perfect approach to evaluating students. There have been several problems identified, including students who lack exposure or expertise in relation to the expected outcomes, bias, leniency, and acceptance as a fair part of assessment (Melvin, 1988; Morahan-Martin, 1996). However, if instructors plan carefully, they can successfully avoid many of these problems by addressing the following issues in peer assessment:

1. Criteria & objectives

Instructors should carefully explain exactly what is being assessed and make sure students clearly understand the criteria and objectives. Patri's study (2002) showed that clear assessment criteria helped enable peers to make judgments comparable to those of the teacher. This can be done in a number of ways, including providing bilingual criteria or examples and models of what a successful or unsuccessful attempt looks like. In some instances, students took part in selecting the criteria and increasing their involvement and responsibility in the assessment process (Duke & Sanchez, 1994, in Cheng & Warren, 2005).

2. Assessment tools

The assessment tool should be user-friendly and time-efficient. Along with students having a clear understanding of the grading criteria, it is similarly important that the assessment tool be as clear and simple as possible without sacrificing educational goals. Common peer assessment tools include numerical scales, descriptors, or letter grades. For example, four- and six-point Likert scales are often employed to score performance criteria. Using numerical scales can avoid the ambiguity between terms such as *excellent*, *good*, *fair*, or *poor*. However, numbers can be easily substituted with descriptors. This can help peer raters think about the quality of the work instead of negotiating numbers. Also, descriptors lacking numerical data can reduce the impression that the peer rater has a direct impact on their peer's grade. Additionally, teachers can provide bands of specific descriptors students can select and use as common feedback language. Specific written feedback should generally be positive, constructive, and ideally be in the L2, using language familiar to the students. Depending on their level, L1 feedback

may be used to ensure comprehension of the critique. One idea to keep open-ended feedback constructive and in English would be to give students sentence starters such as *I like…*, *I want to know…*, *You can make it better by…*. These help students stay focused and constructive about their comments (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

3. Training

In order for students to be effective raters, they need to be trained on how to use the assessment tool and have a clear idea of what constitutes a high or low score. Ideally, prior to using the assessment tool, students should observe and evaluate good and bad models for the assessment task. Allowing students to analyze the difference between these models not only gives them excellent practice as raters, but also provides them with a reference and a goal for their own work. Models can be teacher-generated or anonymous authentic student work from previous courses.

4. Bias

Saito and Fujita (2004) identify several studies that indicate problems with bias in peer reviews of writing. Common forms of bias can occur because of friendship or fear of future retribution. In one-to-one reviews, bias can be reduced by conducting anonymous peer reviews where the identity of the author and the reviewer is withheld. The instructor should take precautions not to identify the evaluators and remove names from assessment forms. One-to-one peer assessments are generally more appropriate for providing qualitative feedback and comments for formative tasks where students are taking part in a process of revision. For summative tasks where students are presenting their final product for assessment, including more than one assessor can further reduce bias and help instructors acquire a more accurate score. Kane and Lawler (1978) cited Winch and Anderson's finding to establish an ideal number of ten raters to maintain interrater reliability and help reduce bias.

5. Repetition

Several studies (Saito & Fujita, 2004; Chen & Warren, 2005; Rothschild & Klingenberg, 1990, in Saito, 2008) indicated that students initially feel uncomfortable with peer assessment but generally attain a positive attitude toward it. However, after training, practice, and a few actual attempts, students gradually become more comfortable rating their peers. Students may often feel the teacher has the sole authority to make judgments about language ability and feel reluctant to rate their peers. Numerous opportunities to engage in peer assessment can instill a sense of confidence and acceptance among students. Additionally, these repeated opportunities allow students to become more familiar with the rubric and criteria and provide insight into editing and improving their own performance.

6. Impact

Even though peer assessment has proved to have high reliability and validity, research suggests instructors should not rely too much on peer assessment to avoid errors of judgment and issues of student acceptability (Kane & Lawler, 1978; Melvin, 1988; Morahan-Martin, 1996). For students who are used to a traditional evaluation system with one evaluator, peer assessment may seem unfamiliar and untrustworthy. Therefore, it is important peer assessment be used only as a small part of the final grade and should be combined with several peer scores and an instructor score. Instructors can simply use peer assessment results to validate and support their own scores. Alternatively, peer rating can be used to provide additional feedback but have no bearing on the actual score.

Conclusion

Although peer assessment has not yet been fully integrated in the language classroom, it can provide an alternate and valid assessment tool that can be easily and effectively implemented into any language curriculum, course, classroom, or activity. If used properly, peer assessment can offer several advantages to traditional assessment forms and enable teachers to maintain a broader perspective and more accurate assessment of their students. Likewise, students benefit from assessing each other through increased feedback, understanding of expectations and requirements, a sense of shared responsibility, and increased self-awareness as language learners.

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An interview with John Read

Daniel Dunkley
Aichi Gakuin University

Keywords
second language vocabulary testing, vocabulary depth, word-associates test

How do we measure a student's vocabulary? John Read of Auckland University, New Zealand, is the person best qualified to answer this question. Along with Paul Nation and Paul Meara, he has spent the last 30 years researching vocabulary knowledge, acquisition and assessment. In this interview he explains how he came to be interested in vocabulary assessment, and how he wrote his two well-known works: the word-associates test and the book *Assessing Vocabulary*.

いかに学生の語彙力を測定するべきであろうか。ニュージーランド、オークランド大学のJohn Readにこの質問をした。Paul NationとPaul Mearaともに、彼は語彙知識、語彙習得、語彙評価などを30年以上研究している。このインタビューでは、いかに語彙評価に興味を持つようになったのか、そして彼の有名な2つの研究成果である語連想テスト(the word-associates test)と著書Assessing Vocabularyについて語る。

Daniel Dunkley (DD): Dr. Read, could you tell me how you moved from studying Crow Indian language in the USA to writing a major book on vocabulary assessment (Read, 2000)?

John Read (JR): The first question is how I got to be doing research into Crow Indian language maintenance. That grew out of my experience as a student. In the period immediately after my Master's degree, at the beginning of my teaching career in the early 70s, I was involved in the early stages of the Maori language and culture revival, and developed an interest in sociolinguistics and bilingual education. These two aspects came together, so I went to the University of New Mexico to do my doctoral work with Bernard Spolsky. There was a confluence of interests - the academic interest in sociolinguistics, and the political and cultural interest in the revival and revitalization of indigenous languages. The Crow reservation turned out to be a very interesting place to do research because there was a high level of maintenance among the members of the tribe. This ran counter to expectations; you would have predicted, as with most other American tribes, a high degree of language shift towards English.

DD: What happened after your time in New Mexico?

JR: After my research there I had a job at the Regional Language Centre in Singapore for five years. I think for someone in applied linguistics at that time I had an unusually strong back-

ground in research methodology. The reason for this was my experience in New Mexico. Because they didn't actually have a doctoral program in Applied Linguistics at the University of New Mexico, I went through the College of Education and did a number of courses on research methods that way. The job in Singapore involved both Research Methodology and Language Testing. I'd done some work on testing at New Mexico, and in fact two of the most prominent language testers of the seventies, Bernard Spolsky and John Oller, were both there at that time. Though my own research did not primarily focus on testing, I realize in retrospect that I picked up quite a lot through working with those two professors.

DD: So you finally returned to New Zealand?

JR: Yes, after five years in Singapore a lectureship came up at my old university in Wellington, Victoria University. So when I went back there I guess I brought together two things: on the one hand that interest and expertise I'd developed in testing, particularly in Singapore, and on the other hand an interest in vocabulary. Vocabulary was a traditional strength of the English Language Institute in Victoria. I guess currently the most famous vocabulary specialist there is Paul Nation. Through him I developed an interest in vocabulary tests in particular. And of course, even though he's not a testing person, he has developed a number of tests in his career, most famously the Vocabulary Levels Test.

DD: What kind of research did you do in Wellington?

JR: One of my early studies, which actually appeared in the *RELC Journal* (Read, 1988), looked at Nation's vocabulary levels test. I administered it at the beginning and the end of an intensive pre-university course as we used to call it. These days, it would be called an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) course. I looked at whether the vocabulary levels test could show any kind of growth in vocabulary over that three-month period. Another thing I looked at was the scaling of the different frequency levels in the test. There are five different levels of vocabulary knowledge: 2000, 3000, 5000, *university level* and 10,000 words. There are just 18 questions for each level, and I defined *mastery* as 16 correct answers out of 18. I wanted to see the extent to which when the students achieved a mastery of the 3000 word level, whether we could assume that they'd also mastered the 2000 word level. And if they achieved mastery of the university word level (specialist academic vocabulary), had they also mastered the 5000, 3000 and 2000 word levels? I found broadly there was that pattern. However, there was one exception, which has been found in other studies as well. We had a number of Spanish speaking Latin American students who were coming for post-graduate study at a New Zealand university; they didn't follow that pattern very clearly. The reason is, of course, that a lot of the less frequent vocabulary in English is from Latin or French. So speakers of Romance languages don't follow that sequence, that you would certainly get with Japanese learners, the more frequent the word is in the language the more likely they are to know the word. So that was the basis for that analysis that I did.

DD: How exactly were you asked to write your vocabulary assessment book, which was published in 2000?

JR: I was actually first asked to write the book in 1991. My first sabbatical after I went to Wellington was in 1990, and I went to Britain. I divided my time between two places. First I spent three months at Birkbeck College, London University. There I worked with Paul Meara, who's one of the big names in vocabulary studies. He was just finishing his time there before he moved to University College Swansea in Wales to establish his famous doctoral program there. It was while working with him that I developed the test I guess I'm best known for, the word associates test (Read, 1993). Meara at that time had been working on the concept of word association. He used the standard word association test where you give the language users a series of stimulus words and ask them to respond, either orally or in written form, with the first word that comes into their head. There are well-established norms for native speakers. For example, in the 1960s and 70s there was a lot of work done with native speaking children and adults which showed that the kind of responses they gave were fairly stable and consistent from one native speaker to another. But Meara and I found that that wasn't the case for second language learners. In fact,

Meara has just published a book called *Connected Words*, which pulls together six or seven articles he's published over the years. His theme is how word association of various kinds can give insight into the nature of the second language lexicon. I've just written a review of it.

DD: What was new about your Word Associates Test?

JR: Our innovation was the notion that instead of asking learners to supply responses to a word-association task, why not give them a selection of words to choose from? Originally there were eight words – four of the words are associated with the target word and four aren't. Your task is to pick which of the words are associated either paradigmatically or syntagmatically. So it includes not only aspects of the meaning of the word or synonym, but also words that can collocate with the target word.

DD: Did you meet Alderson, the series editor at that time?

JR: Yes. After that three months in London I went to Lancaster for another two to three months at the invitation of Charles Alderson. It so happened that at that time he was putting together the original proposal for that series of books in which mine appears. I didn't actually see much of Charles while I was there for various reasons, but he did attend a seminar I gave to graduate students just before I left. He was looking for someone who was not only a language tester, but also had a strong interest in vocabulary, so I was in the right place at the right time. But it took quite a long time for the series to be accepted. I think in 1992 I wrote a couple of draft chapters, and then in 95 the series was accepted and I wrote a more formal proposal to get the contract from Cambridge. I wrote another two chapters then.

DD: Who is *Assessing Vocabulary* for and what is its message?

JR: Its intended audience is both test developers and classroom language teachers. I looked at theory and research on one hand and vocabulary testing on the other. The theory is what we know about vocabulary knowledge and use in addition to what we know about the ways vocabulary can be measured. Theory and practice are integrated by my framework for vocabulary assessment. Also, one chapter is devoted to four case studies, including the TOEFL test, and I finally discuss new directions for vocabulary assessment, including computer applications.

DD: Who else influenced you in the 90s?

JR: In the long process of writing the book I met up with Carol Chapelle. Of course testing is one of her areas, and at that time she was quite interested in vocabulary testing. I think she'd come at it from her work with the cloze procedure and C-tests. That collaboration with her was very helpful for me in developing my ideas. It provided a more sophisticated view of language assessment than I could have had if the book had in fact appeared in 94 or 95 (Read & Chapelle, 2001).

DD: How is vocabulary testing viewed by academic language testers?

JR: I guess from the time I first got involved in vocabulary testing I used to be a bit uncomfortable about talking about my work at language testing conferences. A focus on vocabulary seemed so much out of the mainstream at the time. Language testing had moved decisively into communicative and task-based testing of speaking and writing skills, and that was where all the leading edge research was being done. So focusing on vocabulary seemed to be rather old hat. In some ways vocabulary tests were the kind of classic discrete-point test which everybody thought had been discredited in the 70s. It was fashionable to rubbish Robert Lado without necessarily having read his book. It's also true to say that for a long time, in the 70s and 80s, the vocabulary researchers like Meara, Nation and Laufer were a fairly lonely bunch. One big change that occurred during the 90s and this century is that vocabulary studies, generally, and not just vocabulary testing have come much more to the fore. But, if you look at SLA, although there is more focus on vocabulary tests, I think there is still a sense that it's not really at the core of SLA research compared with the study of syntax and morphology. That's a point that I picked up in my review of Meara's book.

DD: How about the future?

JR: My major project this year is to write a book with Cathie Elder, of Melbourne University Australia on diagnostic assessment. Actually, I've just had three years as head of department. This hasn't been conducive to thoughts about where I'll go in research. But once I get to Melbourne, where I'm doing a sabbatical, I hope to be taking new initiatives.

DD: We look forward to hearing about them. Thank you very much for your reflections, Dr. Read.

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TLT RESOURCES

MY SHARE

Welcome to another edition of My Share. In this issue we have quite a range of different activities to keep you going in the classroom. First off, Mathew Porter uses clip art cards and role-plays to get students working with hotel language. Then, Darby McGrath gives tips on helping students with citing and referencing in their academic written work. Our third author, Yukie Saito, uses the second part of the TOEIC test to help students get a grasp on indirect speech acts. Finally, Azzeddine Bencherab has students working with cartoons during the pre-reading stage of a reading lesson. Four great ideas, sure to be a hit in your classroom.

JALT2011 Call for Submissions
See page 78 of this *TLT*!

Honeymooners: Conversation activities for practicing hotel English

Mathew Porter
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Quick guide

Key words: ESP, hotel English, vocational school
Learner English level: Beginner to advanced

Learner maturity level: High school and above
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Activity time: 50 to 90 minutes
Materials: Hotel symbols sheet, hotel symbol card sets, hotel descriptions sheets A and B, client profile

Introduction

The first part of this activity is designed to get students to recognize icons and vocabulary associated with the hotel industry. Then, using the icons and vocabulary, students communicate with clients to plan a honeymoon in the second part of the activity.

Preparation

Create a symbol sheet, card sets, and hotel description sheets using public-domain clip art at openclipart.org (see Appendices for sample handouts).

Procedure

Step 1: Put students in groups of four, and pass out one symbol sheet per student (Appendix A).

Step 2: Give students about 5 minutes to guess and write the meaning of all the symbols on the sheet. Providing a word bank for lower level students is a good idea.

Step 3: Have students check the meanings of the symbols in groups or just give the answers.

Step 4: For an advanced *karuta* vocabulary game, pass out one card set per group and have the students place the symbol cards face up on their desks (Appendix B). Each student takes a turn asking the group about an amenity or service. The members of the group try to take the symbol card that was referenced in the sentence. The caller may not reach for a card. For lower level students, introduce expressions for asking about hotel services and amenities (e.g., *Are there irons in the rooms? Is there a swimming pool?)*. Continue until all the cards have been taken. Then, count and declare a winner.

Step 5: For a hotel descriptions activity, give two students in each group Hotel Sheet A, and two students Hotel Sheet B (Appendices C and D). Advanced students could work in pairs instead of groups of four.

Step 6: Have students ask questions to discover the differences between the hotels on their sheet. Explain that the goal is to become familiar with the hotel choices on both sheets. For lower level students, introduce expressions (e.g., *Does your hotel have a gym?* or *Is your hotel near a subway station?*).

Step 7: For the "Honeymoon" task, students must ask questions to discover the client's desires for their trip. For lower level students, introduce questions (e.g., *Would you like a hotel with a swimming pool?* or *Do you need a restaurant in the hotel?*). Lower level students can also work from prepared client profiles (Appendix E).

Step 8: Divide students in each group into *Planners* and *Clients*.

Step 9: Instruct the planners to search through Hotel Sheets A and B and find a satisfactory hotel. After finding one, they should discuss in English which hotel to suggest and why.

Step 10: The clients ask the planners about the hotel they find, confirming that it satisfies all the required features.

Step 11: If the planners have given an unsatisfactory suggestion, they must search the hotels again (repeat Step 9).

…with Dax Thomas

To contact the editor: <my-share@jalt-publications.org>

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>

Conclusion

This is a lesson used at a guidance fair for first-year high school students who were considering enrolling in a hotel course at a vocational college. Although this lesson was prepared for a high-beginner level, modifications can be made at every step to encourage more natural language use and make it more challenging for advanced students. Also, the final step could be performed on prescreened travel web sites or within a teacher-constructed HTTP environment in a CALL lab.

Appendices

The appendices for this article are available online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/2011_1a.pdf>

Helping students with citations and references

Darby McGrath
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Quick guide

Key words: academic writing, citations, references

Learner English level: Intermediate and above

Learner maturity: University

Preparation time: About three hours

Activity time: About 60 minutes

Introduction

As anyone who teaches academic writing in a Japanese university context will testify, the formal conventions of citing and referencing sources present a real challenge. Superficially, this appears counterintuitive. What could be easier than presenting students with examples of the types of references they will be required to write, and having them follow those models? The reality is much less straightforward. It can be difficult to persuade students to attend to those models, and even when they do the results are often patchy. This approach aims to present students with the requisite information incrementally, so that they are not overwhelmed.

Preparation

Step 1: Prepare a set of reference materials (see Appendix) which guides students through the process of constructing references and citations through a series of questions. The questions ask students to reflect on the nature of the sources they are using.

Step 2: Find a set of sources which your students can use to practice constructing citations and references and for which you can provide adequate feedback. Make sure that the sources reflect the variety of sources your students will be expected to use in their own writing (e.g., journal articles, web pages, book chapters).

Procedure

Step 1: Lead in to the topic by having the class discuss the following questions in pairs:

- How are citations and references different?
- Where do we use citations?
- Where do we use references?
- Why do we use citations?
- Why do we use references?

For students who have some familiarity with referencing, this will be a useful revision. For students who are not familiar with referencing, this will be your opportunity to give them an introduction, ideally with the use of a model essay.

Step 2: Familiarise students with the reference materials by leading them through the process of constructing citations and references; each step consists of a simple yes-no choice (Appendix).

Step 3: Give students the sources you have prepared beforehand. Then, ask students to apply the process laid out in the reference materials and to write both a citation and a reference for each source. Rotate them so that while one pair of students is working on a journal article, another pair is working on, for example, a

newspaper article. Set a time limit of around seven minutes, and then have each pair pass their source on to the next.

Step 4: Have each pair write a different citation and reference on the board and conduct plenary feedback, using the reference materials.

Conclusion

This approach focuses purely on helping students to write formally accurate references and citations, and to this extent it has proved fairly successful. It avoids overwhelming students with information, as often happens when they are simply confronted with a list of models to choose from. This said, it deals with perhaps the simplest aspect of source integration in academic writing. Beyond this you will need to attend to the far more challenging areas of source appropriacy, attribution, and paraphrasing.

Appendix

The appendix for this article are available online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/2011_1b.pdf>

Using TOEIC part 2 for the instruction of indirect speech acts

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Quick guide

Key words: TOEIC, indirect speech acts, speaking activity

Learner English level: Low intermediate and above

Learner maturity level: High school students and above

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Activity time: 45 minutes

Materials: Handouts (Appendices), a CD player, plastic chips, and a coin

Introduction

An indirect speech act has an indirect relationship between its structure and function, such as an interrogative sentence spoken not as a question, but as a request (Yule, 1996). In Part 2 of the TOEIC, test-takers listen to a short utterance and choose the proper response from three choices; these include various types of indirect speech acts such as indirect requests, offers, and suggestions. Thus, Part 2 of the TOEIC can be useful in teaching indirect speech acts for speaking, as well as listening.

Procedure

Step 1: Play music on a CD player loud enough that students cannot hear what you are saying. Elicit Japanese questions such as, *Oto o chisaku shitekuremasuka?* (Could you turn down the volume?).

Step 2: Ask them to think about how they say the same expression in English, and have them compare the two expressions and find similarities between them. Then, explain that interrogative utterances, such as, *Excuse me, do you think you could turn the music down?* can be used as a request (*TOEIC Test New Official Preparation Book*) and that this is the topic of the lesson.

Step 3: Introduce the following indirect requests from Part 2 of the listening section (Educational Testing Service, 2005):

- How about giving me a hand with this projector?
- Would you mind moving over?
- Excuse me, do you think you could turn the music down?

Then, have students practice indirect requests similar to the expressions above and appropriate to each situation as outlined in Appendix A. Remind students to be careful about using gerunds after *How about ～?*and *Would you mind～?*

Step 4: Introduce indirect expressions for suggestions (e.g., Educational Testing Service, 2005):

- How about going out for lunch today instead of eating in the cafeteria?

- Why don't we meet for lunch tomorrow?
- Don't you want to get some coffee before we go back to the office?
- For more polite suggestions, introduce sentences such as the following:
- Would you like to go out for drinks tonight?
- Would you be interested in going to see a movie tonight?

Have students make suggestions similar to the expressions above and appropriate for each context using the situations in Appendix B.

Step 5: Ask students to respond to the requests and suggestions. Students may be used to simply accepting the suggestions with a short answer (e.g., *Sounds nice*.). However, encourage them to refuse indirectly by introducing examples, such as *I have a one o'clock meeting, so that won't work today* (Educational Testing Service, 2005). Using Appendix A and B, encourage them to reject the suggestions and the requests indirectly with reasons why they cannot do the suggested actions.

Step 6: Have students form groups of 3 or 4 students and play the board game in Appendix C to practice indirect expressions. To play, students flip a coin in turn and move one square for heads or two for tails. They make a suggestion or a request to the person on the left, according to the instructions on each square. That person has to accept or refuse the request or suggestion indirectly.

Step 7: Review indirect requests, suggestions and refusals in this lesson and ask them if they use similar indirect strategies in Japanese. Then, suggest that they can adapt the indirect strategies in Japanese to English.

Conclusion

The listening section of the TOEIC test, which includes various types of indirect expressions, can be used to help students acquire knowledge of indirect speech acts and use them in conversation. Also, through this lesson, students can understand that there are indirect expressions in English just as there are in Japanese.

References

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Educational Testing Service. (2005). *TOEIC Test new official preparation book* (Vol. *1*). Tokyo: The Institute for International Business Communication.

Appendix

The appendix for this article are available online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/myshare/resources/2011_1c.pdf>

Cartoons: A bona fide tool for the pre-reading stage

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Quick guide

Key words: pre-reading, authentic material, exam-oriented syllabus, teachers' responsibility

Learner English level: Intermediate to advanced

Learners maturity level: High school and above

Preparation: 60 minutes per session

Activity time: 60 minutes

Materials: Illustrations hand-out

Introduction

When planning a reading lesson, there is an array of questions that should be kept in mind:

1. Is the reading passage authentic, comprehensible, and of interest to learners?
2. Does the reading passage permit learners' involvement?
3. Are learners familiar with the topic?

4. What are the best strategies that could be adopted to enhance learners' reading ability and sustain their motivation?

The answers to these questions, which are by no means exhaustive, will determine selection of reading materials and frame the appropriate strategies to enhance learners' ability in reading, especially in countries where the syllabus is primarily exam-oriented, and thus teachers' sole responsibility is to get learners to pass their exam.

Therefore, teachers' endeavours will depend on how well and minutely the lesson is planned, and to what extent the learners' profile and needs are taken into account. One of the components for a successful reading lesson is mental preparation, commonly known as the pre-reading phase. The pre-reading phase introduces the topic and useful vocabulary and places all learners on the same rostrum.

In this paper, I will describe how cartoons could be used in the pre-reading phase, enabling teachers to go beyond the limits of the class and monitor discussion. In my experience, cartoons often motivate learners because they are not only fun, but they often depict a topic under debate in the media; as a case in point here: the Environment.

Preparation

A set of cartoons bearing a topic about problems related to trash is handed out to learners who will be reading through and examining the pictures.

Procedure

Step 1: Learners examine the illustrations for a few minutes, and then answer the questions (e.g., What happened to the little boy's window? Who broke it? What is written on his sweater? What does "re" suggest to you?).

Step 2: Answers are written randomly on the board to serve as a backup for later activities.

Step 3: Learners team up to fill in the bubbles (see comic strip: Reboy's recommendations). This is a good exercise to make learners recall what has been said before and move from listening and speaking to writing. Surely, one should not expect them to find correct answers, but they can try, and in so doing they are given a chance to try their wings. With a lower level class, the statements could be written on the board.

Step 4: Once all the groups are finished, the teacher deals with the correction and asks general questions to add a finishing touch (e.g., How can people cut down the trash they produce? What are the 3 R's? What does each "R" mean? What is recycling?).

Statements

A: Bye for now, I'll see you soon!

B: Why won't you? I'm ready to talk to a kid with falling trousers.

C: No, not at all! Work your brain, kid.

D: Relax, kid! I'm Reboy; I'm here to teach you the 3 R's.

E: Not so much, unless you want to turn our planet into a garbage dump.

F: Ah! Ah! So is it! Do you know that the average American kid produces 475 pounds of solid waste every year?

G: Yes, you! But if you do the 3 R's, you can reduce the amount of trash and protect the Earth.

H: Tell me boy, is your cap on the right side or did your head take a turn?

Keys

Bubble 1: D	Bubble 3: F
Bubble 5: C	Bubble 7: H
Bubble 2: B	Bubble 4: G
Bubble 6: E	Bubble 8: A

Follow-up activity

As review or reinforcement, the activity described above could be extended to include reported speech. In other words, learners could be assigned the task of turning the statements into reported speech.

Conclusion

In a language class, cartoons can be used in a hundred ways to serve hundreds of purposes. Implementing such a tool depends ultimately

on the teacher's ingenuity and imagination. The activity described above features very important characteristics: it introduces and generates a topic (recycling), it integrates all skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and sub-skills (guessing, negotiating, and speculating), and perhaps more importantly it leads young learners into a world which is theirs: Cartoons. What more could we ask for?

Picture one

Picture two

TLT RESOURCES BOOK REVIEWS

This month's column features John Bankier's evaluation of the *Reading Explorer* series and Julian Pigott's review of *English Firsthand 2*.

Reading Explorer 1, 2, 3, & 4

[Nancy Douglas. Boston: Heinle, 2009. pp. 160. ¥3,842. ISBN: 978-1-4240-4362-0; Paul MacIntyre. Boston: Heinle, 2009. pp. 160. ¥3,492. ISBN: 978-1-4240-4364-4; Nancy Douglas. Boston: Heinle, 2010. pp. 160. ¥3,492. ISBN: 978-1-4240-4370-5; Paul MacIntyre. Boston: Heinle, 2010. pp. 224. ¥3,492. ISBN: 978-1-4240-4373-6.]

Reviewed by John Bankier, Soka University

Reading Explorer is a series of intensive reading texts based on articles from National Geographic magazine. The readings highlight popular science topics, with accompanying questions. These books are aimed at young adult learners and above, particularly students in an academic context. The series comprises four levels, with each book containing 12 units of two readings, along with four texts without questions. There is also a multimedia portion on CD-ROM.

...with Robert Taferner

To contact the editor: <reviews@jalt-publications.org>

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>

Each unit includes some warm-up questions to build interest and activate students' prior knowledge (Nation, 2009). This makes reading easier, as drawing attention to what students already know helps them to focus on understanding the language, rather than the content. This is followed by pre-reading activities to introduce key terminology the students will need in order to read the text. The pre-reading section also includes previewing skills, such as skimming and making predictions.

The readings in *Reading Explorer* are noticeably longer than many similar texts, with many readings in Book 4 around three pages in length. Personally, I find longer and more in depth readings give students more chance to flex their reading muscles than short texts, and more closely resemble the kind of texts learners might read outside the class. Another striking thing about the series is the large, full-color photos that accompany the stories, taken from National Geographic. This was a standout feature according to the feedback from my students. The texts themselves are graded; lower levels use simpler sentence structures and use more redundancies such as using proper nouns as opposed to pronouns, or repeating key information more often. One of the best features of the books was the non-patronizing nature of the lower-level topics. In my view, many texts aimed at lower-proficiency learners tend to assume they lack general knowledge; in contrast, the *Reading Explorer* series uses mature and interesting topics for all levels.

The texts are followed by questions designed to focus on skills such as guessing meaning from context, making inferences, and distinguishing fact from opinion. According to the authors, these are similar to those found in TOEFL and TOEIC (*Teacher's Guide*, p. 7). Generally, I found the questions were appropriate for reading comprehension as well as text preparation, but some students did mention that questions were too academically focused.

After the questions, there are gap-fills or similar exercises using vocabulary from the lesson. Vocabulary is a large focus in the series. Some topic-specific words are used in the articles, but these words are not the focus. Rather, the author focuses on more frequent words which are not topic specific. I found them generally to be within the Academic Word List (AWL) or General Service List (GSL) where appropriate. For example, a sample of Book 1 had 70% of highlighted words within the GSL and 20% within the AWL. The words are not arranged as lexical sets of related words, making them easier to learn (Nation, 2000). For example, the Book 2 lesson on King Tutankhamun included words such as *murder*, *luxurious*, and *teenager*, which are connected in the narrative but otherwise not to each other. Lower-frequency words, such as *X-ray technology*, are glossed in footnotes in the same article.

The feedback I received from students was almost entirely positive. Students liked the topics, which they found intrinsically interesting and different from the typical topics found in other ESL/EFL textbooks. A minority of students did find some questions quite hard; for example, questions focusing on distinguishing fact from opinion were new to many. Lack of previous knowledge did become an issue with certain texts; for instance, a student with a background in biology was able to comprehend a text on the human genome much more easily than a student of similar level but without the biology background. However, this did create opportunities for discussion and information sharing in the pre-reading phase.

The main drawback I found to the series was the cost. When compared to other reading textbooks, *Reading Explorer* is not cheap. Certainly the books are large. However, with potentially up to 28 readings per book, as well as the additional short texts and CD-ROM, they are good value.

To conclude, for those who have the budget, the *Reading Explorer* series would make an excellent main textbook for an intensive reading course, particularly one focused on vocabulary and academic reading skills.

References

Nation, I. S. P. (2000). Learning vocabulary in lexical sets: Dangers and guidelines. *TESOL Journal, 9*(2), 6-10.

Nation, I. S. P. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL reading and writing*. New York: Routledge.

English Firsthand 2 (4th edition)

[Marc Helgesen, Steve Brown, & John Wiltshier. Hong Kong: Pearson Longman Asia ELT, 2010. pp. 144. ¥2,867 (including two CDs containing all course listening materials). ISBN: 9789880030604.]

Reviewed by Julian Pigott, Kansai University

English Firsthand (4th edition) is the latest incarnation of Longman's long-running skills-based series for young adult learners. Book 2 (intermediate) is the highest level of four books (*Access, Success, Firsthand 1*, and *Firsthand 2*). It contains more than enough material to keep university students engaged for 30 weeks of 90-minute classes. A workbook provides review activities, and the teacher's manual comes with a CD-ROM which contains test materials and activity sheets. In addition, Longman Japan maintains a website (www.efcafe.com) where students and teachers can find supplementary review activities and a selection of useful links to other learning resources.

English Firsthand 2 is a four-skills course that emphasizes oral communication. Like the other books in the series, it consists of 12 units plus an introductory unit and two review units. The language focus, topics, and activities of each unit are centered on a particular skill (for example, *Talking about the past*). In each unit, a seven-step procedure introduces relevant vocabulary and structures through listening exercises, and provides structured and freer conversation practice through personalized tasks. Reading and writing exercises towards the end of each unit offer further opportunities for language recycling and consolidation.

One particularly positive feature of *English Firsthand 2* is the care taken to scaffold activities. In Unit 3—*Where Should I Go?*—for example, the main aim of the preview section is to introduce six adjectives related to travel. Rather than being presented with a word list, students are first expected to guess as much of the vocabulary as they can by reference to antonyms and visual clues. The accompanying recording provides not only the answers, but also contextualizing sentences. Finally, a follow-up activity encourages students to brainstorm nouns with which these adjectives could reasonably collocate. This scaffolding provides a supportive learning framework, which is especially welcome for students who lack confidence using English. Such careful attention to detail characterizes the *English Firsthand* series as a whole.

In general, there is a focus on pair work rather than group work in *English Firsthand 2*. This emphasis, along with clearly stated goals and scaffolding, motivates students—especially those who generally lack enthusiasm for English classes—to be active task participants (Dörnyei, 2001). During the activities themselves, some interesting exercises are utilized to facilitate meaningful interaction. For example, in Unit 2—*You Must be Excited*—the questioner checks a box every time she comments or asks follow-up questions, and the answerer checks a box every time she gives an extended answer. Methods such as these are a handy way to help students keep more interesting conversations going for longer.

In terms of level, topics, and relevance to the EFL context, *English Firsthand 2* scores highly. It is less challenging in terms of the presentation of new material than comparable textbooks. In my opinion this is a positive feature, because it allows more time for fluency practice, in line with recent arguments that up to 75% of class time should be spent on meaning-focused input and output (Nation & Newton, 2009). The topics

in *English Firsthand 2*, while generic, are personalized, encouraging students to share their own experiences and ideas. This fits with an EFL context-relevant view of authenticity, in which authenticity is viewed as meaningful interaction that works in the classroom—which is, after all, EFL students' main English world—rather than using a more abstract concept of authenticity based on a native speaker ideal or corpus data to judge the potential worth of student interaction.

My reservations about *English Firsthand 2* are minor. The *Model Conversation* section may perhaps be more suited to students using the lower level books, who are more likely to appreciate controlled practice. This is one respect in which the standardized format may have some disadvantages as well as advantages in terms of ease-of-use. Although *English Firsthand* is visually appealing, I feel that the distinctive hand-drawn artwork of the *New Gold Edition* gave more of a personal feel to the series than the computer generated manga-style characters of the current edition. The teacher's book is now printed in black-and-white, making it less user-friendly than its predecessor. Progress tests have been relegated to the CD-ROM, which is regrettably accessible only to Windows users.

These reservations notwithstanding, I have no hesitation in recommending *English Firsthand 2* to teachers looking for a general communication-based textbook. The clear layout, well-defined aims, varied and interesting pair work activities, and opportunities for fluency practice distinguish it from many of its competitors.

References

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nation, I. S. P., & Newton, N. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL listening and speaking*. New York: Routledge.

Recently Received

...with Greg Rouault

<pub-review@jalt-publications.org>

A list of texts and resource materials for language teachers available for book reviews in *TLT* and *JALT Journal*. Publishers are invited to submit complete sets of materials to the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison address listed on the Staff page inside the front cover of any *TLT*. [Please note the new address for the Publishers' Review Copies Liaison]

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* = new listing; ! = final notice. Final notice items will be removed 28 Feb. Please make queries by email to the appropriate JALT Publications contact.

Books for Students (reviewed in *TLT*)

Contact: Greg Rouault

pub-review@jalt-publications.org

* *Fiction in Action: Whodunit?* Gray, A., & Benevides, M. Tokyo: ABAX, 2010. [12-unit reading class coursebook or bridge to extensive reading w/ two six-chapter detective stories and tasks incl. CD and notebook].

! *Get it Down*. Cowie, N., & Sakui, K. Tokyo: Cengage Learning, 2009. [10-chapter writing text for high beginners with real world writing skills and process tasks focused on the reader].

* Helbling Young Readers. *(Lost on the Coast, A Christmas Present for Barney Bunny, Can I play?*) Various authors. Crawley, UK: Helbling Languages, 2010. [5-level fictional story series for young learners incl. CD-ROM/Audio CD w/ games, chants, dictation, interactive listening activities, and full story recording].

* *Lifestyle*. Dubicka, I., & O'Keefe, M. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education, 2010. [12-unit intermediate level listening and speaking coursebook built on a grammatical syllabus with functional language for work and socializing incl. self-study CD-ROM, audio CDs, workbook w/ audio CD, and teacher's book with *Test Master* CD-ROM].

* *Media English*. Knight, T. Nagoya: Perceptia Press, 2010. [13-unit coursebook for upper beginner to intermediate level learners in media studies or oral communication and discussion classes incl. photocopiable worksheets].

* *openMind*. Rogers, M., Taylore-Knowles, S., & Taylore-Knowles, J. Del Alvaro Obregon, Mexico: Macmillan Languagehouse, 2010. [2-level, 12-unit coursebook covering 4 skills for false beginner to low intermediate learners in a functional syllabus with added life skills topics incl. CD, workbook, teacher's guide, and test generator w/online resources (videos, reading activities, wordlists, and games for students, and presentation tools, planner, and resources for teachers)].

* *Read This*! Mackey, D., & Savage, A. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. [3-level reading series designed for adults and young adults at high beginner to intermediate levels incl. teacher's manual, unit tests, and student website *WebQuests*].

* *Scraps*. Cullen. B., & Mulvey, S. Nagoya: Perceptia Press, 2010. [8-unit, two-lesson cycle coursebook or supplementary resource for oral communication and presentation courses w/ topics closely related to students' daily lives incl. scripts, worksheets, and downloadable teacher's guide and resources].

* *The Sixties*. Elvin, C. Kawasaki: EFL Press, 2010. [4-skills book w/ each unit introducing a year from the sixties decade incl. online audio and teacher notes].

Thinking in English. Hunter, L. Tokyo: Cengage Learning, 2009. [Coursebook for logical thinking and entry-level technical writing].

* *True to Life*. Merenda, L., Fuller, D., & Fuller, C. Tokyo: Macmillan Languagehouse, 2011. [12-unit conversation coursebook w/ video of live interviews incl. DVD and free downloadable teacher's manual].

JALT FOCUS

JALT FOCUS

JALT Calendar

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

- Jan 6 – Deadline for submissions for JALT2010 Conference Proceedings. See <jalt-publications.org/proceedings/2010> for more information.
- 22 Apr – Deadline for submissions to present at JALT2011 in Tokyo. See <jalt.org/conference> for more information.
- May 21-22 – PanSIG 2011, Shinshu University, Matsumoto, Nagano. <jalt.org/pansig/2011>
- Jun 3-5 – JALTCALL, Kurume University, Kurume, Fukuoka. <jaltcall.org>
- Jul 2-3 – CUE SIG, Motivation Conference, Toyo Gakuen University (Hongo Campus), Tokyo. <cue2011conference.org>

JALT News

In the immediate wake of what was by all accounts another outstanding international conference, I am pleased to bring you the results of the national elections. Congratulations to all who put their name forward.

Here is Ann Mayeda, JALT's national elections officer, to give you the winners.

Election Results for 2010-12 JALT National Board of Directors

As the Nominations and Elections Committee Chair, I am pleased to announce the new slate of National Officers for the 2010-12 term of office.

- **President:** Kevin Cleary
- **Vice-president:** Nathan Furuya

- **Director of Membership:** Judith "Buzz" Green
- **Director of Program:** Steve Cornwell
- **Director of Public Relations:** Michael Stout
- **Director of Records:** Aleda Krause
- **Director of Treasury:** Oana Cusen
- **Auditor:** Caroline Lloyd

A total of 126 valid ballots were received by the official postmarked deadline of 15 October 2010.

On behalf of JALT I would like to thank the candidates for accepting their nominations and contributing to the dynamism of JALT into the next decade. I would also like to thank all the active members who took the time to show their support for the candidates and the organization by mailing in their ballots. A special round of applause goes to Malcolm Swanson for his help with the ballots, to Marcos Benevides for getting the announcements out on time in *TLT*, and to June Shirakawa and Chie Kobayashi at JCO for their help with the election and voting details.

Ann Mayeda, JALT NEC Chair 2010

Office	Name	Votes	Write-ins	Abstentions
President	Kevin Cleary	120	1	5
Vice-president	Nathan Furuya	120	1	5
Director of Membership	Judith Green	115	2	9
Director of Program	Steve Cornwell	121	0	5
Director of Public Relations	Michael Stout	116	1	9
Director of Records	Aleda Krause	121	0	5
Director of Treasury	Oana Cusen	119	0	7
Auditor	Caroline Lloyd	122	0	4

Positions available

TLT *Associate Editor*

Application deadline: Ongoing until filled.

The Language Teacher. . . is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of Associate Editor, with future advancement to the position of Coeditor. Applicants must be JALT members and must have the knowledge, skills, and leadership qualities to oversee the production of a regularly published academic publication. Previous experience in publications, especially at an editorial level, is an asset. Knowledge of JALT publications is desirable. Applicants must also have regular access to a computer with email and word processing capabilities.

This post requires several hours of concentrated work every week editing articles, scheduling and overseeing production, and liaising with the Publications Board. Applicants should be prepared to make a minimum three-year commitment with an extension possible. The assumption of duties is tentatively scheduled for early 2011. Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae (including details of publication background and published works), a cover letter, and a statement of purpose indicating why they would like to become Associate Editor (and later advance to Coeditor) of The Language Teacher, to: Ted O'Neill, JALT Publications Board Chair, at pubchair@jalt-publications.org. This position will remain open until filled.

. . .with Marcos Benevides

To contact the editor: <jalt-focus@jalt-publications.org>

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:
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JALT FOCUS MEMBER'S PROFILE

In this edition of Member's Profile, Jennifer Yphantides reflects on her career path and the importance of acknowledging the affective side of teaching.

MEMBER'S PROFILE

Jennifer Yphantides

Although I have worked for nearly 17 years as an ESL/EFL teacher, I have just recently begun to set aside some time for serious reflection on my professional identity. Instead of ignoring the personal side of teaching, I am asking myself about how who I am outside of the classroom shapes what I do on a daily basis in the classroom. I believe it has taken me such a long time to come to the conclusion that this type of questioning is critical to professional satisfaction for two reasons. First, similar to numerous colleagues, I have often had very busy workdays which did not afford much time for reflection. Second, also similar to many of my fellow teachers, I came into our profession by accident and for the first several years expected that I would eventually exit it as easily as I had entered.

The fortunate accident happened one lazy summer afternoon as I was caught speaking English in a Greek market. I was immediately offered a teaching position in Thessaloniki, my father's hometown. I had just graduated from university, had never really travelled outside of North America before, and was ready to live in a picturesque coastal city which enjoyed much warmer winters than my native Canada. I envisioned weekend getaways to exotic destinations and dinners overlooking the beach. What I hadn't expected was teaching more than 300 students in 16 different groups, some of whom I met only fortnightly. More important, I had not foreseen the immense moral responsibility involved in teaching.

I survived my one-year contract in Greece and escaped on to graduate studies in England. I did a MA in War Studies but I did not want to abandon TESOL entirely, so I simultaneously pursued a teaching qualification. I assumed that an ESL situation would involve more motivated, less problematic students. On my first day of practice teaching, I realized this would not necessarily be the case as my meticulously prepared lesson

…with Jason Peppard

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Member's Profile is a column where members are invited to introduce themselves to *TLT*'s readership in 750 words or less. Research interests, professional affiliations, current projects, and personal professional development are all appropriate content.

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.

on describing family members brought my randomly assigned class of former-Yugoslavian refugees to tears.

Despite what seemed like a fatal classroom disaster, I passed my teaching practicum with my cognitive focus on teaching and learning firmly intact and the affective side tucked safely away. I then went on to work in Korea for two years, followed by a five year stint in Israel. I very much enjoyed my time in Korea but the punishing workload quelled any real possibility for self-examination. In Israel however, I was limited to part-time work at the University of Haifa. In Haifa, I had the pleasure of teaching very diverse groups of students including Arabs, Jews, Ethiopians, and Russians. Because of the intense political situation, many issues arose in class that could not be ignored. It was my first real experience coping with (rather than ignoring) the more delicate side of teaching and learning. At that time, I brought a lot of myself into the classroom but found exploration and analysis of this part of my teaching to be complex and overwhelming.

I have now been in Japan for over six years. After paying my dues at various conversation schools, I was able to afford pursuing an MA in TESOL. I was pleased I was able to focus so heavily on the more personal aspects of teaching during my degree while still concentrating on cognitive issues. Since graduation, I have had more time to reflect on what I want to focus on as a teacher: presenting multiple perspectives in the classroom and fostering more critical thinking. Of course, this requires sharing personal feelings and opinions, something I'm shying away from less and less as I move forward in my career.

In addition, I have also become more active in professional organizations such as JALT, where I have discovered a supportive network of committed teachers with whom I can share ideas about self-exploration. Recently, I was inspired at the Pan-SIG by Maggie Lieb's presentation on personal ethics in English language education. Also, I attended Andy Curtis's plenary address entitled *Know thyself: What can we learn about reflective practice from other professions?* at PACKOTESOL in October 2010. At the end of his talk, Dr. Curtis expressed his belief that "teaching is an affective, heart-level event based on good relationships between teachers and students." His comment challenged me to take a deeper look at how I may be able to harness the power of personal qualities, both my own and those of my students, to make a stronger pedagogical impact.

Jennifer Yphantides is currently a lecturer at Kanda University of International Studies in Chiba. This academic year, she has enjoyed working on two literacy development projects. The first involved students writing their own graded readers. The second was holding a readathon during the school festival to raise money for shipping books to a girls' school in Varanasi, India.

JALT FOCUS GRASSROOTS

In this edition of Grassroots, Roger Pattimore writes about how a small but passionate group, the long-running Junior/Senior High SIG remains committed to making a difference in the lives of secondary school teachers across Japan; Katsuhito Watanabe describes the JACET-Kanto Convention: the annual "one-day" convention in the heart of Tokyo; Paul Doyon exhorts us to think a little more critically about the use of wireless technologies in the classroom; and Jack Yohay writes in honor of the memory of a great teacher and prodigious communicator, Louis Levi, from Tokyo Woman's Christian University.

The Junior/Senior High SIG: Year17 (?)

by Roger Pattimore, Treasurer

The Junior/Senior High SIG is in its 15th or 17th year, but it depends how you count! The "Team Teaching SIG," our apparent ancestor, formed in 1993, and volumes of its newsletter, *Team Teaching Bulletin*, are numbered as the first volumes of our current newsletter. In 1995 the title of the SIG changed to "Jr./Sr. High N-SIG", thus broadening the mandate, and the newsletter became the *Jr./Sr. High Bulletin*. *The School House* dates from 1998. Thus, if not 17, the SIG has remained basically the same organization since 1995 and we may consider the years 1993 and 1994 as a longish period of gestation!

In principle, the SIG represents secondary school English teachers, a huge group numbering some 80,000 individuals nationally. This estimate includes both public and private junior and senior high Japanese teachers of English (JTEs), various private Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs), members of the JET program (mostly ALTs), as well as many stand-alone foreign teachers in the private sector. Our group, tiny though it is, consists of members from all of these, plus members who, although not secondary teachers themselves, are involved in teacher education.

Despite the huge potential pool of members, secondary teachers have been vastly underrepresented within JALT, which in turn has affected SIG membership. According to a 1993 SIG report, we had about 100 members. We have rarely been more than that and sometimes much less. At the time of writing (September) we have 82 members, although several people appear to have forgotten to renew their memberships during the summer!

We have succeeded in focusing a wide variety of teacher types on some main ideas. Looking at the goals listed in our first newsletter in 1993, one goal stands out:

> "To provide a focus in JALT for increased research and discussion of issues directly related to the improvement and development of foreign language education in Japanese secondary schools."

That goal has clearly endured and has been religiously pursued by successive executives to

…with Joyce Cunningham and Mariko Miyao

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

the benefit of our members and the rest of the English teaching community.

What do we do? Firstly, the newsletter has come out regularly three times a year for 17 years. We publish a wide range of articles on all facets of secondary education from very theoretical research-oriented articles to practical classroom ideas. Secondly, SIG members are active presenters. Within the preceding 10 months, every member of the SIG executive has presented either at the 2009 JALT National Conference or at local venues around the country such as chapter-sponsored events.

While the SIG has maintained a high degree of continuity since inception, several new trends have developed in the last seven to eight years. First, the annual JALT conference SIG Forum has become a regular event. More overtly than in the past, we aim to push the limits and challenge assumptions. Within our usual 90-minute time slot, we try to keep presentations short and discussions long. Topics have been wide ranging and challenging: we have critiqued the Ministry of Education; we have listened to students discuss their secondary school experiences; we have challenged the idea of the JET program; and most recently, contrary to the popular trend, we have been talking about what IS working. During last year's groundbreaking forum (2009), a panel of Japanese teachers, including non-JALT members, presented ideas on their own teaching as well as problems confronting all secondary teachers. A lively 45-minute discussion followed. At least 50% of the audience was also Japanese and we did the whole thing in English! This year, in line with the conference theme of "thinking outside the box," we will challenge the current pessimism about team teaching. A panel of ALTs and JTEs will present and discuss how they are making team teaching work.

Blessed with conscientious editors, *The School House* always makes excellent reading. On the production side, it is always a sought-after place for new and experienced writers alike. Our ISSN number makes publication with us countable in terms of job placement. We have also published submissions in Japanese to try to broaden the dialogue. Finally, we also welcome submissions from non-JALT and/or non-SIG members.

I am very optimistic about the future of our SIG. In 2011, we are expecting to have a diverse executive from all walks of teaching at the secondary level, and all full of enthusiasm and new ideas. We hope to see many of you at various events planned for 2011.

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The JACET-Kanto 4th Annual Convention

by Katsuhito Watanabe, Obirin University

The JACET-Kanto 4th Annual Convention was held at Hongo Campus of Toyo Gakuen University in Hongo, Tokyo, on Sunday, 27 June 2010. Conveniently located in the centre of Tokyo, the campus is a short walking distance from Suidobashi Station on the JR Sobu line, close to the Tokyo Dome, the home of the Tokyo Giants. Registration started at 8:30 am (1,000 yen for members and students, and 2,000 yen for non-members). A number of articles and booklets were available to peruse before the conference started. The main theme of our JACET-Kanto 4th Convention was *What is expected in college English education from a global perspective*. At the opening ceremony, key JACET officials including Yukinari Shimoyama, Executive Chairperson of Toyo Gakuen University, and others gave initial remarks.

The 4th convention featured eight research presentations, four case studies, two workshops, five symposiums, two publisher presentations, and two special events from Toyo Gakuen University. All research presentations and case studies were 30 minutes long, while workshops

and symposiums ran about an hour long. Highlights of research presentations included an analysis of the fluency of three Japanese graduate students who studied in the UK. This was a one-year longitudinal study focusing on the graduates' abilities in the areas of linguistics, communication, and fluency. Another highlight was titled *Toyo Gakuen Session*, by two presenters from Toyo Gakuen University, who concentrated on ALPS and developing good language learners. They emphasized the strengths and limitations of good language learners. It was possible to attend many other interesting presentations and workshops in a variety of areas such as content-based course design, effective use of the L1 in EFL classrooms, CALP-based learning, and so on. All were well attended.

The featured speaker of the keynote lecture, Nobuaki Minematsu of the University of Tokyo, gave an inspiring session on his analysis of English pronunciation. The title was *English Pronunciation in the Globalized Era and the Scientific Method of its Analysis*. His point of view of English pronunciation is not only drawn from English education, but from the fields of science and engineering as well. In his talk, Minematsu discussed the importance of English pronunciation in English education in Japan. In the past, many students in primary and secondary education were taught English by the "repeat after me" technique. From a scientific point of view, Minematsu argued that this procedure of repeating after the teacher is but one of the many ways for students to acquire English pronunciation. He stated that the acquisition of English pronunciation needs to be further analyzed. The procedure presented in his session was a striking one, demonstrating how various types of gadgets such as buzzers, cylinders, and tubes could improve the understanding of the listeners as to how different sounds are made. Two procedures showed how people articulate sounds using soft tubes, and musical instruments with hard cylinders. Minematsu simply attached a buzzer to all sorts of soft tubes to show human articulation. Just as humans change their articulation by changing the size of the opening of their mouths, soft tubes were squeezed to produce a variety of sounds. On the other hand, hard cylinders cannot alter their shapes, similar to musical instruments. These examples of articulation were only a few of the many aspects of his analysis of English pronunciation. The importance of the level of pronunciation to be acquired was also addressed in that Minematsu believes learners should set their own goals to acquire pronunciation at the levels of Hollywood stars, diplomatic officials, presenters who often speak at international conferences, Japanese business people traveling to non-English speaking countries, and finally that of tourists doing some shopping. The scientific and pedagogical ideas laid out in this presentation were truly inspiring and will surely attract more researchers and educators of English pronunciation in the future.

For more information about the next convention, please check the JACET Kanto Chapter website at <jacet-kanto.org>. Although the official announcement has not yet been published, previous conventions were all held within the same time frame and at major universities in the central Tokyo area and it is highly likely that the next convention will follow suit. We look forward to welcoming you warmly to the next convention.

Thinking critically about wireless technologies and language learning

by Paul Raymond Doyon, Associate Professor, Utsunomiya University

Condemnation without investigation is the height of ignorance—Albert Einstein

I am disturbed to increasingly be seeing reports of presentations blindly extolling the benefits of cell-phone and other wireless-device usage in the language-teaching classroom.

Last year, at a university in Thailand, I was getting ready to teach an EFL class and was taking role when I noticed Noi (a pseudonym) had been absent for five classes. I had just been having a conversation with the students about cell phones explaining to them that the research is showing an increase in brain tumors after ten years of use. I had then asked them how long they had

had their cell phones. *"Three years." "Five years." "Seven years,"* had been their answers. When I asked Noi why she had been absent she replied, "It is because I have a brain tumor."

This was a terribly sad thing to know from a young woman who was just beginning her adult life. Yet, I have recently been hearing an increasing number of personal accounts from people with this problem. At this same university, one of my colleague's friends had died of a brain tumor. Several of my coworkers from when I was working in China the previous year had parents with brain tumors. Another friend of mine wrote to me to tell me of his dismay at seeing his five-year old nephew being treated for a brain tumor. Brain tumors, surpassing leukemia in 2002, are now the leading cause of cancer death in children. I gave a presentation last year on the topic of cell phone dangers to a women's group in Chiang Mai, Thailand and asked people in the audience to raise their hands if they knew someone with a brain tumor. Almost everyone did. Now, the "official" explanation out there for this is that we have better diagnostics with the MRI machine, which made its debut in 1984—though I question this answer.

1984 was also the first year when the first commercial cell phone network was set up nationally in the USA. It is also the first year that we started seeing what the media dubbed as "Yuppie Flu," which was given the more officious, but dubious, name of "Chronic Fatigue Syndrome" by the CDC four years later in 1988. It was furthermore the first year reports of Colony Collapse Disorder started being made; and this disorder which is causing bees to disappear has now spread around the world.

I personally suffered from an illness back in the spring of 2005 when I started to exhibit a host of bizarre and (at the time) unexplainable symptoms which included extreme fatigue, insomnia, brain fog, concentration and memory problems, dry and irritated eyes, swollen lymph nodes, heart pain and palpitations, anxiety attacks, increased allergies and sensitivities, night sweats, chills, headaches, dizziness, intestinal disturbances, eye pain and vision problems, nausea, extreme thirst, frequent urination, tinnitus, and extreme and sudden weight loss.

I was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (自律神経失調症) by a doctor at Kyushu University Hospital—and was told there was nothing I could do to recover. However, after six months of a progressively worsening condition and the frantic search for both the cause and a cure, I finally started to suspect ambient electromagnetic radiation (also known as "electrosmog") exposure —especially the microwave radiation pumped out into our environments for cell phone and WiFi use—as being the culprit. I moved into a log house in the mountains of Saga, where there was no cell phone reception, and within 24 hours noticed a complete disappearance of approximately 50% of my symptoms. I stayed in this log house for four months and was pronounced completely cured by another Japanese doctor one year after I initially started to experience symptoms.

Further research into this issue led me to the knowledge that not only did people start getting ill with this mysterious illness in 1984—the same year that the first commercial cell phone network began operating across the United States, but also that the symptoms of CFS mimic what have been termed *Radio Wave* or *Microwave Sickness*. There are a multitude of other parallels I have found which I don't have the space to go into given my 750-word limit.

Suffice it to say, before uncritically embracing these technologies in the classroom and blindly extolling their benefits, we also need to take a very serious look at the other side of the coin: their negative mental, psychological, social, and biological effects.

L'chaim! To life! Louis Levi 1925-2010

by Jack L. Yohay, EFL Coordinator, Seifu Gakuen, Osaka

The great teacher and prodigious communicator Louis Levi, whose 11 years at Tokyo Woman's Christian University followed a 1960s sojourn at Sakura no Seibo Junior College in Fukushima-ken, died this past 14 June at age 84

in Alnwick, Northumberland, UK, where since 1991 he had lived in retirement, generously sharing his literary talents, his enjoyment of the arts, and an enormous sense of fun, fuelled by a crisp morning mix of muesli and, later on, crisp, chilled white wine.

Much of that sense of fun had to do with Louis' immense appreciation for and pride in the English language. While delighting in pointing out odd, at times "atrocious" turns of phrase in print, he nurtured its development in the minds of his students, insisting on rewrite after rewrite, much as his long-time TWCU colleague Kobayashi Yuko (1991) imagined that a traditional British grammar school master would do. According to Ms. Kobayashi, he refused arbitrarily to base a pedagogical point purely on the notion of "native intuition"; as if he were an accomplished physician doing teaching and research in medical school, he would take the time to pursue the issue at hand, look things up, and perform his own rigorous analysis. He was like a doctor, examining and prescribing remedies for his "patient" learners.

Professor Levi (who never even hinted at his exalted qualifications) demonstrated his scholarly powers of analysis in a seminal paper, "Talking of 'If'" (1983), using 183 examples drawn almost entirely from popular writers, mostly of mysteries, without idiosyncratic styles, and observing that in all instances the inter-personal function of the "if" clause is more important to the discourse than the ideational content. His *A Narrative Function of the Past Perfect* had appeared (as it were) in 1982, preceded by *English Written and Spoken*, in which he points out, "Speech tends to be treated as if it were conversation; and conversation seems to be regarded as the interchange of greetings and the idle chitchat of an empty day. There seems little sense of the use of speech for such purposes as explanation, instruction, persuasion, and narration." He goes on to recommend that initially the syntax of written material presented to learners be the syntax of speech, arguing for the instilling of "oracy" as a complement to literacy.

Following graduation from Cambridge University in 1946, Louis secured a teaching-of-English certificate at Queens College and soon embarked on 12 years with the Colonial Education Service, which took him to Nigeria, Singapore, Malaysia, Fukushima-ken, Israel (Hebrew University, University of the Negev), and Papua New Guinea. He obtained an M.A. at Cambridge in 1961 and later a Ph.D. at St. Catharine's. For 11 years he would walk in the rain under his "brolly" to the drolly-named Tokyo Woman's Christian University, where after all he helped educate many a woman. During this time he presented at several JALT national conferences and served as My Share editor for The Language Teacher in 1988. His letters-to-the-editor published in newspapers in Japan and Britain revealed a deep concern not only for the English language but also for a number of social causes.

The Biblical role of the Levi as teacher and spiritual example is to lead and thereby accompany others back to their spiritual purpose. Louis enacted this role with verve and dedication. As his Alnwick friends Jane O'Brien and Francesca Mackay express it, those of us privileged to have known Louis will ever remember one who "jostled a lot of molecules," the gentlest of listening ears and the most loyal of friends, a truly good and gifted man who enriched our lives in so many ways.

Zikhrono livrakha: may Louis' memory be for a blessing.

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JALT FOCUS

OUTREACH

My dream: Towards a methodology for using Japanese in the ESL classroom

Ted Bonnah has the ability to speak and write in Japanese, yet he prefers not to use these skills when he is teaching English. He obtained the top level (1-kyu) in JLPT, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, in 2001 with a score of 297/400. An Anglophone, he obtained a *Certificat en Français Langue Seconde* from Université Laval in Quebec. But he didn't use French when teaching mixed ESL and English classes at L'École des Grands Vents in Canada, a francophone school for junior high school students and elementary classes of mixed English speakers, French speakers, and refugee children from different linguistic backgrounds.

Bonnah launched his teaching career in 1996 as a JET teacher in Kyushu. Returning to his native Canada, he leveraged the experience to develop a colorful and varied teaching record. From 2004 to 2005, he taught ESL to immigrants and refugees at the Association for New Canadians, an NPO, using the Canadian Language Benchmarks system. While enrolled in a B. Ed. in French and English and an M.A. program, he taught ESL and Introduction to Japanese classes at Memorial University. Now he is back in Japan teaching English Communication and Writing classes at Ritsumeikan University. In this essay for Outreach, Bonnah explains why he uses Japanese in his university classrooms "only when it is necessary and beneficial."

JALT2011 Call for Submissions
See page 78 of this *TLT*!

In the autumn of 2007, while attending an ESL workshop in Fukuoka entitled *Using L1 in the L2 Classroom*, I had a beautiful dream. The tension in the room between an older Japanese teacher who insisted that she never used Japanese in her classes (perish the thought!), and a group of younger, "off-the-boat" first-time foreigner teachers pleading for advice or direction sapped my energy. I began to daydream. The workshop was overseen by a pony-tailed university chap who wanted to open a dialogue, but not offer any support or direction to either side.

My mind drifted to thinking about what would happen if the ruckus about using Japanese in the ESL classroom melted away, if we could all just agree that L1 is a tool like any other in the second language classroom, not much different from a tape recorder or a computer. There would be no more arguments, no more boasting from teachers who claim to use only English, no more parents or administrators putting pressure on those who do not, and no more guilt for those

…with David McMurray

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Outreach is a place where teachers from around the world can exchange opinions and ideas about foreign language learning and teaching. It provides outreach to classroom teachers who would not otherwise readily have access to a readership in Japan. The column also seeks to provide a vibrant voice for colleagues who volunteer to improve language learning in areas that do not have teacher associations. Up to 1,000 word reports from teachers anywhere in the world are welcomed. Contributors may also submit articles in the form of interviews with teachers based overseas.

of us who "slip up" and use Japanese. But like other teaching tools, the issue of what methodology should govern its use would still have to be resolved in the calm that would follow the storm. Just as the fervor over language labs in the 1960s went bust by the 1980s and computers in the classroom are still a bone of contention today, to avoid the problems that plagued the implementation of other educational tools we would need to clarify some rules and regulations for using Japanese in the classroom. McMillan, Rivers, and Cripps (2009) suggest that judicious L1 use may be a good strategic choice under certain circumstances, but to determine what circumstances suggest L1 use, three questions need to be answered: when should teachers use Japanese, what objectives can be met by it, and finally, who is entitled to use L1 in the L2 classroom?

Before a useful discussion can begin, however, we need to acknowledge the two great misunderstandings that underscore this debate. The first is that "Japanese use" does not mean using Japanese all the time. Just as an ESL teacher would not think of having a class use computers or audio labs all the time (unless they were in a specialized course that dictated this), "use" implies judicious employment only in situations where it could be said to benefit the student with increased learning and the teacher with better classroom management. Secondly, there is no such thing as "the" Japanese ESL classroom. There are innumerable variations in the composition and coordination of English lessons. Student ages may range from babies to university students to seniors, or a mix thereof, while direction could vary from clear objectives in a syllabus with a textbook to "free" conversation with neither. Teachers may be responsible for evaluation and course development, or they may just have to show up sober. Just as a teacher would never think of using PCs with toddlers (unless in a specialized setting), or using children's ABC books with adults, so too the characteristics of the class and requirements of the situation dictate whether use of Japanese is justified.

The first question we must ask ourselves is: How would we know when this tool is necessary? Classes where communication with students in English is difficult or impossible would seem to call for a modicum of Japanese use. If the problems are due to a lack of basic L2 ability, instructing and explaining in Japanese can clarify expectations, thereby allowing smoother English practice. In my beginner children's classes, I have found that an investment of 2 to 3 minutes explaining an activity or game in Japanese pays off with 20 to 30 minutes of English use. The activity can be re-explained in English at a later date, gradually "loading" students with teaching language and decreasing the need to explain in Japanese over time. In situations in which students lack motivation, especially where miscommunication causes classroom management problems, using Japanese may allow the teacher to help students get over these hurdles which prevent learning. In so-called "problem child" classes I have taught at both elementary and post-secondary levels, students have expressed their exhaustion and frustration when immersed in an all-English context for which they were unprepared. Birch (2010) confirms that code-switching to Japanese is equally a tool students use for communication, checking their performance, and building their L2 learner identity. By using Japanese to help troubled students over rough spots and ensure their success, I have been able to assist their transition from language learner to language user.

In addition to communication considerations, the presence or lack of successful language learning factors also determines whether using Japanese is appropriate. Ellis (2000) summarizes the factors of successful learners as internal attributes such as an ear for sounds, talent with grammar, an eye for connections, and a good memory, as well as external factors such as having a good reason to study or an interest in English. The fewer successful language-learning factors there are, the more judicious use of Japanese would seem to allow the teacher to help students compensate for these factors. Conversely, when more of these factors are present, the less need there would be to use Japanese. For instance, English immersion classes and those with motivated learners would not seem to require Japanese use. In such cases using L1 could even be detrimental to student motivation or the English learning environment.

The second question is: What objectives can be best served by using L1? For argument's sake,

we can break these into management objectives and learning objectives. At the post-secondary level, instructors have a duty to let students know assessment expectations and results, yet such explanations in English are often beyond the capabilities of the student. In such cases, the teacher or administrator would almost be ethically compelled to use whatever language the student understands to apprise them of their academic standing. It would be ideal if students were able to follow in English. When I was teaching English in Canada, I saw firsthand that this type of specialized pedagogic language was sometimes beyond most people's means. As for exercises with communication objectives, it seems antithetical that Japanese would be useful. For beginners it could be used to initially explain activities that later facilitate communication. Finally, since language is fundamentally a social construct, using Japanese could be a way for the teacher to bond with students, to show them that the teacher knows what it is like to be a language learner, and that the teacher has knowledge of a foreign language and culture that they are equally capable of achieving.

Finally, this question needs to be considered: How can we decide who could or should use Japanese in the classroom? Non-Japanese teachers should be able to concretely explain what students are to do, as well as be able to put abstract concepts into understandable terms. This means having at least JLPT level 2 and being confident with their spoken and written Japanese ability. In addition, to acquire the specialized language of instructors, foreign teachers could practice by observing competent Japanese native teachers, preferably in naturalistic situations like kokugo (Japanese language and literature) classes. In addition to the burden of ability (vocabulary, syntax, and nuance), a foreigner would also have to show that they possess the judgment to use L1 only to benefit the class. All too often, both foreign and Japanese teachers limit themselves to words like *dame* (Stop that!) and *shizuka* (Be quiet!)—negative reinforcement that derails classroom management over time, and thus should be avoided. Only Japanese words that illuminate problems and solutions, and that encourage students to do their best, should be employed. Naturally, although native Japanese speakers have L1 communication ability, similar good judgment would also be required of them.

Will my dream ever become a reality? Probably not. But for teachers grappling with mixed-level classes, a wide range of ages, classroom management and learning disability issues, as well as evaluation and counseling duties, judicious use of L1 can be a boon. Although no consensus on Japanese use may ever be reached by the teaching community, it is up to each educator to determine for himself or herself whether Japanese use can improve their teaching results, and whether they have the ability to wield it.

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Bonnah (third from left) studies Japanese with classmates.

TLT COLUMN SIG NEWS

SIGs at a glance

Key: [💡 = keywords] [📖 = publications] [🗣 = other activities] [📧 = email list] [💬 = online forum] **Note**: For contacts & URLs, please see the Contacts page.

Pan-SIG 2011

Pan-SIG 2011 conference on the theme *Discovering paths to fluency* will be held at Shinshu University, Matsumoto, in Nagano Prefecture, 21-22 May 2011. For more information, please contact Mark Brierley <mark2@shinshu-u.ac.jp> or the website < jalt.org / pansig / 2011>.

Bilingualism

[💡 bilingualism, biculturality, international families, child-raising, identity] [📖 *Bilingual Japan*—3x year, Journal—1x year] [🗣 forums, panels] [📧]

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 <bsig.org> for more information.

当研究会は複数言語で生活する家族および日本におけるバイリンガ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<bsig.org>をご覧下さい。

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 Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Special Interest Group (SIG) actively supports and promotes the use of various technologies in language learning. In addition, we encourage everyone interested to join our new online discussions in our Google Group. JALTCALL 2011 will be held 3-5 June at Kurume University, Fukuoka, and will feature Keynote Speaker Carla Meskill of the State University of New York. For more information please visit the reorganized CALL SIG website at <jaltcall.org>.

…with James Essex

To contact the editor: <sig-news@jalt-publications.org>

JALT currently has 21 Special Interest Groups (SIGs) available for members to join. This column publishes announcements of SIG events, mini-conferences, publications, or calls for papers and presenters. SIGs wishing to print news or announcements should contact the editor by the 15th of the month, 6 weeks prior to publication. SIG NEWS ONLINE: You can access all of JALT's events online at:

<jalt.org/calendar>

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]

Call for Presentations: CUE 2011 Conference on Foreign Language Motivation in Japan, 2-3 July 2011, at Toyo Gakuen University, Hongo Campus, Tokyo. Empirical and theoretical proposals accepted from 1 Nov 2010 to 31 Jan 2011. Visit <jaltcue-sig.org> or <cue2011conference.org> for proposal details and online submission form.

Extensive Reading

The ER SIG exists to help teachers in Japan start and improve Extensive Reading and Extensive Listening programmes. Our newsletter, *Extensive Reading in Japan* (ERJ), is full of ideas for those new to ER and experienced ER practitioners. It keeps our members up-to-date on ER research and new graded reader releases. Check out our website at <jaltersig.org>.

Framework & Language Portfolio

[curriculum-planning, assessment, language education reform, Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), European Language Portfolio (ELP)] [newsletter] [workshops, materials development] [ ]

This SIG wants to discuss the CEFR and ELP, and other similar frameworks and their relevance for Japan. There is an emphasis on developing materials to support educators who would like to use these pedagogic tools; the bilingual Language Portfolio for Japanese University is now available online. The SIG holds periodical seminars focusing on classroom use and is present at many conferences. Please refer to <sites.google.com/site/flpsig/home> and <flpsig@gmail.com> for more information.

Gender Awareness in Language Education

[gender awareness; gender roles; interaction/discourse analysis; critical thought; gender related/biased teaching aims] [newsletter/online journal] [Gender conference, workshops] [ ] [ ]

GALE works towards building a supportive community of educators and researchers interested in raising awareness and researching how gender plays an integral role in education and professional interaction. We also network and collaborate with other JALT groups and the community at large to promote pedagogical and professional practices, language teaching materials, and research inclusive of gender and gender-related topics. Visit our website at <gale-sig.org> for more details.

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 <gilesig.org>. For further information, contact Kip Cates <kcates@rstu.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] [AGM at the JALT conference] [ ]

論文・記事大募集:JALT日本語教育学会では日本語教育論集の発行を計画しています。研究報告、学会発表報告論文、日本語教授・学習法に関する論文、ブック・レビューなど募集。日本語研究者、指導者、学習者の皆様応募お願いします。ホームページをご覧ください:<jalt.org/jsl>.

Call for Papers: JALT Journal of Japanese Language Education. Japanese as a second language researchers, teachers, and learners are invited to contribute articles, research reports, essays, and reviews. Please visit our website: <jalt.org/jsl>.

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, anthology of Japan-based action research projects] [ ]

The Learner Development SIG is a lively and welcoming group of teachers interested in improving our practice by exploring the connections between learning and teaching. We also meet to share ideas and research in small-scale events such as mini-conferences, poster-sessions, and local group meetings. For more information check out our homepage <ld-sig.org>.

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 <jalt.org/lifelong>. For more information or to join the mailing list, contact Yoko Wakui <ywakui@bu.iij4u.or.jp> or Eric M. Skier <skier@ps.toyaku.ac.jp>.

生涯語学学習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。LLL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< jalt.org/lifelong>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。お問い合わせは涌井陽子<ywakui@bu.iij4u.or.jp>。または Eric M. Skier <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 was established for the purpose of helping members to turn fresh teaching ideas into useful classroom materials. We try to be a mutual assistance network, offering information regarding copyright law, sharing practical advice on publishing practices, including self-publication, and suggesting ways to create better language learning materials for general consumption or for individual classroom use.

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/jaltpragsig> 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 <debito.org/PALE>. Also, anyone may join our listserv <groups.yahoo.com/group/PALE_Group>. For information on events, visit <jalt.org/groups/PALE>.

Study Abroad

[study abroad, pre-departure curriculum, setting up, receiving students, returnees] [*Ryugaku*—3-4x year] [national and Pan-SIG conferences] [ ]

The Study Abroad SIG is interested in all that is Study Abroad. We aim to provide a supportive place for discussion of areas of interest, and we hope that our members will collaborate to improve the somewhat sparse research into Study Abroad. We welcome submissions for our newsletter, *Ryugaku*, and we are still in need of officers. Contact Andrew Atkins or Todd Thorpe <studyabroadsig@gmail.com> for further information.

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 a speaker at the JALT national conference] [ ] [ ]

The Teacher Education SIG is a network of foreign language instructors dedicated to becoming better teachers and helping others teach more effectively. Our members teach at universities, schools, and language centres, both in Japan and other countries. We share a wide variety of research interests, and support and organize a number of events throughout Japan every year. Contact <ted@jalt.org> or visit our website <tinyurl.com/jalt-teachered>.

JALT2011 Call for Submissions
See page 78 of this *TLT*!

Teachers Helping Teachers

[teacher training, international education programs, language training, international outreach] [*THT Journal*—1x year, *THT Newsletter*—4x year] [teacher training conferences/seminars in Bangladesh, Laos, Vietnam, and the Philippines, AGM at JALT national] [ ]

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 four times a year, with columns by leading teachers in our field. There is a mailing list for teachers of children who want to share teaching ideas or questions <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 <tcsig.jalt.org>.

児童語学教育研究部会 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<tcsig.jalt.org>をご覧下さい。

Testing & Evaluation

[research, information, database on testing] [*Shiken*—3x year] [Pan-SIG, JALT National conference] [ ] [ ]

The TEVAL SIG is concerned with language testing and assessment, and welcomes both experienced teachers and those who are new to this area and wish to learn more about it. Our newsletter, published three times a year, contains a variety of testing-related articles, including discussions of the ethical implications of testing, interviews with prominent authors and researchers, book reviews, and reader-friendly explanations of some of the statistical techniques used in test analysis. Visit <jalt.org/test>.

TLT COLUMN CHAPTER EVENTS

Wishing you a year filled with exciting lessons, bright new ideas, and tons of learning and teaching motivation for everyone! As you can see below, chapters around Japan are starting off the first months of the new year with some really great events—and so many to choose from! Remember to check the Chapter Events website <jalt.org/events> if your chapter is not listed below. Other events may appear on the website at any time during the month.

GIFU—***Story writing as a form of genre writing*** by **Cameron Smith**. The presenter will demonstrate how to teach story writing as a form of genre writing, much like academic essay or business writing. Key components in this approach are having a well-formed plot and characters, and attending to pace, vocabulary, imagery, and descriptive technique ("show don't tell"). Equivalent level semester-long academic writing courses require students to produce two or three 500-word essays. In story writing, students typically produce more: two stories around 1500-2000 words each, often with better quality prose. Smith will offer suggestions as to why students appear to do comparatively well in such tasks. *Sat 22 Jan 19:00-21:00; Gifu JR station, Heartful Square 2F, East Wing.*

HAMAMATSU—***A lesson in Swahili: Being an elementary level student*** by **Vick L. Ssali**. As teachers, it can be difficult to know what kind of learning experience beginner-level students are having during class. With the goal of reminding teachers of what it is like for low-level students to learn a foreign language, this month's presentation will be a lesson conducted in beginner-level Swahili, a language commonly spoken in various parts of Africa. The lesson will include pronunciation, vocabulary, and drills. After the lesson, participants will have a chance to discuss the feelings and reactions they had during the lesson, as well as their opinions about the methods used. *Sat 12 Feb 2:00-5:00; ZaZa City Pallette, 5F, Hamamatsu; See Hamamatsu Chapter website for location, directions <hamajalt.org>; One-day members ¥1000.*

HIROSHIMA—***Good ideas offered by publishers.*** Two major publishers in Japan will talk about some of their best materials! **Important note: The date for this meeting might be changed to 30 Jan**, so please check Hiroshima JALT's homepage for accurate details. *Sun 23 Jan 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; One-day members free.*

HIROSHIMA—***Improving English reading abilities***. The teaching and learning of English reading skills will be the center of focus. After a talk by the main speaker, all members of the audience will have an opportunity to recommend successful techniques and strategies which make learners better readers. *Sun 20 Feb 15:00-17:00; Peace Park, 3F Conference Room; One-day members free.*

IBARAKI—***Vocabulary learning and teaching*** by **guest speakers** and **chapter members**. The February meeting will focus on teaching and learn-

…with Michi Saki

To contact the editor: <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. SIG NEWS ONLINE: You can access all of JALT's events online at <jalt.org/events>.

ing vocabulary. We plan to have two featured speakers and two chapter members who will make presentations related to the topic. *Sun 20 Feb 13:00-17:00; Urara Building in Tsuchiura, Room 1. Check our website for updates about the speakers and how to get to the site: <ibarakijalt.blogspot.com>; One day members ¥500, students free.*

KITAKYUSHU—***Improve memory and learning: Practical classroom applications*** by **Robert S. Murphy** (Murphy School of Education). Want to improve your memory? What about your students' memory? Murphy will discuss provocative new discoveries in brain research, memory, and learning. The content, stemming from his research at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is cutting-edge yet highly practical! There will be a good balance between theory and fantastic hands-on applications. CREAME pedagogy and "Teaching for the DATC" will be thoroughly covered in the presentation. *Sat 8 Jan 18:30-20:00; International Conference Center, 3F, Kokura; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; One-day members ¥1000*.

KITAKYUSHU—***Active participation through student response*** by **Bill Pellowe** and **Paul Shimizu**. We can motivate students to stay focused in the classroom through student response systems (SRS) that require all students to respond simultaneously. Low-tech SRS include giving students "batsu-maru" paddles to show the teacher. In more complex SRS, students use remote "clickers" to send in answers. Regardless of the level of technology, SRS improve student concentration, and encourage an active engagement with the material. Feel free to bring your iPhone or iPod Touch. *Sat 12 Feb 18:30-20:00; International Conference Center, 3F, Kokura; <jalt.org/chapters/kq>; One-day members ¥1000*.

KYOTO—***The power of visual images in EFL*** by **Sandra Healy** (Kyoto Sangyo U.) and **Penny Sugihara** (Kansai U.). In EFL teaching, images can be used to illustrate or present language points, to offer systematic practice, or to stimulate creative and imaginative spin-offs. The presenters will introduce simple yet effective ways of enriching the visual landscape of the classroom through the use of images. They will demonstrate how images can be used to engage, stir up curiosity, provide inspiration and motivation for writing and speaking, and generally enhance learners' classroom experience. *Sat 15 Jan 16:00-17:00; Campus Plaza Kyoto, Dai 4 Enshushitsu, 5F; One-day members ¥1000.*

MATSUYAMA—***Using recent media in FL courses and for rating oral examinations*** by **Rudolf Reinelt** of Ehime U. The aim of this presentation is to familiarize the audience with recent media in FL courses and for rating oral examinations. The presenter briefly introduces his conversation-oriented FL courses and the course-final oral examination. After the break, a demonstrative example will be discussed and future tasks outlined. The issues presented should be relevant for the acquisition of any foreign language. *Sun 9 Jan 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan, 4F; One-day members ¥1000*.

MATSUYAMA—***The practical applications of multi-modal teaching*** by **Charmain Winter** and **Toby Curtis** of Ehime U. Textbook-dominated ESL classrooms are often limited by traditional, "studial" methods of learning and teaching, ignoring the multiple ways (structural, audial, kinesthetic, etc.) in which students process new information. How can teachers employ multimodal methods to extend the learning experience to multiple dimensions? This presentation will explore how multi-modal activities can be advantageous for both teachers and students. *Sun 13 Feb 14:15-16:20; Shinonome High School Kinenkan, 4F; One-day members ¥1000*.

OKAYAMA—***Student reading habits and perceptions: Before and after extensive reading*** by **Richard Lemmer** and ***Fluency and collocations*** by **Dave Robinson**. Lemmer will be talking about results of a pre and post questionnaire administered to students in a 15-week Extensive Reading course. Reading habits in English, reading preferences, reading strategies, and perceived outcomes affecting reading speed, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition will be examined. Robinson will be talking about a study he performed that suggests that learning collocations may be a way of helping students to improve their fluency. After a brief overview

of the study, he will describe how he judged fluency and collocations and then discuss the results of the study. *Sat 22 Jan 15:00-17:00; Kibi International University Ekimae Campus, Room B, 4F; <tenplaza.info/introduction/access.html>; One-day members ¥500.*

OKAYAMA—***The 4th Annual Extensive Reading Seminar in Japan - Plenary speakers:*** **Rob Waring** (***Extensive Reading at School in Japan***) and **Atsuko Takase** (***Indispensable Extensive Reading and Listening for English Acquisition***). This event is co-sponsored by the ER Special Interest Group, the Okayama Chapter, and Okayama U. Details about other presentations and registration can be found at <jaltersig.org>. *Sun 13 Feb 10:00-16:00; Okayama University, Tsushima Campus, General Education Bldg. A & B; Members ¥500, one-day members ¥1000.*

NAGOYA—***Teaching speaking*** by **Tim Stewart** of Kyoto U. This workshop will introduce two books related to teaching speaking in Japan: *Insights on Teaching Speaking in TESOL* (TESOL Inc., 2009) and *Good Point!* (Macmillan Language House, 2011). Participants will explore teaching ideas from each book and discuss how they might use the materials in their lessons. The author/editor of the texts will facilitate this session. Stewart is a faculty member at the Kyoto University Institute for the Promotion of Excellence in Higher Education. *Sun 23 Jan 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; <nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/aboutus/access.htm>; One-day members ¥1000.*

NAGOYA—***Stories that don't begin with "once upon a time"*** by **Bob Jones**. Andrew Wright says, "Go to any pub or party and you will hear a constant babble of stories. The whole world is full of storytellers." This presentation will look at some of the typical structural and lexical features of the stories that adults tell each other in conversation. We will consider how we can make learners more aware of these features and train them to become more fluent and effective conversational storytellers. Jones has been in Japan since 1990. He has co-written a textbook entitled *Tell Me Your Stories: Storytelling in Conversational English*. *Sun 20 Feb 13:30-16:00; Nagoya International Center, 3F, Lecture Room 2; <nic-nagoya.or.jp/en/aboutus/access.htm>; One-day members ¥1000.*

OKINAWA—***The grades students want and the grades they deserve*** with **Kelly Quinn** (Nagoya Institute of Technology). Quinn, author of several texts, articles, and language-related videos, explains the results from a survey of 200 students, giving hypothetical situations and asking, based on test scores and assignments completed, what grade they expected for the class. Similarly, full and part-time teachers were asked what grade they would give. Answers will be compared and discussed. *Sat 15 Jan 14:00-17:00; Meio University Research Center; email <kamadutoo@yahoo.com> for more info; One-day members ¥1000.*

OKINAWA—***The grades students want and the grades they*** **deserve** with **Kelly Quinn** (Nagoya Institute of Technology). Quinn, author of several texts, articles and language related videos explains the results from a survey that was presented to 200 students, giving hypothetical situations and asking, based on test scores and assignments completed, what grade they expected for the class. Similarly, full and part time faculty were asked what grade they would give. Answers will be compared and discussed. *Sun 16 Jan 14:00-17:00; Okinawa Christian Jr. College/University A-V Lecture Hall; email <kamadutoo@yahoo.com> for more info; One-day members ¥1000.*

OMIYA—***Presentations*** by **Alastair Graham-Marr** and **Masa Tsuneyasu**. Topics to be announced at a later date. *Sun 9 Jan 14:00-17:00; Sakuragi Kominkan, 5F, Shiino Omiya Center Plaza, 1-10-18 Saukragicho, Omiya, Saitama; Tel: 330-0854; Omiya webpage at <jalt.org/chapters/omiya>; One-day members ¥1000.*

OMIYA—***Presentations*** by **Marcos Benevides** and **Jake Arnold**. Topics to be announced at a later date. *Sun 13 Feb 14:00-17:00; Sakuragi Kominkan, 5F, Shiino Omiya Center Plaza,1-10-18 Saukragicho, Omiya, Saitama; Tel: 330-0854; Omiya webpage at <jalt.org/chapters/omiya>; One-day members ¥1000.*

SHINSHU—***Inviting student voices: a weekend with* Tim Murphey**, Susan Fraser-Osada, Naoki Fujimoto-Adamson, Yuuki Watanabe, and Shawn Williams-Brown *(with optional skiing)*. This one-day conference, co-sponsored by MASH Collaboration and Shinshu JALT, will be held at Nagano Seisen Jogakuin College in Nagano City, and the skiing is planned for Togakushi Resort. Please direct email inquiries to <representables@*gmail.com*>. *Fri 11 Feb 10:00; for further information concerning schedule, cost and access visit <mashcollaboration.com/weekend-with-tim-murphey>.*

TLT COLUMN CHAPTER REPORTS

AKITA: September—***Exploring and investigating non-judgmental stances*** by **Hiratsuka Takaaki** and **Wayne Malcolm**. This joint presentation covered a recent study into student-teacher interactions within the classroom, and how teachers make and implement decisions. The focus of the talk was on data collected by the two researchers, starting a comparison between "Action Research" with "Exploratory Practice." Takaaki and Malcolm are using an exploratory practice design to guide the study. They reviewed the pertinent literature and presented their data collection methodology and data analysis. The talk ended with a lively question and answer session discussing the merits and demerits, as well as the implications of this particular qualitative study.

Reported by Stephen Shucart

AKITA: October—***ELT and the science of happiness: Positive psychology in the classroom*** by **Marc Helgesen**. Positive, motivated students who are engaged in what they are studying learn more. This workshop started with everyone receiving a homemade cookie, and the eating of it by sections became the metaphor for the entire talk. Helgesen asked the question: "How do we facilitate that positive attitude in the classroom?" This was an activity-based session that looked at the ways positive psychology could be combined with clear language learning goals for active, invested learning. This is more than mere "hippy-dippy," "healie-feelie," California-esque "positive self-talk." Positive psychology is based on data gathered from scientific experiments. Starting from the set-point of personal affect and moving to the tipping point of positivity, Helgesen gave a hands-on (literally, as the workshop included back massage) demonstration of how to apply the "Science of Happiness" to EFL/ESL teaching methodology. Not only was the cookie delicious, but the entire audience was noticeably happier by the end of the presentation.

Reported by Stephen Shucart

FUKUOKA: July—***Communication spotlight: Rationalisations and developments*** by **Alastair Graham-Marr**. Over the past several years, the *Communication Spotlight* textbook series has grown quickly in the Japanese EFL market, representing a break from some of the more standard texts. In this presentation, the author shared his experiences in the process of developing this and other textbooks and presented a history of ABAX over the years. Also discussed was how the text and the author's own teaching

…with Tara McIlroy

To contact the editor: <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 on our website.

approach have changed through the development process. The discussion included questions to the audience about people's major influences, both personal and academic, and how these influences affect our teaching.

Reported by Aaron Gibson

GIFU: September—*Getting back to basics in English language teaching* by **David Barker**. In this thought-provoking presentation, Barker discussed the need to re-examine Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theories. He argued for a return to basics as CLT does not give learners any language to work with, so we shouldn't "throw the baby out with the bath water." He argued for an inclusion of L1 in all L2 activities, explicit teaching of grammar, focused deliberate learning, and error correction by the teacher. Barker commented that successful language learning requires hard work and commitment and is extremely time consuming. We also examined common mistakes made by Japanese learners and analyzed teaching methods to overcome them.

Reported by Brent Simmonds

GUNMA: September—*Designing a themed task-based syllabus* by **Marcos Benevides**. To begin, Benevides reviewed Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), concentrating on its focus on meaning over form. Many issues arise from this focus on meaning, such as when it becomes beneficial to introduce vocabulary, grammar points, and other forms which constitute traditional English syllabi. Benevides explained that traditional, prescriptive syllabi are inappropriate in a TBLT environment and are generally ineffective means for teaching language. He argued that telling students to use certain grammar patterns or vocabulary to achieve a goal is unnatural and ineffective. So how is a teacher to design a syllabus if not around vocabulary and language points? Benevides' answer is a themed, task-based syllabus which is a set of related tasks that comprises an overarching theme. The primary example Benevides presented was his self-produced *Widgets: A task-based course in practical English*. Students are given the scenario that they have been hired by a company, Widgets Inc., which invents and manufactures products. As employees, students must work individually and in groups to perform various real-world tasks, from brainstorming ideas for products to conducting market research. It is these kinds of themed syllabi that can allow teachers to shift away from form-focused syllabi while retaining continuity and flow in their classrooms.

Reported by John Larson

GUNMA: October—*How to promote reflection in professional development* by **Akiko Takagi**. Presentations customarily center on ideas and activities for students. Instead of focusing on student progress, Takagi reminded us of how important it is to reflect on our development as teachers. During the first half of her lecture, Takagi defined reflection and classified different types of reflection. She introduced several frameworks of reflection. Student observation includes activities such as student questionnaires and free writing exercises that can engage students more fully in the class. Self observation can be done through video or audio and is useful for evaluation of one's own classroom behaviors. Peer observation can allow both the observed and the observer to discover how other teachers deal with common difficulties. In the second-half, Takagi led participants through three different reflection activities. In the first, participants were asked to draw a picture as a metaphor for the roles you and your students take in class. The second activity involved creating an idea map of different aspects teachers can reflect on. The last activity was to talk with a partner about a "critical incident" which was a significant class event.

Reported by John Larson

HAMAMATSU: September—*Getting published: Tips from an author's perspective* by **Diane H. Nagatomo**. In a presentation co-sponsored by the Material Writers SIG, Nagatomo introduced her experiences in publishing textbooks for the Japanese university market and facilitated discussion on ways first-timers can introduce their work to the market. Throughout her fully engaging presentation, Nagatomo spoke of her successes and failures while sharing some surprising anecdotes along the way. Among the topics covered were approaching publishers,

differences among publishers, co-authoring, and understanding what Japanese students and teachers want from a textbook. The bottom-line advice for a would-be author seemed to be to "never give up," because you never know when or how opportunity will come calling.

Reported by Jon Dujmovich

HIMEJI: July—*Common sense in vocabulary teaching* by **Rob Waring**. Waring began by introducing two levels of knowledge with words: (a) the form/meaning relationship including spelling, pronunciation, and primary meanings, and (b) a deeper level of meaning with shades of nuance, register, collocation, and colligation. The key point was made that some 80% of formal instruction concentrates on form/meaning, leaving only 20% to focus on deeper vocabulary meaning along with phrases, expressions, lexical chunks, and sentence heads or patterns. Basic math showed the huge task for students looking to deepen their vocabulary where even only 20 collocations leave intermediate level learners (2,000 word families) facing some 40,000 combinations. In referring to research that suggests learners must encounter a word 20-30 times to really know it, Waring made the point that regular course books cannot possibly teach everything that learners need, or provide the repeated exposure necessary. Since most materials introduce content in the scope of covering some new language, but offer little recycling, this helps the forgetting curve. Together with the example of his own intentional vocabulary study with word cards, Waring then moved to outline extensive reading (and listening) as the missing pieces of the puzzle where learners can get a sense of the language and the incidental encounters needed.

Reported by Greg Rouault

HIMEJI: September—***Language output, language input: Things that are true of all*** by Alastair Graham-Marr. Graham-Marr opened by introducing the notion that language is more than a set of knowledge content. Although humans can be said to be hardwired to learn language, it is nevertheless a skill set that needs practice. Practice in the form of output for fluency works toward building the neural networks necessary for automaticity. A brief examination of some of the weak points in the generalizability of past research findings on output and language acquisition was contrasted with some of Graham-Marr's own research. The challenge of validating empirical studies of whether output leads to accuracy often depends on isolating grammar points. Drawing on research by Izumi showing output did not help students learn conditionals, Graham-Marr reported on his own test of the output hypothesis using dictation as the mechanism. The findings were ambiguous for fluency yet with gains in accuracy. The presentation then included reference to salience where learning will occur when something is needed. The difference between the syllable-timed Japanese language and stress-timed English shows how listening content in some textbooks creates problems where content doubles as both input and as an output production model.

Reported by Greg Rouault

KITAKYUSHU: October—*Portfolios, assessments, and institutions: An interim report* by **Hugh Nicoll**. Nicoll distributed copies of self-evaluation forms and explained how he uses portfolios in his reading classes at a small aspiring liberal arts college doggedly pursuing its perceived vocation as a teaching institution in the face of pressure to pursue grant money and the blurring line between "standards" and "standardization." He offered various meanings of portfolios, pointing out that quasi-privatization and the politics of pedagogy and research have introduced problems for teachers looking for alternatives to TOEIC for language assessment. Growing out of the student autonomy movement, Common European Frame of Reference (CEFR) and European Language Portfolios (ELP) using dossiers, self-regulation, lifelong learning, and can-do statements, are models for the Personal Assessment Checklist System (PACS) project. PACS is about rationales, goals and constraints, and data gathering for English and IT courses. It is also about building systems, where students answer questions with their cell-phones and self-assess their burgeoning language skills and confidence with Likert scales. There was some discussion of how other teachers used methods similar to portfolios for

their classroom and coursework organization—with alternatives and improvements offered by Nicoll's research.

Reported by Dave Pite

KITAKYUSHU: ***November—Teaching and learning English humour, in principle and practice*** by **Richard Hodson**. Humor is playing with language, and teaching it can usefully combine authentic input with creative output for a dynamic aspect to second language classes. Hodson has been researching and teaching humor for several years and shared with us some of its principles and how he uses it. Incongruity, superiority, and psychic release are the accepted reasons for funniness; pedagogical credibility is based on the linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge required to teach and learn it. Some difficulties include recognizing and avoiding taboo topics (those too personal or culture-specific), varying student levels, jokes necessitating lengthy explanations (losing the attention of some and the interest of others), and spoiling the joke by discussing it too much. This is not a problem for Hodson, who concedes to being quite amusing in his classroom while encouraging his students to be funny as well by modifying jokes, rewriting the endings, and evaluating each other with Likert scales of happy faces. For us, the evening was an entertaining and interesting introduction to a potentially very useful methodology.

Reported by Dave Pite

KYOTO: September—*Presenting naked with slides: How thinking like a designer can help* by **Garr Reynolds**. The presenter began with an overview of presentation culture in Japan. The audience brainstormed features of good and bad presentations they had experienced. A whole group discussion about *zen*, its basic principles, and how these ideas are fundamental to any effective presentation, followed. Lessons to be conscious of when devising our own presentations include: making a commitment to clear, simple design, establishing clear boundaries to direct the flow of a presentation, and being aware of the audience and their needs. A Q&A session followed where the presenter and the audience discussed how these ideas could be applied in our own presentations as well as how they could be used in the classroom as part of an EFL course or segment on presentation skills.

Reported by Gretchen Clark

KYOTO: October—*Practice makes perfect! Presentation practice session for JALT National* and ***chapter officer elections*** by ***various***. **(1) *Examining the carry-over effect*** by **Daniel Mills**. In this presentation, Mills outlined his upcoming study on how computer-mediated communication, such as instant messaging, may reduce anxiety and encourage more communication among EFL learners even in subsequent face-to-face chat sessions. **(2) *From boxed-in daughters to carnivore women*** by **Jhana Bach**. The presenter started off by giving the audience a quiz on gender stereotypes and introducing gendered terms such as "onnazaka," "fukeikai," and "make-inu." She also engaged the audience in discussion by showing various images on the screen. Bach then continued by giving an overview of the materials she has been using in her Women's Studies course. **(3) *Thinking outside the film*** by **Kelly Butler**. The presenter outlined her use of short film clips in her university classrooms and called for a group discussion on how video can enhance the EFL learning experience. Following each presentation, the audience provided feedback on topics such as slide use, presenter demeanor, content, and flow. The chapter annual business meeting and officer elections concluded the meeting.

Reported by Gretchen Clark and Michi Saki

NAGOYA: September—*Active learners* by **Jon Catanzariti**. According to Catanzariti, active learners are ready to start the class before it begins, take every opportunity to speak English, are not afraid to make mistakes, ask for help when they don't understand, never give up, try again, respect and cooperate with everyone in class, ask lots of questions, learn from their mistakes, and do their homework carefully. Important factors are their interest in foreign languages, perseverance, initiative, their way of using the environment, and their outgoing personality. To create active learners, motivation is important. Give them as many opportunities to speak out as possible. Catanzariti recommends that his students learn effectively by writing many essays and using DVDs, music, and

movies. He listens to students, lets them work by themselves and exchange their ideas, and makes them collaborate and learn techniques and strategies. He encourages students to make their own study schedules and lets them take responsibility for their own learning. He gives them a form of daily self-reflection, in which each day they give themselves a grade on their contribution to their own learning. It has made students change their behavior completely, making them pay attention to their learning and making a fantastic class of active learners.

Reported by Kayoko Kato

NAGOYA: October—*Speaking of speech: Basic presentation skills for beginners* by **Charles LeBeau**. LeBeau says three simultaneous manageable messages are important for a successful presentation: physical message, visual message, and story message. As for physical message, a routine for posture is needed to focus on the presentation. To be positive and assertive, place feet shoulder-width apart, hold hands together and keep them about waist high and focus on the audience with eye contact. In speech, speak in abdominal vocalization 150 % louder with voice inflection than usual conversation voice. The main concept is to communicate to the audience. Speak slowly, clearly, step by step, without losing the audience. For visual message, make the background simple, use keywords, avoid sentences on the screen, and use a simple conclusion slide. In story message, LeBeau showed how to use the presentation structure. Giving a speech is like giving a tour. Introduction: give a greeting to catch the tour participants' attention. Tell them what the tour is about and why it is interesting/important. In the body, explain each point, announcing transitions between them. In the conclusion, summarize the presentation and tell them what to remember.

Reported by Kayoko Kato

NARA: October—*Harold Palmer in Japan: A lesson from history* by **Leigh McDowell** and **Yoko Yaku**. Nara enjoyed a thought-provoking presentation about Harold E. Palmer (1877-1949), a reformist educator who influenced English language education in Japan. McDowell explained that Palmer's methodology was initially inspired by the Berlitz Method, but with a more scientific approach. One of the central concepts in Palmer's methodology was the binary distinction between language as speech and as a code. Speech is an expression of communication, whereas code is contained in the grammar, spelling rules, and phonology— and speech preceded code in his teaching. Another feature was that the learners' L1 was used, if necessary, to confirm meaning vocabulary in the Palmer Method. Yaku focused on Palmer's great contribution to English language education in Japan, where he established the Institute for Research in English Teaching (IRET) in 1923. Beginning with various teaching activities such as "imperative drill," "action chains," and "reader system," reading comprehension, extensive reading, and writing were to follow. Yaku then explained the reason for the failure of the prevalence of Palmer's methodology. The presentation was well received and the audience concluded that we could learn from the history of language teaching and apply it to the current situation of English language education in Japan.

Reported by Motoko Teraoka

NIIGATA: September—*Designing a theme tasked-based syllabus* by **Marcos Benevides**. Benevides, who also co-authored *Widgets: A task-based course in practical English* (Pearson, 2008), spoke about the advantages of task-based teaching. Authentic texts and creating relatively authentic L2 spaces for foreign language contexts was a theme. For example, if the task is to order a pizza, can the student order a pizza in their L2? Do they have the English required to do such a task? Benevides also spoke about Canada's Language Proficiency Tests, and how proficiency was based upon self-assessed task-based items. In addition to proficiency measures, a task-based themed syllabus has many other advantages, such as exploring specific subject matter more thoroughly, and as a natural recycling of core vocabulary and language forms. Through Benevides' presentation, we learned the value of task-based assignments, and a wide range of applications to apply them in our own classrooms.

Reported by Kevin M. Maher

OITA: September—*Conversation analysis: Practical applications for the classroom* by **Donna Fujimoto**. Fujimoto presented on the various ways in which conversational analysis (CA) can be used to enhance teachers' proficiency through understanding more precisely the strategies students employ during interactions in the language classroom. Fujimoto provided the participants with a studied explanation of what CA is, its beginnings as a field with the work of Sacks, Schlegloff, and Jefferson, and how it has been applied since, including its use as an analytical tool in the assessment of student performance in oral interactions. The presenter emphasized the fact that CA does not have any "preformulated theories or concepts," but rather allows the data to speak for itself. The audience was guided through the analyses of two group discussions between learners of English, focusing on repetition. In the course of these analyses, Fujimoto was not only able to demonstrate the great level of analytical detail conversational analysts must go into, but also the richness of the findings uncovered. The presentation was very well received and participants were left with a clear sense of CA's potential, and how it could be applied to an analysis of their own students.

Reported by Steven Pattison

OKAYAMA: September—*Language acquisition by cochlear implant infants deafened by meningitis* by **C. J. Creighton**. The presenter outlined how he chose this topic, aided by his background in applied linguistics. He then explained how infants acquire audition and spoken language, the biomechanics of hearing, meningitis and hearing loss, and prosthetic hearing with cochlear implants. Meningitis sometimes destroys a victim's hair cells rendering them deaf. Cochlear implants bypass the destroyed hair cells and stimulate existing auditory nerves. Benefit is measured through standardized sound perception and usage tests similar to the knowledge/usage dichotomy in EFL. Next he explained how he examined the patient records of children (n=41) deafened prior to acquiring their L1 and used their age-equivalent and standardized scores to measure their language development after cochlear implantation. Also, by considering a child's age at test compared to their age equivalent score, he was able to determine the child's language growth relative to their peers. The results showed the children benefited from their implants but lagged behind their peers. He suggested that meningitis has an effect on language outcomes with the implication that these children have special learning needs for their hearing therapy.

Reported by Paul Moritoshi

OKAYAMA: October—*Proofreading: Problems and practice* by **Ian Willey** and **Kimie Tanimoto**. The presenters discussed problems proofreaders in Japan continually face when proofreading scientific manuscripts and abstracts for English language publications. Problems run the gamut, from proofreader understanding of the topic to the legitimacy of a Japanese variety of English, to the question of whether a proofreader's work can qualify as partial authorship. Most of the presentation focused on a comparative study among three groups: English teachers in Japan with experience proofing English scientific manuscripts written by Japanese researchers; English educators in the U.S. with little experience proofing L2 manuscripts; and U.S. medical and health professionals. Members in each group were given the same abstracts and asked to make corrections they felt necessary to make the work publishable. The resulting corrections were categorized and analyzed. There were many patterns of difference, though not all were considered significant. Issues like use of anaphora and definite articles varied along group lines, indicating that being a native checker does not guarantee that one is native within a certain scientific register. The remainder of the presentation was spent with participants proofing and comparing sample abstracts provided by the presenters.

Reported by Scott Gardner

OMIYA: October—*Debate* by **Harry Harris** and ***Stories about learning English*** by **Tazuru Wada**. In previous presentations, Harris enlightened participants as to the benefits of teaching debate with students, pointing to the intellectual, academic, linguistic, and social growth that it encourages. This time his presentation focused on achieving these aims through debate with

low-level students. After making the argument, Harris led the attendees in a demonstration of the technique, which was interesting for all. During the second half of this session, Wada presented findings from her project of having students give their stories about learning English, in English. The concept was one of self-reflection and applying coherence to the seemingly random memories students have of their language acquisition. After hearing this report, the audience was given a chance to do this with in their own second languages. As could be expected, the activity was very interesting.

Reported by Brad Semans

OMIYA: November—*Novemberfest* by **various**. **Brad Semans** conducted a workshop on using *mini-immersion*, the inclusion of short, content-intensive segments of a conversation lesson for young students. The audience, made up mostly of post-secondary level teachers, was politely attentive while Semans instructed them on the advantages of using this technique. Omiya JALT was also lucky enough to have **Soryong Om**, a featured speaker at the JALT national conference. After a brief history of language education in Cambodia, Om discussed the various barriers to developing English as a second language. This presentation was eye-opening for those present, who could identify with some of the barriers to progress that were discussed. Issues related to class size (sometimes up to 100 students), restricted budgets (teachers with second jobs), and learning environments resonated with the audience. Om's presentation was also positive since as a university instructor he sees the positive effects of promoting development and improvement of the language learning situation in Cambodia.

Reported by Brad Semans

OSAKA: October—*A moveable feast: Exploring the connection between teaching and learning* with **Chuck Sandy** and **Charles Adamson**, co-sponsored by the **TED** and **LD SIGs**. The whole-day event offered the opportunity to look at teaching and learning from different aspects. It started with the keynote talks: ***Just because you're teaching doesn't mean everyone's learning***, by Chuck Sandy, and ***Just because everyone's learning doesn't mean you're teaching***, by Charles Adamson. In the afternoon, there were poster presentations: **(1)** ***Education outside of TESOL for the language teacher*** by **Frank Cheang**; **(2)** ***A journey in teacher development through literature with slumdog Bombay millionaire*** by **Andrew Dowling**; **(3)** ***Contrasting identities of returnee students: Facebook vs. interview*** by **Patrick Kiernan**; **(4)** ***The more you learn, the more you earn*** by **Richard Miller**; **(5)** ***Professional development: What's on the menu? An account of a TD workshop*** by **Greg Rouault**; **(6)** ***Reflections on how our learning experiences inform our teaching*** by **Bob Sanderson**; and **(7)** ***Is "demotivation" the flip side of "motivation"? Investigating the relationship between teacher "demotivational" factors and student "demotivational" factors*** by **Toshiko Sugano**. The poster session was followed by a reflective workshop led by **Deryn Verity** and **Steve Cornwell**. Finally, we had a wrap-up discussion lead by Sandy and Adamson. The event, which was interactive and informative, reminded me of the basics of teaching and gave me, and I think all participants, a lot of insight.

Reported by Junko Omotedani

TOKYO: November—*JALT2010 Balsamo Asian Scholar/Four Corners Tour – Teaching and learning English in Cambodian high schools: Challenges and prospects* by **Soryong Om**. The presenter, as an EFL teacher/teacher trainer, described the challenges that have continued to impede the progress of English teaching and learning in Cambodian high schools since its introduction to the curriculum in 1992. Om also discussed the chances of its success and the ongoing attempt to revitalize the ELT field in high schools in particular and in Cambodia as a whole. The question and answer session was well received by the participants.

Reported by Akie Nyui

JALT2011 Call for Submissions
See page 78 of this *TLT*!

TLT COLUMN
JOB INFORMATION

Advice for hiring committees

James McCrostie

In my final column as editor I'd like to offer some advice to the hardworking people responsible for hiring teachers in the hopes of making the process smoother for all concerned.

First, please organize yourself. I understand everyone is busy but… a shambolic search won't land the best candidate, no matter how much of a buyer's market the employment situation happens to be. If your school doesn't hire regularly, think about all the steps necessary for hiring *before* writing the job ad. Typos in a job ad should be a red flag to job hunters.

Too many positions are advertised with non-existent or incredibly vague job descriptions. Schools that can't describe an opening in terms more detailed than *English teacher wanted* deserve to be swept away by a CV tsunami. State exactly what the job entails in the ad. For example, give the number and types of classes, the class goals, as well as the type and number of students. Furthermore, the phrase *Teachers may be asked to perform various other duties* means little, even if it allows you to dump any task onto a teacher's lap later on. Try to give a few examples.

Being more specific about qualifications would also cut down on the number of applications. If you want someone with a Master's degree, please say so. Demanding a *Master's or equivalent academic achievement* without defining what that equivalent might entail begs for a blizzard of resumes from unqualified candidates to cover your desk.

Also, and this is just a suggestion, think about how your school limits itself if it just looks at resumes from native English speakers. You want to hire the best teacher for the job, not the best passport.

Schools often require detailed application packages including a cover letter, resume with photo, an essay, and perhaps even photocopies of degrees, transcripts, and passports. And don't get me started on the Byzantine forms that each university requires. Why ask for all this information you'll have to read if you don't even have the time to show candidates a little common courtesy like keeping them informed?

I recognize that the practice of acknowledging receipt of applications might seem quaint, but keeping candidates informed could save time in the long run because you won't have to answer calls and emails from candidates wanting to know where they stand. Even announcing the hiring process timeline in the job ad would show more respect to candidates than they get now.

Make sure you update the school's website before you start hiring. Serious candidates will look at it to learn more about the school, its

…with James McCrostie

<job-info@jalt-publications.org>

To list a position in *The Language Teacher*, please submit online at <jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs> or email the Job Information Center Editor, <job-info@jalt-publications.org>. Online submission is preferred. Please place your ad in the body of the email. The notice should be received before the 15th of the month, two months before publication, and should contain the 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>.

classes, and other instructors. Sites littered with out of date information and dead links not only give candidates (and potential students) a bad impression but also make it harder for them to present their skills and qualifications in the most precise manner. For example, a school might not update its webpage to mention its new kids' classes. As a result, teachers with lots of experience teaching children fail to stress this in the application materials.

I'll save advice on how to conduct an efficient interview for another day, but at the end at least tell candidates when they can expect to hear your decision. If a candidate is the first of five people you are interviewing and a decision won't take place for another week, say so.

Finally, giving the bad news to those failed candidates who were interviewed is better done by telephone than email. Form rejection letters delivered months after the interview serve no meaningful purpose at all, unless of course you really intend to twist the knife deeper.

Job Openings

Please visit <jalt-publications.org/tlt/jobs> to view the most up-to-date list of job postings.

TLT COLUMN CONFERENCE CALENDAR

Upcoming Conferences

20-22 JAN 11—TESOL Asia Conference, Hyatt Hotel, Manila, Philippines. **Contact**: <tesol.asia>

21-22 JAN 11—The 31st Annual Thailand TESOL International Conference: ***Transforming the Language Classroom-Meeting the Needs of the Globalized World,*** The Empress Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand. **Contact**: <thaitesol.org>

22 JAN 11—KAPEE 2011 Int'l Conf. National Curricular Changes in Primary English Education: ***Challenges and Opportunities***, Korea Nat'l Univ. of Ed., Cheongju, Chungbuk. **Contact**: <kapee.or.kr/index.php>

13 FEB 11 —Extensive Reading Japan Seminar 2011, Okayama U. **Contact**: <eltcalendar.com/events/details/4934>

15-18 FEB 11—ELLTA 2011 First Academic International Conference: ***Exploring Leadership & Learning Theories in Asia***, U. of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur. **Contact**: <ellta.org>

22-23 FEB 11—The Third Moodle Teachers and Developers Conference, JALT CALL SIG, Kochi U. of Technology. Keynote speaker will be Martin Dougiamas, founder and lead developer of Moodle. **Contact**: <netcourse.org/courses>

26-27 FEB 11—7th CamTESOL Conference on English Language Teaching: ***English for Mobility***, Nat'l Inst. of Education, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Plenary speaker will be Christine M. Bundesen (U. of Brisbane). **Contact**: <camtesol.org/2011conference/2011_Conference.html>

10-12 MAR 11—2011 International Conference and Workshop on TEFL and Applied Linguistics, Taoyuan, Taiwan. Plenary speakers will include: Jack Richards, (RELC), Leo Van Lier, Monterey Inst. of Int'l Studies, and Claire Kramsch, U. of CA, Berkeley. **Contact**: <ae.mcu.edu.tw/modules/tinyd2>

11-12 MAR 11—2nd International Conference on Foreign Language Learning and Teaching: ***Strengthening Ties between Research and Foreign***

…with David Stephan

To contact the editor: <conferences@jalt-publications.org>

New listings are welcome. Please email information (including a website address) to the column editor as early as possible, preferably by the 15th of the month, at least three months before a conference in Japan, or four months before an overseas conference. Thus, 15 January is the deadline for an April 2010 conference in Japan or a May 2010 conference overseas. Feedback or suggestions on the usefulness of this column are also most welcome.

Language Classroom Practices, Language Inst., Thammasat U., Bangkok. Plenary speakers will be Rod Ellis (U. of Auckland) and Brenda Cherednichenko (Edith Cowan U., Aus). **Contact**: <fllt2011.org/>

16-19 MAR 11—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), New Orleans, USA. **Contact**: <tesol.org/s_tesol/convention2011>

15-19 APR 11—45th Annual IATEFL Conference and Exhibition, Brighton Centre, Brighton, UK. Plenary speakers will be Thomas Farrell, Peter Grundy, Brian Patten, Sue Palmer, and Catherine Walter. **Contact**: <iatefl.org/brighton-2011/45th-annual-conference-and-exhibition-2011>

22-24 APR 11—International Language Conference (ILC) 2011: ***Developing Soft-skills in Language Learners***, Federal Territory, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. **Contact**: <iiu.edu.my/ilc>

28-30 APR 11—TESL Canada: ***Standing Corrected - Fluency, Accuracy and Reality***, Halifax World Trade Convention Centre, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. **Contact**: <tesl.ca/Secondary_Navigation/TESL_Canada_Conferences.htm>

14 MAY 11—The 2011 KOTESOL National Conference: ***Ten Years In - Advancing Korean TESOL in the 21st Century***, Woosong U., (SolBridge), Daejeon. **Contact**: <kotesol.org/?q=Conferences>

21-22 MAY 11—Tenth Annual JALT Pan-SIG Conference 2011: ***Discovering Paths to Fluency***, Shinshu U., Matsumoto. **Contact**: <pansig.org>

28 MAY 11—2011 International Conference on EFL Education: ***Tradition and Innovation***, Changhua, Taiwan. Keynote speakers will be Ovid J. L. Tzeng (Academia Sinica), and Anna Chamot (George Washington U.). **Contact**: <icefle.blogspot.com>

10-11 JUN 11—Thammasat ELT Conference: ***Voices in ELT***, Bangkok, Thailand. Contact: <tuenglish.org/ELTconference>

23-28 AUG 11—16th World Congress of Applied Linguistics (AILA2011): ***Harmony in Diversity: Language, Culture, Society***, Beijing. Plenary speakers will be: Allan Bell (Auckland U. of Technology, NZ), Malcolm Coulthard (U. of Aston, UK), Gu Yueguo (Beijing Foreign Studies U.), Diane Larsen-Freeman (U. of Michigan), and Barbara Seidlhofer (U. of Vienna, Austria). **Contact**: <aila2011.org/en/newsdetails.asp?icntno=92662>

18-20 NOV 11—4th Biennial International Conference on Task-Based Language Teaching: ***Crossing Boundaries***, Auckland, NZ. Plenary speakers will be Rod Ellis (U. of Auckland, NZ), Kim McDonough (Concordia U., Canada), and Scott Thornbury (The New School, NY). **Contact**: <confer.co.nz/tblt2011/>

Calls for Papers or Posters

DEADLINE: 31 JAN 11—(for 13-15 APR 11)—Penang English Language Learning & Teaching Assoc. (PELLTA): ***Going Global - Teaching & Learning English in the 21st Century***, Bayview Hotel, Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia. **Contact**: <eltcon.webs.com>

DEADLINE: 31 JAN 11—(for 2-3 JUL 11)—JALT CUE 2011 Conference: ***Foreign Language Motivation in Japan***, Toyo Gakuen U., Hongo Campus, Tokyo. **Contact**: <cue2011conference.org/index.php/cue2011/cue2011/schedConf/cfp>

DEADLINE: 10 FEB 11—(for 30 AUG-2 SEP 11)—JACET Convention 2011: ***The 50th Commemorative International Convention***, Seinan Gakuin U., Fukuoka. Plenary speakers will be Rod Ellis (U. of Auckland), Ernesto Macaro (U. of Oxford), Ikuo Koike (Keio U.), and Peter Skehan (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). **Contact**: <jacet.org/jacet50/modules/tinyd0>

DEADLINE: 10 FEB 11—(for 27-29 JUL 11)—The 9th Asia TEFL International Conference: ***Teaching English in a Changing Asia - Challenges and Directions***, Hotel Seoul KyoYuk MunHwa HoeKwan, Seoul. **Contact**: <asiatefl.org/2011conference/conference2.html>

DEADLINE: 28 FEB 11—(for 3 SEP 11)—First Extensive Reading World Congress: ***Extensive Reading - The Magic Carpet to Language Learning***, Kyoto Sangyo U., Kyoto. **Contact**: <erfoundation.org/erwc1>

DEADLINE: 26 APR 11—(for 18-21 NOV 11)—JALT 2011: 37th Annual International Conference on Language Teaching: ***Teaching, Learning, Growing***, National Olympics Memorial Center, Yoyogi, Tokyo. **Contact**: <jalt.org/conference>

TLT COLUMN

OLD GRAMMARIANS

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

Sleep, a twin-sized hobby

When I was starting out as a teacher in Japan, I often asked students to introduce themselves, including their "hobbies." When discussing hobbies I always ran into the same two problems. The first concerned "natural" usage: framing questions about hobbies in a way that sounded normal (to me, at least). Perhaps as a new teacher you too may have gone through a stage where you winced every time you heard students starting a dialogue with the question, "What is your hobby?"—like "hobby" is interchangeable with "name" or "tax bracket," and you can only have one at a time. The other problem was a semantic one, because certain activities that I hesitate to call hobbies kept creeping into the discussion. "Sleep" appeared most frequently. Technically, sleeping is a body function as basic as breathing and blinking your eyes. Biologically prompted efforts to stay alive shouldn't be considered hobbies.

But I suppose in another sense sleeping can be a perfected skill, and people who develop that skill may deservedly pride themselves in it. Take for instance those who can sleep while standing on a train, or those who can sleep through a trigonometry class without the teacher noticing. These are not easy tasks, and there is a beauty in them that also appears elsewhere in nature. For example, some animals that routinely find themselves at the lower end of the food chain have developed patterns on their bodies resembling huge eyes, so that even when they're asleep they give predators the illusion of being wide awake and perhaps quite dangerous. (Allegedly one rare species of moth in South America has markings on its wings that spell out the word "boo!") And horses can also sleep standing up, although they prefer to lie down when playing concentration-intensive games like mumblety-peg.

Sleep is the "Dark Continent" of history. We know oodles about what happened in the world during the waking hours of the last two or three millennia, but very little about what happened at night, while everyone was asleep. I wonder how many decisive battles in history hinged upon one or another military leader's attitude toward sleep:

First Officer: Emperor Napoleon! Wellington and his armies have marched double-time all day to arrive here and do battle with us. They are weary. It may be a good idea to attack them tonight in their sleep before they recover.

Napoleon: Sneak attack at night, huh? That sounds like it just might work. Tell you what—prepare an outline of what you have in mind and we'll call an officers' meeting first thing in the morning to work out the details. And since you're just standing there, help me pull these boots off.

Scientists talk about certain severe forms of sleep disorder, where people actually go out and do daytime activities while sleeping, like drive a car. I'm of the opinion that this sleep state could be a desirable and tremendously efficient one. It would certainly be nice if I could go to school and teach my first-period class without having to wake up.

In high school we studied REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep, the stage of sleep where the sleeper's eyes dart around as if they're playing a video game in their dreams. But we never learned about VEM sleep, the Violent Elbow Movement stage. My wife and I occasionally suffer from sleep disturbance during this stage.

To remedy the effects of VEM sleep my wife had what she thought was a great idea: place the mattress a few centimeters away from the wall side of the bed—her side—and stuff some pillows along the wall to fill the gap, thus creating a bit of extra sleeping space for both of us. While I appreciate her effort, the mattress shifting project has had two negative effects. One is that the newly created space between us has been claimed by the cat, who suffers from bouts of RTM (Rapid Tail Movement) sleep. The other is that the widened mattress space, lacking corresponding bed frame structure underneath, results in a gentle downward slope along *my* edge of the bed, which if I turn the wrong way can roll me right out onto the floor. You'd think I'd be quick to reject this "wide bed" arrangement, but unfortunately, with the cat involved, the vote is two to one in favor. My only option is to try to turn my plight into a practical skill of some kind: "What's your hobby?" "Falling out of bed. What's yours?"

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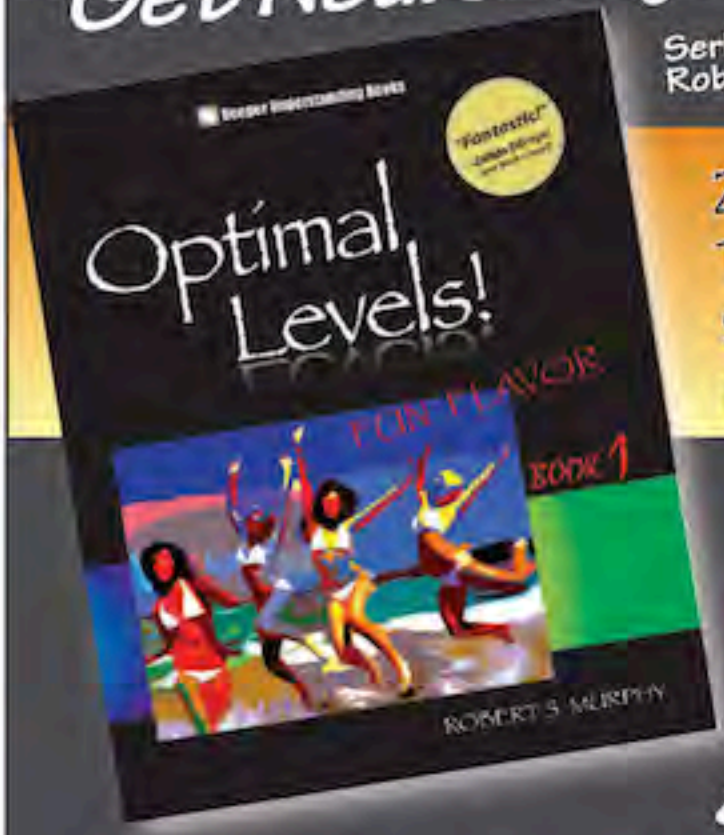

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- over 3,000 members in Japan and overseas
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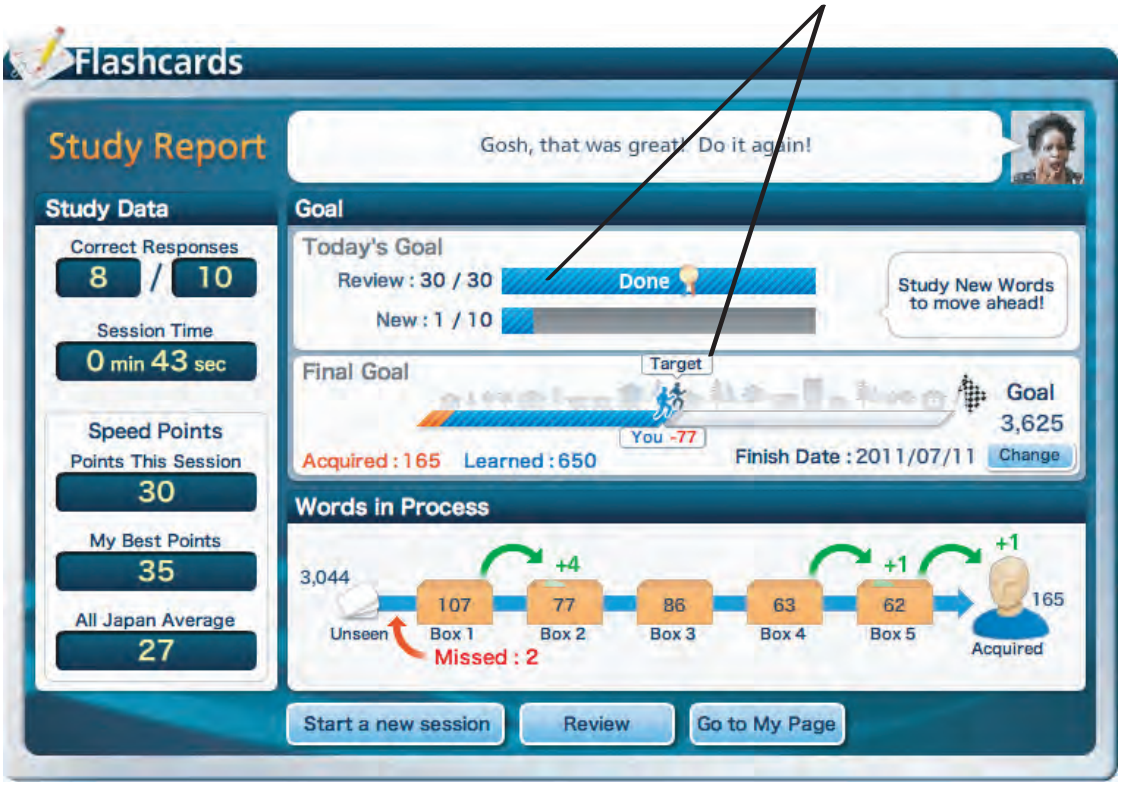

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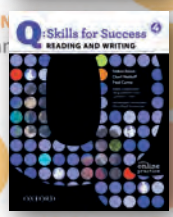
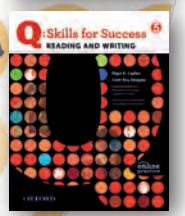

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